

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that we start the vote now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, the question occurs on agreeing to the Schatz amendment No. 2252.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 132 Leg.]

#### YEAS—51

Baldwin	Harris	Peters
Bennet	Hassan	Reed
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Rosen
Booker	Hirono	Sanders
Brown	Jones	Schatz
Cantwell	Kaine	Schumer
Cardin	King	Shaheen
Carper	Klobuchar	Sinema
Casey	Leahy	Smith
Coons	Manchin	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Markey	Tester
Daines	Menendez	Udall
Duckworth	Merkley	Van Hollen
Durbin	Murkowski	Warner
Feinstein	Murphy	Warren
Gardner	Murray	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Paul	Wyden

#### NAYS—49

Alexander	Fischer	Risch
Barrasso	Graham	Roberts
Blackburn	Grassley	Romney
Blunt	Hawley	Rounds
Boozman	Hoeven	Rubio
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Burr	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Capito	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Shelby
Collins	Lankford	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lee	Thune
Cotton	Loeffler	Tillis
Cramer	McConnell	Toomey
Crapo	McSally	Wicker
Cruz	Moran	Young
Enzi	Perdue	
Ernst	Portman	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 49.

Under the previous order, the 60-vote threshold having not been achieved, the amendment is not agreed to.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 2411

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 2411 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Oklahoma [Mr. INHOFE] proposes an amendment numbered 2411 to amendment No. 2301.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To impose additional conditions and limitations on the transfer of Department of Defense property for law enforcement activities)

At the end of subtitle E of title X, insert the following:

**SEC. 1052. ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS AND LIMITATIONS ON THE TRANSFER OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PROPERTY FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES.**

(a) ADDITIONAL TRAINING OF RECIPIENT AGENCY PERSONNEL REQUIRED.—Subsection (b)(6) of section 2576a of title 10, United

States Code, is amended by inserting before the period at the end the following: “, including respect for the rights of citizens under the Constitution of the United States and de-escalation of force”.

(b) CERTAIN PROPERTY NOT TRANSFERRABLE.—Such section is further amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (e) and (f) as subsections (f) and (g), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (d) the following new subsection (e):

“(d) PROPERTY NOT TRANSFERRABLE.—The Secretary may not transfer to a Tribal, State, or local law enforcement agency under this section the following:

“(1) Bayonets.

“(2) Grenades (other than stun and flash-bang grenades).

“(3) Weaponized tracked combat vehicles.

“(4) Weaponized drones.”.

#### VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2411

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question occurs on Inhofe amendment No. 2411.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, 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.

The result was announced—yeas 90, nays 10, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 133 Leg.]

#### YEAS—90

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

#### NAYS—10

Blackburn	Hawley	Sanders
Booker	Kennedy	Warren
Cotton	Loeffler	
Harris	Markey	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 90, the nays are 10.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for adoption of this amendment, the amendment is agreed to.

#### RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:59 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m., and reassembled

when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. CAPITO).

#### NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

#### BUDGET

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, I rise today to discuss our Federal finances and the need to address our unsustainable fiscal debt and deficit.

The Federal budget has already been on an unsustainable path before COVID-19 reached our shores and before the pandemic and our government's response to it, which has accelerated what I believe is a coming day of reckoning.

I recognize the unprecedented crisis presented by COVID-19. I support the necessary response. Together, Congress has passed and the President has signed five separate pieces of legislation responding to the pandemic and its economic fallout that together will cost more than \$2 trillion.

I never would have supported trillions in new spending unless I truly believed that it was necessary to combat the virus and prevent economic catastrophe resulting from the government shuttering the economy. I know many of my colleagues feel that same way.

When this crisis abates—and it will—the Federal Government cannot afford to return to the status quo of unsustainable budgets and surging debt that jeopardizes the prosperity of future generations. We have to start serious conversation about how we are going to pay our bills and put our finances on a more sustainable path. We can justify aggressive borrowing and spending as necessary during times of crisis, but that can't be the default.

So far this fiscal year, we have already run up a deficit of \$2.7 trillion in 1 year, more than triple the size of the deficit we ran at the same time last year. The Congressional Budget Office says that we are on track to spend \$3.7 trillion more than we take in this year, and that is assuming we don't pass new COVID legislation. By the end of the fiscal year, our publicly held debt will exceed the size of our economy and, by the end of next year, debt as a percentage of the economy will be higher than it has ever been in our history. I have a little chart here that demonstrates that.

We have been fortunate the interest rates on our debt are currently low, and the government has been able to borrow the funds necessary to address the crisis caused by the pandemic. The dollar has remained relatively strong, helping to keep inflation low. The U.S. dollar remains the world's reserve currency and the safe haven for investments in the current time of crisis.

But how long will that be the case if we continue to run trillion-dollar deficits each year? Future Congresses will not have the same flexibility to deal

with their own crises if we leave them saddled with an enormous national debt. They will not be able to fund new emergency programs without cutting other spending or raising revenues.

That is why it is so critical that we get a hold of our debt and deficits once we emerge from this pandemic. Regardless of what some people far outside of the economic mainstream are saying, there are constraints on how much government can borrow and spend without triggering higher interest rates or inflation. If we just start printing money to pay for over-spending, our country could face the curse of stagflation, a combination of high inflation and low to no economic growth. We haven't had to think about this type of devastating combination since the late seventies, and that is economic history we should not repeat.

Even if we have the capacity for significant, one-time emergency spending, we should bear in mind the fact that the Federal Government doesn't have a good track record of reducing spending after it has ratcheted it up during a crisis.

I would remind my colleagues of the old adage: There is nothing so permanent as a temporary government program. We are already hearing calls to extend or make permanent many of the temporary entitlement expansions enacted in previous bills.

More legislation may be needed to combat the virus and help the economy, but we cannot use the crisis to justify opening the spending floodgates and borrowing from future generations to fund nonemergency priorities. Low interest rates do not mean that government spending is free or that we don't need to spend it wisely.

The House of Representatives has passed a bill that the Congressional Budget Office says will cost nearly \$3.5 trillion. That is more than the cost of all the COVID-19 legislation we have already enacted combined. Are we to believe every penny of that is absolutely necessary?

A \$60 billion bailout for union pensions? A massive giveaway for wealthy individuals living in high-tax States? Billions in student loan forgiveness for all borrowers, regardless of income and ability to pay?

We should not view this crisis—a crisis that claimed over 130,000 American lives and left millions out of work—as an opportunity to enact things that have nothing to do with the pandemic.

And it is not just the lower Chamber. The Senate recently approved \$17 billion in new mandatory spending for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and park and public lands maintenance. We refused to consider an amendment to even try to pay for that bill, an attempt that would have mostly charged foreigners visiting our parks. As I said, if we don't try to pay for that bill, what will we pay for?

We are just adding to an already long list of unfunded mandatory spending programs that we allow to operate on

autopilot without ever being voted on or ever being evaluated again. Nobody runs a business like that. Even though these programs are allowed to bypass the annual appropriations process, most of them don't have any dedicated revenue to pay for the spending. And those that do collect their own revenue often spend more than they take in—with no vote. It just happens. Even before the pandemic, the Congressional Budget Office projected that Social Security spending over the next 10 years would total \$15.2 trillion. But listen to this: The program's dedicated tax revenues would only cover \$12.5 trillion of that—\$15.2 trillion cost; \$12.5 trillion revenue. Medicare's taxes and premiums were projected to cover only half of the program's \$12.6 trillion spending over the next 10 years. We put the rest of it on the Nation's credit card left to be paid for by future generations. What kind of a crisis are they going to have?

This chart shows again that this is the revenue coming in for Social Security, and this is the additional we have to borrow. This is the money coming in from Medicare, and this is the additional we have to borrow. Medicaid, we borrow every bit of it. The total revenue that we receive will not cover these deficits, so everything else that we do we will have to borrow for it.

If the interest rate were to go up to its norm of 5 percent, we wouldn't be able to do defense; we wouldn't be able to do education; we wouldn't be able to do anything else, infrastructure or otherwise, that we expect the Federal Government to do for us. We have to start getting control of it. It isn't an unlimited source of money. We are putting it on the Nation's credit card, and the future generations will have to pay for it.

There are a couple of ways you can pay for it. One is to eliminate the services. The other one is to increase revenues. Another one, of course, is to eliminate a lot of duplication that we have, but we don't even have an appetite for that.

We have over 100 housing programs. Tell me there is no duplication in 100 housing programs, but we don't look at them. Most of them are mandatory. So we can just ignore the impacts of them and the fact that we have multiple administrators doing the same job, and we don't even know if it is effective.

I have been trying for a long time through the Budget Committee to get a list of the programs we fund. Now, you would think, if we are writing checks, that we would have a list of programs, wouldn't you? We don't have a list of programs. We don't know what we own. We don't know when it is going to wear out. We don't know what the cost of replacement would be. All are very basic business decisions, but we just keep sliding everything over to mandatory so it has to be paid for regardless of whether we have any money or not, and we don't even look at them. That has to change, and it has to change rapidly or our kids and our grandkids

will find that all of their money has been spent, and all they can do is pay more taxes.

I am frustrated that we are spending billions without so much as a discussion about how to pay for things. Yes, we needed a strong response to the COVID virus, but I am disappointed that we can't work together on responsible solutions, even modest efforts like a paid-for fix for our parks and public lands maintenance that I mentioned would already be paid for by foreign visitors. I am dismayed that we keep digging the hole deeper for future generations. We all owe it to them to do better, and I hope we start to do it soon.

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.

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

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

S. 4049

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I come to the floor today to speak in support of Senate amendment No. 1729, which I hope will be added today to the National Defense Authorization Act. The goal of this amendment is to finish—what I hope is to finish a public health study that we began with legislation in 2017 to address the contaminant known as PFAS. I know the Presiding Officer knows about this because she has that chemical in her State as well.

I want to begin by commending the work of the Armed Services Committee—both Chairman INHOFE and Ranking Member REED for working with me to establish the first ever human health study of PFAS and to institute policies that will phase out the Defense Department's use of these chemicals over the next several years.

We began this journey in 2017 when we put \$10 million into a health study—the first of its kind in the country—to look at the impacts of PFAS on humans. At that time, we authorized \$10 million for 3 years. Unfortunately, because of the coronavirus pandemic, it is taking longer to complete the study than we had hoped, so we are going to need some additional funding.

There is real urgency in addressing PFAS. As many of us know, PFAS chemicals have emerged as widespread pollutants in the drinking water sources of military bases across this country. The main reason is because PFAS chemicals were used in firefighting foam that was used by the armed services.

The number of military installations with known or suspected contamination from PFAS continues to rise. In March, DOD updated its count of military installations impacted by these materials from 401 across the country to 651—651 military installations—

which means that they are in almost every State in the United States, and other studies have reported that this is actually a conservative estimate.

We don't yet know what the long-term risks of exposure to PFAS are because we are still trying to get research into that, but studies have already linked these chemicals—and there are hundreds of chemicals in the PFAS category—to a number of adverse health effects.

The potential ties between PFAS and various forms of cancer are of particular concern to firefighters who may have experienced exposure during firefighting and fire-training exercises.

On June 11, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, ATSDR—works as part of the Centers for Disease Control—issued a statement expressing concern about how PFAS exposure can impact the risk of COVID-19 infections. Now, for all of us who have constituents who have been exposed to PFAS, we know this has caused a lot of sleepless nights for countless American families both in New Hampshire and across the country who have been living and working near sites contaminated by these materials.

In my State of New Hampshire, the city of Portsmouth, which was the home of the former Pease Air Force Base, closed a major water supply well located at that airbase after the Air Force found PFAS in the drinking water at levels 12½ times higher than the provisional health advisory from the Environmental Protection Agency at that time. That number has changed since then.

Moreover, State health officials determined that more than 1,500 people, including children who attended daycare centers near the site, have elevated levels of PFAS in their blood from drinking contaminated groundwater at Pease. I have heard from so many parents who are terrified of what this contamination means for the health of their children.

One woman, who has been a real leader in responding to the PFAS emergency, Andrea Amico of Portsmouth, remembers feeling like her world was crashing down when tests showed that her two children, exposed to PFAS in drinking water at Pease, had elevated levels of these materials in their blood. She said: “[T]o actually see it on paper, to know it was true, was very devastating for me, and the wide range of emotions I experienced with those results ranged from anger to fear, frustration and guilt.” Andrea’s children attended the childcare center—one of the two childcare centers at Pease.

I also heard from Alayna Davis of Dover and Michelle Dalton of Durham, both of whom are mothers with children at a daycare center near the former base at Portsmouth. Alayna said that she was exposed to PFAS at Pease when she was pregnant with her son. She and her husband were devastated when they learned that their son had high levels of PFAS in his

blood. Michelle was exposed to the contaminated water in January of 2011 when she started working on the base. Her youngest child has attended daycare at Pease since he was 12 weeks old, but, of course, he was exposed to contamination since conception.

Stories like Andrea’s, Alayna’s, and Michelle’s are not limited to Portsmouth, sadly. Contamination from PFAS is not limited to military bases and airports. That is why this long-term health study is so important, and it is so critical that we complete it. We need to know what the research says are the dangers of PFAS.

Since Congress authorized the study in 2017, the ATSDR and Centers for Disease Control have been working to identify the health effects of PFAS exposure, starting with the former Pease airbase in Portsmouth. There are other—I believe there are seven other sites around the country that have been designated as part of this study. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, as I said earlier, the agencies expect additional costs associated with continuing the study, as well as a 1-year delay in finalizing the results.

I think we could all agree that families who have been exposed to these chemicals deserve answers. What my amendment would do is provide additional funding for the PFAS health study to ensure that ATSDR and CDC can complete their work and do it without delay.

The safety of our drinking water is essential, and it is nonnegotiable. The potential serious health effects associated with exposure to PFAS chemicals demand moving forward with policies that will protect our communities, especially our men and women in uniform. Senate amendment 1729 would help to do just that.

Of course, this is just the beginning. This gives us a baseline study to tell us what the health effects are. Once we get that study and as we continue to move forward, we have a lot of work to do to ensure that PFAS—not just on military bases but in communities across this country, which appear in so many different products—that we can address that in a way that provides some sort of insurance and protection to families across this country so they know what they are dealing with and so they know they can get help. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. The cars we drive, the planes we fly, and the smartphones we have in our pockets are all powered by computer chips—or semiconductors—a technology that is key to modern society and that may determine whether America or China leads the world in the decades to come.

Computer chips were, of course, pioneered in America. Cold War-era initiatives like the Apollo Program, DARPA, and SEMATECH created the break-

throughs and steady demand for this high-tech industry. Storied American companies like Intel, IBM, Texas Instruments, Micron, and others commercialized and then perfected this technology. Brilliant American entrepreneurs and engineers kick-started the digital revolution that shaped the modern world. That was then. Today, sadly, most semiconductors are not made in the U.S.A.

We have learned during this pandemic how dangerous it is to rely on distant factories and overstretched supply chains that can be compromised by emergencies or enemies. Well, almost three-quarters of the world’s capacity to make computer chips is located in just a handful of countries in East Asia—closer to Communist China than our shores and all within range of the missiles of the People’s Liberation Army.

China is investing huge sums—possibly \$150 billion—in its semiconductor industry. This investment is paying off. For the first time ever, last year China surpassed the United States in its capacity for manufacturing advanced chips. China is projected to surpass Japan and South Korea in the next 2 years, which would put it behind only Taiwan, an island just 80 miles off its shore, which, I must remind you, the PLA regularly trains to invade.

We cannot allow China to dominate production of computer chips. Doing so would be a grave threat that could allow a corrupt clique of Communists to impose a high-tech tyranny on the rest of the world. That is why I am offering a bipartisan amendment, along with Senators CORNYN, SCHUMER, WARNER, and others, to ensure American leadership in computer chips in the face of this Chinese threat. Our proposal calls for key investments in advanced factories and research and development so that America discovers and then produces the next generation of semiconductor technology. It also requires the Department of Defense and the intelligence community to work with trusted industry partners to secure the supply chain for computers chips for our military and other national security needs.

This bill is a moonshot investment, and such investments don’t come cheap. So I regret that the question of funding this bill has been postponed to another time, but I look forward to having and winning that debate because, make no mistake, robust support is needed to ensure the future of the American semiconductor industry. At the very least, it is necessary to level the playing field so that American companies can compete against the coercive, anti-competitive, and mercantilist policies of Communist China and others. It will provide a surge of support and demand for advanced technology, just as the Federal Government has always provided.

We offer this amendment so that the next digital revolution is also made in the U.S.A., not in Communist China. I

urge my colleagues to support it and to support America's continued technological primacy in the world.

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

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

Mr. REED. Madam President, I rise to express my support for the Cornyn amendment, which would, among other things, authorize a Federal grant program to enable the leading global chip companies to manufacture in the United States.

I want to commend a bipartisan group of Senators who have worked so hard on this issue: Senators COTTON, CORNYN, SCHUMER, and WARNER. The semiconductor manufacturing story is similar to many other industries in America. The United States invented the technology and still leads in research and development, but the manufacture of the product itself has steadily migrated to Asia.

Over time, not just the manufacturing expertise and capacity are lost but also the science and engineering necessary to invent the next generation of products. While this has happened to too many industries, the impact is particularly acute in electronics because electronics power the modern economy, fueling all the critical technologies on which our future prosperity depend.

Asian nations—and, in particular, China, Taiwan, and South Korea—have for decades pursued aggressive industrial policies to gain control of the electronics industry. These policies directed large subsidies and protections for fledgling companies that have now become global giants.

While South Korea is an ally, and Taiwan is a partner, the plants in those countries that make the world's most advanced logic and memory semiconductors are highly vulnerable to disruption or destruction by China and/or North Korea. In a confrontation in this region, China could threaten to bring the western economy to its knees by halting the flow of semiconductors.

China itself is investing hundreds of billions of dollars in new semiconductor fabrication plants in a relentless bid to dominate this industry. In 10 years, Chinese companies may dominate the production of the chips that power 5G wireless networks, artificial intelligence, cloud computing, the Internet of Things, and autonomous vehicles.

In America, there is one remaining company that is globally competitive in logic chips—Intel Corporation—but Intel is at least a generation behind its main competitors and historically has designed and produced chips only for its own product line. Its major global

competitors—the Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Corporation, or TSMC, and Samsung—provide manufacturing services for chips designed by other companies. These are typically so-called fabless chips companies, and they include the names of some of our most famous tech companies: Qualcomm, Xilinx, Nvidia, and Microsoft. TSMC and Samsung, together, have close to a monopoly on the manufacturing of leading-edge semiconductors for fabless chip companies.

Recently, there was the good news that Intel announced in a letter to the Defense Department its intent to compete with its Asian rivals in manufacturing chips designed by fabless companies. Again, these are companies that would design the chips and the electronic processor but would not produce the chips. That would be left to these other major companies.

In addition, TSMC and the administration announced an agreement to bring TSMC to America to produce leading edge chips. It is suspected that Samsung can be persuaded to set up a major manufacturing facility in the United States, as well.

The Defense Department has two major studies nearing completion, one by the Defense Science Board and one conducted in partnership with industry by the Under Secretary for Acquisition, Ellen Lord. They are both expected to plead for urgent and large-scale action to revive U.S. semiconductor manufacturing, but none of this is going to happen without funding and without a plan.

We did not lose chip manufacturing to Asia simply due to cheap labor, especially in the chip industry, which is not manpower intensive. We lost this market sector because the investments required are massive and constant and because foreign governments heavily subsidize them.

We all prefer to let markets govern where competition is fair and mutually beneficial, but relentless actions by foreign governments to dominate specific industries regardless of economics and where they succeed, like in the semiconductor industry, must be countered by U.S. government action because of the threat to our national security and prosperity.

While this amendment does not include funding authorizations, it is an important first step. This amendment will serve notice that the U.S. Senate recognizes this very serious issue and intends to take corrective action.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment and to commit to finding funding solutions. Our economic well-being and our national security depend upon it.

Madam President, I would now also like to speak about Senator Shaheen's amendment, which will be considered this afternoon, with your permission.

I rise in support of Senator Shaheen's amendment to increase fiscal year 2021 funding by \$5 million for the ongoing CDC human health study on the effects

of PFAS substances in drinking water sources.

As most of you are aware, PFOS and PFOA are chemicals that are very effective for extinguishing fires and have been used in firefighting foam in the Defense Department since the 1970s. Unfortunately, the fluorine bonds never break, and environmental problems are presented, which are very dangerous to people.

The lifetime health advisory for PFAS is the equivalent of one grain of sand in an Olympic-sized swimming pool. The WHO found that these chemicals are likely carcinogenic, especially in children and pregnant women, and that they can decrease the effectiveness of vaccines, and they are known to cause cancer in animals.

PFAS has been found in the drinking water at over 650 military installations in almost every State in the United States and overseas. Thousands of Americans in many States across the United States have already found elevated levels of PFAS in their blood.

Beginning with the fiscal year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act, the Department of Defense has been authorized to transfer funds to the CDC for a human health study on the effects of all PFAS substances in drinking water sources for people. Specifically, it seeks to determine the exact types of cancers and other toxic effects drinking water with PFAS has on human beings.

For example, years ago, the CDC determined precisely how much lead can be ingested before cognitive impacts can occur in children. They can and should do the same thing with respect to PFAS.

The study should take 7 years to complete. So this fiscal year 2021 NDAA will fund year 4.

The CDC study received \$7 million in fiscal year 2018, \$10 million in fiscal year 2019, \$10 million in fiscal year 2020, and there is \$10 million currently in the fiscal year 2021 NDAA amendment. Senator SHAHEEN's amendment would increase it to \$15 million. It would accelerate our ability to find these critical answers that affect the health and safety of the American people and are particularly associated with military bases all across the country, which means in every one of our States.

We all recognize the urgent need for the CDC to better understand the toxic effects of PFAS chemicals on the human body, and supporting this amendment will accomplish just that.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Once again, I commend Senator SHAHEEN for her work in developing this amendment with respect to PFAS, and I commend Senator CORNYN and his colleagues for working very, very diligently and perceptively about building up our industrial base in order to produce microchips so we will be the leader in the world and not the follower.

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

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

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, as the Senate knows, this week we will complete our work on the 60th National Defense Authorization Act—actually, 60 years in a row. For decades, this legislation has provided the opportunity for us to take stock of the evolving threat landscape and ensure that our national defense is prepared to meet the challenges on the horizon.

As technological advancements have changed battlefield tactics, each year's NDAA has allowed us to invest in a modernized force and advanced weapons. As risks in cyber space emerged as a new vector for warfare, this legislation has allowed us to invest in resilient networks and a talented workforce.

As the global order has shifted, this annual bill has given us the opportunity to identify the greatest threats to our country and to take strategic action. This year's national defense authorization bill is no exception. It continues to invest in a modernized national defense that is critical to maintaining peace through strength.

That is something we need to remember, which Ronald Reagan taught all of us. Weakness is provocative. Bullies look for opportunities to take advantage of weakness. It is strength in our leadership, particularly with our military, that helps us maintain the peace.

This bill also devotes resources to regain our competitive advantage over our greatest opponents to freedom and democracy today, including China and the Communist Party. In my lifetime, China has gone from a poor and isolated country to now accounting for nearly 20 percent of the global gross domestic product. But China's economic muscle isn't the reason it tops America's watch list. The Chinese Communist Party's ruling strategy can best be described as "win at all costs," and, sadly, the victims of that strategy are often the Chinese people themselves.

On the Senate floor yesterday, I spoke about some of the latest human rights violations by the Communist Party in China—their recent move to erode the freedoms and autonomy of Hong Kong, their efforts to silence and punish protesters who dare to speak out against the Chinese Communist Party, their ongoing ethnic cleansing campaign targeted at the Uighur people.

China continues to demonstrate a complete lack of respect for basic human rights and dignities, and I remain concerned by the growing threat they pose to the world order, including the United States of America.

Attorney General Bill Barr recently gave a speech about the challenges posed by an increasingly powerful, wealthy, and relentless China. It is a great speech, which I commend to you. It provides an impressive overview of how the Communist Party manipulates American businesses and industries, steals intellectual property, surveils and censors its own people, and seeks to exert its power and influence in the United States.

For those who are unfamiliar with the modern relationship between the United States and China and the risks and vulnerability this creates, I highly recommend reading the speech of the Attorney General. In that speech, he discusses the threats posed by the Communist Party's Made in China 2025 initiative, which seeks to achieve Chinese dominance in high-tech manufacturing. For everything from electric cars to advanced robotics, to artificial intelligence, China wants to lead global production.

While this is framed as a way to reduce the dependence on foreign technology and strengthen domestic manufacturing, these ambitions paint an alarming picture for the United States and our allies.

As the Attorney General noted, it is clear that the People's Republic of China seeks not merely to join the ranks of other advanced industrial economies but to replace them altogether.

Before any piece of technology becomes usable for its audience, it includes parts, pieces, and materials that come from, literally, all over the world. Regardless of where that final product is assembled and packaged, each of those individual pieces are the key to protecting the supply chain that creates our most valuable assets.

If the COVID-19 virus taught us anything, it has given us a clear picture of how vulnerable our unsecured supply chains are. We lean heavily on China—too heavily—for things like masks, gloves, gowns, ventilators—all the equipment for which the need was skyrocketing earlier this year.

As a result of the fact that the world was dependent on China to produce this critical equipment, hospitals reached dangerously low levels of personal protective equipment. In the meantime, China refused to disclose to the rest of the world that the virus had indeed broken out in its country so that it could, in fact, hoard the personal protective equipment they knew the rest of the world would need.

As a result of the lack of a secure supply chain, healthcare workers were using a single mask throughout an entire shift, putting both themselves and patients at risk. This has been a wake-up call—or should have been a wake-up call—on supply chain vulnerabilities and a reminder that we need to take action today to secure our supply chains for tomorrow.

One of the biggest of these vulnerabilities we are facing today is a lack of

domestic semiconductor manufacturing. These chips are everywhere in almost every product. They are the underlying technology in everything from our cell phones and towers to computers, to precision agriculture, to missile defense systems.

As you can imagine, as technologies have become more sophisticated in recent years, the demand for high-end semiconductors has skyrocketed. In fact, U.S. companies command 47 percent of the global market of these integrated circuit chips. But when it comes to manufacturing, we are falling further and further behind.

Since 2000, the United States has dropped from producing roughly a quarter of the world's semiconductors to only 12 percent, and you need only one guess as to which country stepped up to manufacture these critical devices. You guessed right. It is China.

In the same period, China has gone from manufacturing zero chips to 16 percent of the world's supply and plans on investing another \$1.4 trillion in semiconductor technologies.

America has lost ground to our global competitors, and unless we take action, it is estimated that by 2030, 83 percent of the global semiconductor manufacturing capacity will be not here but in Asia.

We need to bring those manufacturing jobs back to the United States and provide end-to-end security in our semiconductor supply chain.

Of course, that is much easier said than done. Building a new foundry, which is where these semiconductors are manufactured, is very expensive and, quite frankly, will not happen without an investment from the Federal Government. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development estimates that 21 major semiconductor firms across a number of countries receive more than \$50 billion in government support between 2014 and 2018.

Some of these countries investing in manufacturing of these technologies were South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Ireland, Germany, and, you guessed it, China. If we are going to regain lost ground in semiconductor manufacturing and secure one of our most critical supply chains, it is going to take a strategic investment, and that is exactly where the CHIPS for America Act will deliver.

Senator WARNER, the distinguished Democratic Senator from Virginia, and I have introduced legislation to restore American leadership in semiconductor manufacturing and ensure long-term national security and economic competitiveness. We worked hand in hand with our colleagues, Senator COTTON from Arkansas and Senator SCHUMER from New York, in drafting the amendment before the Senate that we will vote on this evening. It is truly a bipartisan product.

It achieves that goal by creating a Federal incentive program through the Department of Commerce to encourage

semiconductor manufacturing right here in the good old USA. In short, it would stimulate domestic advanced semiconductor manufacturing and boost both our national security and global competitiveness. It will enable us to bring manufacturing of these critical devices back onto American soil and eliminate this critical national security and economic vulnerability.

As I mentioned, these chips are literally everywhere. Many of you have them in your pockets right now or on your wrists. Semiconductors are the foundational technology for our military systems, our critical infrastructure, our telecommunications, healthcare, agriculture, and manufacturing. We want these devices to run on made-in-America semiconductors.

As we conclude our work on the National defense authorization bill, I am glad the Senate has the opportunity to vote on this legislation as an amendment. I am grateful to the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, Chairman INHOFE, and Ranking Member REED for making sure that happens. This legislation supports a critical goal of the National Defense Authorization Act and our national defense strategy, which is strategic competition with China. That is where we are right now.

It prioritizes advancements in the critical technologies that will modernize our national defense and restore our competitive edge, all while allowing us to secure our most critical supply chains.

I hope our colleagues will all join me in supporting this legislation so that we can reclaim American leadership in semiconductor manufacturing, so we can support American jobs, and so we can invest in both a strong national security and our economy.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 2244

(Purpose: To restore American leadership in semiconductor manufacturing by increasing federal incentives in order to enable advanced research and development, secure the supply chain, and ensure long-term national security and economic competitiveness.)

Madam President, I call up my amendment No. 2244 and ask that it be read.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Texas [Mr. CORNYN], for himself and others, proposes an amendment numbered 2244.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

#### REMEMBERING JOHN LEWIS

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, I rise today with deep sorrow and strong determination.

I am feeling deep sorrow over the loss of one of our Nation's great moral leaders and a dear friend of mine, Congressman John Lewis.

As anyone who had ever met John knows, he was incredibly kind. He was a man who had seen so much of our Nation's history and written so much of our Nation's history, and yet he still treated everybody with dignity and respect. I have been honored to serve alongside him in the House and to become his friend.

He was so supportive of me when I decided to run for the U.S. Senate. In fact, I will never forget how knowing that he believed in me helped give me the courage to jump into a race against an incumbent Senator.

I am grieving the loss of my friend.

I am also determined. Congressman Lewis dedicated his entire life to the fight for justice and equality. I am determined to do everything I can to do my part to ensure that his life's work continues.

John Lewis came from very humble beginnings. He was one of 10 children of Willie Mae and Eddie Lewis, who worked as sharecroppers. Making a living off the land has always been hard, but it was even harder in the 1940s in the Deep South, where racism and discrimination were as relentless as the Alabama Sun.

Faith in God was essential, and John had that faith in abundance. As a child, he wanted to be a preacher, and he certainly could have been. From reading Bible verses to the family chickens as a child to speaking alongside Dr. King at the March on Washington at just 23 years old, to his message at the 55th anniversary of Selma earlier this year, John had a preacher's ability to inspire all of us.

Like a preacher, John knew that words alone aren't enough. When words come from the pulpit on Sunday and then they show up on the street on Tuesday, that is when the change really happens. John Lewis certainly showed up over and over and over again. He sat down at lunch counters. He sat in the front of buses. He spent his 21st birthday in jail after blocking the entrance to a theater that refused to sell tickets to people who look like him.

He was arrested more than 40 times, beaten by Klansmen, and nearly killed marching across the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

He never stopped showing up and causing "good trouble." Just 6 weeks before he died, he stopped by the Black Lives Matter Plaza here in Washington, DC. It was the last time he was seen in public.

Time and again, John Lewis put his life on the line in order to protect people's fundamental rights, including the right to vote. John knew that words alone can never be enough, and we have to be willing to take action.

Late last year, the House passed the Voting Rights Advancement Act. It would restore section 5 of the Voting Rights Act that was overturned by the Supreme Court in 2013. For 228 days, this important bill has been gathering dust on Leader MCCONNELL's desk—228 days of inaction.

Senator LEAHY is reintroducing the bill in the Senate as the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act of 2020. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this important bill. It is time to pass it and get it signed into law in Congressman Lewis's honor.

At the 55th anniversary of Selma in March, John reminded us what is at stake. He said this:

We were beaten, we were tear-gassed. I thought I was going to die on this bridge. But somehow and some way, God almighty helped me here.

He added this:

I'm not going to give up. I'm not going to give in. We're going to continue to fight. . . . We must use the vote as a nonviolent instrument or tool to redeem the soul of America.

I have seen the soul of America, and that soul looks a lot like my friend, John Lewis. I urge us to take up the Voting Rights Act in John's name and to pass it as soon as possible and ensure that his legacy lives on.

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.

Mr. DURBIN. 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—H.R. 1044

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, a few steps from the Senate Chamber, at my whip's office, on the credenza behind my desk, is a framed government document. It is my mother's naturalization certificate. She was an immigrant to this country. She was brought here at the age of 2 from Lithuania. She lived long enough to see me being sworn in to the U.S. Senate. I am proud of the fact that I stand here today as the son of an immigrant. That is my story. It is my family's story. It is America's story.

I believe immigration has made America the Nation that it is today. Immigrants are an integral part of our economy, our culture, and our soul.

In the midst of this deadly coronavirus pandemic, we should never forget that 1 in 6 healthcare and social service workers—that is 3.1 million people out of 18.7 million—is an immigrant. They risk their lives every day in the midst of this pandemic for the good of this Nation. Immigrants are playing this critical role in the battle against COVID-19. Yet our broken immigration laws do not allow many of them to fulfill their dreams of finally becoming Americans.

Thousands of immigrant workers, including many health workers, are suffering because of a serious problem in our immigration system—the green card backlog. What is a green card? A green card is our immigration ticket. If you are here as a temporary worker, a green card or legal permanent resident status allows you to remain in the United States without having fear of



deportation and to be on a path toward permanent citizenship in the United States.

Green cards are critical in the lives of so many who are here on temporary and work visas. The backlog in this system puts families at risk of losing their immigration status, as they wait year after weary year to finally make it through this green card backlog, and it stops their ability, many times, to participate in the fight against COVID-19 and to work toward building our economy.

Under the current law, there are not nearly enough immigrant visas—also known as green cards—available each year. The current numbers for 140,000 EB immigrant visas were established in 1990—30 years ago. The American economy has doubled, but the number of green cards has remained the same. As a result, immigrants are stuck in a crippling backlog year after year after year. Close to 5 million future Americans are in line, waiting for these green cards. Many are working in the United States on temporary visas while many are waiting overseas and are separated from their families. Only 226,000 family green cards and 140,000 employment green cards are available each year.

The backlogs are a real hardship on these families who are caught in this immigration limbo. For example, the children in many of these families age out and face deportation. How does this happen? Well, those applying for the green cards also list their spouses and children. If they have to wait a long period of time and the children reach the age of 21, they are no longer protected by the parent's efforts to obtain the green cards, and they can be deported at any time. For many children who age out and face deportation as they reach the age of 21, it is a family disaster.

The solution to this green card backlog is eminently clear to anyone who looks at it: Increase the number of green cards. The number that might have made sense 30 years ago makes no sense today.

The senior Senator from Utah, Senator LEE, with whom I have worked on previous legislation, has introduced S. 386, known as the Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act, to address this issue. I have a basic concern with this bill, and I have told Senator LEE. S. 386 adds no additional green cards, and without additional green cards, S. 386 will not reduce the backlog or the wait.

Here is what the Congressional Research Service says about Senator LEE's legislation. To all of those following this debate, don't take my word for it; read the Congressional Research Service's study that was released on March 26, 2020, entitled the "Employment-Based Immigration Backlog." What does it write about Senator LEE's bill? It writes:

S. 386 would not reduce future backlogs compared to current law. . . . The total backlog for all three categories [of employ-

ment visas] would increase from an estimated 915,497 individuals currently to an estimated 2,195,795 individuals by FY2030. These outcomes would occur whether or not S. 386 is enacted [and here are the operative words] because the bill maintains the current limit on the number of green cards issued.

That is the bottom line. If you don't change the number of green cards and 5 million people are in the queue, waiting for 140,000 employment green cards and 226,000 family green cards, you understand the math.

Despite my concerns that S. 386 would not work as intended, I agreed to sit down with Senator LEE and work in good faith to resolve our differences. Last December, we reached an agreement on an amendment to his bill that addressed many of these concerns.

I want to be clear. This amendment was far from perfect and not what I would have written. The biggest problem is that it still does not increase the number of green cards. As a result, it would not eliminate the backlog. But it has made a substantial improvement to his original bill.

Here is how it reads:

It protects immigrants and their families who are stuck in the backlog. Immigrant workers and their immediate family members would be allowed to "early file" [a provision that Senator LEE suggested and I accepted] for their green cards. They would not receive their green cards early, but they would be able to switch jobs and travel without losing immigration status.

I thought that was fair. Early filing adds a critical protection that was not in the original Lee S. 386. It prevents the children of immigrant workers from aging out of green card eligibility so that they will not face deportation while they are waiting for green cards.

Our agreement also included a green card set-aside for immigrant workers who were stuck in the backlog overseas. The amendment would reserve 4,600 green cards on an annual basis for immigrant workers who would not be eligible for early filing because they would be outside the United States. This number is based on the approximate number of people who apply for employment green cards from overseas each year.

Finally, our agreement would crack down on the abuse of H-1B temporary work visas. I thought this was going to be an easy provision. It has turned out to be the real problem in this bill, and let me tell you why. The amendment prohibits companies from hiring additional H-1B workers if the companies' workforces have more than 50 employees and if more than 50 percent are temporary workers. This 50-50 rule is from the bipartisan H-1B reform bill that I offered with Senator GRASSLEY, Republican of Iowa. This provision was included in the comprehensive immigration reform bill, which I voted for and which passed in the Senate. Senator LEE has said, "This is a common-sense reform to root out abuse."

When most people think of the H-1B visa, they think of well-known compa-

nies—Microsoft, Google—that hire top-notch professionals at top dollar when no American is available. That is how the program was supposed to work, but the reality is different. In fact, the top recipients of H-1B visas are outsourcing companies that use loopholes in the law to exploit immigrant workers and even offshore American jobs.

In the most recent year for which data is available, 8 of the top 10 recipients of new H-1B visas were outsourcing companies. The vice president of one of them, Tata—one of the leading firms—candidly acknowledged that it uses H-1Bs to exploit immigrant workers.

He said:

Our wage per employee is 20-25 percent lesser than the U.S. wage for a similar employee. . . . The issue is that of getting workers in the U.S. on wages far lower than local wage.

It is important to understand that the vast majority of immigrant workers in the backlog in the United States is on an H-1B temporary work visa. So if we want to stop the future exploitation of immigrant workers and the displacement of American workers, we have to stop the abuse of H-1B visas.

Back in December, I asked my Democratic colleagues to support this bipartisan agreement that Senator LEE and I reached. They all agreed. I told Senator LEE that I wanted to move immediately to solve this problem. There were so many people whose lives were tied up in this debate. However, Senator LEE asked me for more time to discuss it with his colleagues. I agreed.

In March, 3 months later, Senator LEE told me he wanted to make significant changes in the agreement, and he said that without these changes he could no longer support it.

Some of the changes were made at the request of the Trump administration, which I will note is not exactly the most reliable or objective source on advice on immigration. Let me briefly explain the changes Senator LEE demanded.

The original version of Senator LEE's bill provides that no individual who had already been approved for a green card would receive the green card at a later time than they otherwise would have. This provision, known as a hold harmless clause, is a critical protection that assures immigrants who have been waiting years, patiently, in line that nothing we do on the floor will change the number of years they have to wait—perhaps improve them but not make them worse.

Now, at the request of the Trump administration, Senator LEE wants to delete this hold harmless provision which was in his original bill. That would jeopardize many people who are innocently waiting patiently for their opportunity.

Second, Senator LEE wants to delay for 3 years the effective date of the 50-50 rule to crack down on outsourcing companies.

Why on Earth would we give companies that are outsourcing American

jobs and exploiting immigrant workers a free pass for 3 more years?

Third, at the request of the Trump administration, Senator LEE wanted to make two changes that would allow early filing for people who are stuck in the green card backlog. He would delay early filing for 1 year—1 more year for children to age out; 1 more year for them to wait. Why?

That means that any children who age out in the meantime lose their chance for a green card and will be subject to deportation.

He would also require that immigrant workers could only “early file” after their green card petition had been approved for 2 years—a 2-year delay on top of a 3-year delay. Any children who had aged out during this new 2-year waiting period would not be protected and would also be subject to deportation.

Why is Senator LEE—or at least those in the Trump administration advising him—so afraid that these children might have a future in America?

When we met in March, I told Senator LEE these changes were not acceptable. It has now been 7 months since Senator LEE and I reached our original agreement and more than 4 months since we met in March. Immigrants who are stuck in the backlog and their children have waited long enough.

I am now going to ask unanimous consent on my agreement with Senator LEE from December 2019—the Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act, as amended by the Lee substitute amendment.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1044, Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; further, that the Lee amendment at the desk be agreed to, the bill, as amended, 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 Utah.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I am a little flabbergasted at this moment, when I find myself in a rare circumstance of disagreeing with literally every word uttered by my colleague, the senior Senator from Illinois. He is my friend. He and I have worked together on a number of issues—criminal justice reform, protecting the civil liberties of Americans when it comes to domestic surveillance, all kinds of things on the Judiciary Committee.

I disagree with nearly every single word, every syllable he just uttered. I find myself wondering whether we experienced alternate universes in recent months.

I have worked nearly the entire time I have been in the U.S. Senate on this issue—for years, nearly 9½ years, on

discrete pieces of legislation, trying to fix immigration. Immigration is a big issue. It is a contentious issue. It is an issue as to which, to put it mildly, there is not always bipartisan consensus. It is one of the areas that I have concluded remains open and possible for bipartisan agreement, is on taking discrete, individual problem areas within our immigration code and updating them and modernizing them.

So what we are talking here today about is a bill that I have long championed, the Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act. My sole purpose for championing that legislation—frankly, at great personal expense to myself, at great political expense—was to bring some equity to a system that unduly burdens some immigrants based on their country of origin and based, specifically, on the arbitrary factor of the population of the nation of origin of the immigrant in question.

There has been a lot of misinformation at both ends of the political spectrum, at every point in between, about this legislation. It has been attacked from the right, from the left, from everywhere else. A lot of people claim falsely that it would change the total number of green cards available. It wouldn't, as Senator DURBIN just acknowledged. That is one of the few things that he said just now with which I think I can agree.

But over the years, we have had a number of Senators objecting to this for different reasons. Every time we resolve one objection—sometimes we will resolve two objections, and then one other will pop up. Then we will resolve that one, and three others will pop up. We have been doing this for years and years, and I have worked in good faith with colleagues on both sides of the aisle in order to resolve those concerns.

Now, most recently, Senator DURBIN objected to it. Just as I have with each objector before him, I worked with Senator DURBIN last fall in order to resolve some of his concerns with the legislation.

In December, as he states, we came to an agreement. We came to an agreement on a way that we could move forward. We set some objectives, and he accurately characterized many of those objectives. What I told Senator DURBIN at the time was that I was reluctant to announce that publicly because we hadn't yet made or received a request or a response to our request for technical assistance and input from the affected agencies—most importantly, from the State Department and from USCIS.

At the time, Senator DURBIN requested that we go to the floor; that we introduce it. I, reluctantly, and perhaps against my better judgment, agreed to do that, in part based on the fact that Senator DURBIN was taking a lot of heat at the time. People were saying that he was opposed to the idea categorically, and I wanted to work with him in good faith to do it.

At the time we had that discussion—at the time the Senator and I made

that agreement—I made absolutely abundantly clear we still needed to get technical input, and we still needed to get the input of cosponsors of the legislation.

But out of consideration for the Senator and a lot of the political heat you were taking at the time, I agreed, with that understanding, to go to the floor and announce that we had reached an agreement in principle.

I have honored every single piece of that agreement in principle, and I strongly resent your suggestion to the contrary—every single piece of it. There is not one substantive piece of this as to which I have changed—not one of them, not the 50-50 rule, not the 4,600 set-aside, not the early filing.

The changes that we made were in response to the technical assistance request that we made to USCIS and a couple from the State Department. They had almost entirely to do with what was feasible, what was administratively possible to implement the legislation. After all, we don't want to enact legislation that cannot be implemented without compromising the other responsibilities that that agency has.

So after seeking this feedback, we understood that the language, as written, was, in some respects, technically not feasible for USCIS to implement as we had written it. But, here again, I told him: We inevitably will have to make some modifications based on the feasibility of this.

So I went back to Senator DURBIN, and in light of the USCIS comments and the response to our request for technical assistance from USCIS, we made some changes. I went back to Senator DURBIN. My recollection is that it was in February. You say March. I believe it was February. But regardless, I came back to you, and I told you: We are honoring the agreement. We are going to have to delay the implementation of some of it so as to make it technically feasible.

Some of these provisions were modified somewhat as to the timing of their implementation, but we honored the spirit and the letter of our agreement.

And yet, when we presented these changes to Senator DURBIN, he flatout rejected them, almost without any discussion at all and almost without any discussion about how these materially departed from the agreement we had reached in December in good faith that we announced the existence of on the Senate floor, against my better judgment, out of the goodness of my heart, given the amount of political pressure Senator DURBIN was getting on this. And he refused, at that point, to continue negotiations.

This, by the way, was after months and months of trying to get him to negotiate; months and months of trying to get him to the table that we reached, finally, in December.

So I find it astounding. If the Senator is, once again, feeling the political expediency to do so, I am happy to continue these discussions with him, but



don't come here and suggest falsely, as he just has, that I have materially departed from the agreement we reached because I did not.

Now, I hope that he is as willing as I am to allow businesses a window of time to come into compliance with the new 50-50 rule so that we don't unnecessarily burden the H1-B workers who are already here. That is what my changes do, is make it so we don't unduly burden those.

I hope the Senator is as willing as I am to extend the transition period before the per-country caps are fully lifted to allow immigrants from around the world the opportunity to ease into the process.

I hope he is willing, as I am, to tackle one major immigration problem at a time in the hope of improving the condition of immigrants in our country without insisting on poison pills.

If there is one thing we have learned about immigration reform in recent years is that if you try to reform everything at once, you will guarantee the failure of the bill. I hope that is not what you are trying to do here, but that is the effect it has when you try to add in other extraneous points.

Never, by the way, was there ever a discussion about increasing the total number of visas in this. That was never the objective. I never hinted at that. You acknowledged that in every one of our discussions.

If you are interested in these principles, as I am, we should be able to find a path forward because all of these changes—all the changes we made to our agreement—were simply made out of expediency in order to be able to ensure that the legislation could, in fact, move forward; that it was feasible to implement; that it could resolve the concerns that you expressed to me and could do so in a manner to ensure the best possible outcome.

If Senator DURBIN can agree on these changes, we can pass this legislation. We can pass it not just today, we can pass it right now, this very moment. I call on him to do so.

If the Senator feels he can work with these changes, I am happy to do that as well.

As I said in February, my door is open, and I am always willing to talk about these things with the Senator if he is willing to work with me.

So I ask that the Senator modify his request to withdraw the amendment at the desk and include my new amendment, which is at the desk, the amendment be considered and agreed to, the bill, as amended, 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. Does the Senator so modify his request?

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, reserving the right to object, let me say to Senator LEE, the changes he came back with were significant.

Removing the hold harmless provision, to me, is fundamentally unfair to

anyone who has been waiting patiently for a green card. Why would the Senator jeopardize anyone and make them wait even longer for a green card? That was one of the modifications he suggested.

The two other modifications the Senator suggested delayed protection for children that left them subject to deportation for 2 to 3 years. Why would we do that? We both agree that is a terrible outcome. That was one of his modifications as well.

As far as the 50-50 rule, listen, I believe that is what is driving this conversation. These outsourcing companies make a bundle of money, and there are people who want to keep them in business and making money, even at the expense of American workers, and I think that is wrong. I really do.

I can't believe that that is what is really going to stop us now at this point, to try to protect these outsourcing companies for 3 years before this provision affects them.

As far as what we can do here today, I think what I am going to offer next is going to be the simplest thing we can achieve and maybe more at a later date. But let us protect the children. That is the next thing I am going to offer.

Let us protect the children and make sure that as they are waiting in line, they can't age out and be deported. That is not an unreasonable request.

So I am going to refuse to agree to the modification, but I will offer protection for the children next, and I hope—let's agree on that today and continue the rest of the discussion beyond.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. LEE. Madam President, reserving the right to object, look, the hold harmless issue was taken care of with the 3- to 9-year transition. That is why we made the 3- to 9-year transition, was to take care of the hold harmless provision.

Now, if the Senator wants to negotiate the terms of that, we can talk about that right now. We can resolve that right now. But make no mistake, the Senator is fundamentally changing and altering the terms of what we agreed to, and he is accusing me of, fundamentally, materially, changing the terms of the agreement, when all I have done is what we agreed to in December.

What the Senator is suggesting here is a deviation from what is possible. I can't agree to what is not possible, to what contravenes what USCIS has said it is capable of implementing. On that basis, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I have a few minutes more to close this debate. I ask forbearance of those who are prepared for the 4 p.m. vote. I ask unanimous consent to speak for 10 additional minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. LEE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, I withdraw my objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is withdrawn.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I am sorry we were unable to reach an agreement today.

The proposal which I am about to make, called the Protect Children of Immigrant Workers Act, simply ensures that children will not age out in this process.

How many times do parents come to me with tears in their eyes saying: Don't hurt my child.

Here is our chance, as we work out all the other issues, to take care of this one provision. It would not increase the number of green cards. It does not get into the other issues we have debated. I ask the Senator to please, for the sake of these children, give them the protections, and let us continue to try and negotiate the other provisions.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of my bill, the Protect Children of Immigrant Workers Act, which is at the desk; that the bill be considered read three times and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Mr. BOOZMAN). Is there objection?

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, it should have been brought forward. We would have loved to have considered it. I haven't seen it yet. My staff saw it for the first time earlier today. I would love to have a look at it.

This is something that could have been brought up at any moment in the last six or seven months, or the last year. I would be happy to look at it now, but I can't agree to pass something that I have not seen. So, therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in the interest of the moment, I cannot offer my third amendment, but I will say this: It will be back. This is a chance to do something for the children. It is very simple. You know what it is. Let's do this.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah is recognized.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I could not agree more. We should do this. I could not agree more that we need to eliminate the outdated, outmoded Elvis Presley era immigration provision that discriminates against individuals on the basis of their country of origin, on the basis of the population of the country in which they were born.

There are reasons why immigration policy is a contentious one. There were reasons why previous efforts have

failed, and it always has to do with the fact that people tend to pile on. They get desperate. It is hard for us to reform the immigration code. When somebody suggests 1 reform, others suggest 10 more, and, before long, it chokes the horse. You can't move forward with it.

This one is focused on a very simple concept, that regardless of how many visas we issue, regardless of how many green cards we issue, there are a lot of ways to allocate the number that we have. Let's start with the number we have and figure out whatever reasons ought to influence that decision. Among them should not be the country in which you were born.

Imagine two hypothetical would-be employment-based green card recipients who are otherwise eligible. Immigrant A and B are identical in all respects—in their employment qualifications, their education, proficiency in English, and every meaningful characteristic except one. Immigrant A happens to be born in Luxembourg and immigrant B happens to have been born in India. Because India has a large population and Luxembourg has a small population, the immigrant from India is going to be discriminated against.

It is senseless and based on a bygone era in which immigration policy didn't make sense by today's standards. We ought to be able to get around that.

I agree with Mr. DURBIN that we should pass this right now. There is no reason not to.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 1729

Mr. INHOFE. I call up amendment No. 1729 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Oklahoma [Mr. INHOFE] proposes an amendment numbered 1729 to amendment No. 2301.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To increase funding for the study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention relating to perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substance contamination in drinking water)

At the end of subtitle B of title III, add the following:

**SEC. 3. INCREASE IN FUNDING FOR STUDY BY CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION RELATING TO PERFLUOROALKYL AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCE CONTAMINATION IN DRINKING WATER.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) INCREASE.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by this Act for fiscal year 2021 for Operation and Maintenance, Defense Wide for SAG 4GTN for the study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention under section 316(a)(2)(B)(ii) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 (Public Law 115–91; 131 Stat. 1350) is hereby increased by \$5,000,000.

(2) OFFSET.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by this Act for fiscal year 2021 for Operation and Maintenance, Army for

SAG 421, Servicewide Transportation is hereby reduced by \$5,000,000.

(b) INCREASE IN TRANSFER AUTHORITY.—Section 316(a)(2)(B)(ii) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 (Public Law 115–91; 131 Stat. 1350), as amended by section 315(a) of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (Public Law 115–232; 132 Stat. 1713), is amended by striking “\$10,000,000” and inserting “\$15,000,000”.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the 60-affirmative vote threshold with respect to the Shaheen amendment No. 1729 be vitiated.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. For the information of all Senators, it is my understanding that we should be able to adopt the amendment by voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 1729) was agreed to.

#### VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2244

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, 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 bill clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 96, nays 4, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 134 Leg.]

#### YEAS—96

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

#### NAYS—4

Lee  
Paul  
Shelby  
Toomey

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). On this vote, the yeas are 96, the nays are 4.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of the amendment, the amendment is agreed to.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

S. 4049

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, right now, we are in the middle of what I have referred to several times as what I consider to be the most significant bill of the year, the National Defense Authorization Act—one that you can almost be sure will pass. This will be the 60th consecutive year it has passed. That is a pretty good indication it is going to pass.

That comes with problems, however. People know that a bill is going to pass, so you get a lot of pieces of legislation that had not been able to get passed, and it may be a whole year, and it becomes a part of this bill. It is more than just the Defense authorization bill, but it is the most significant one.

Before we even came to the floor, we did something that we have been working on now—at least I know personally—for 4 years, and that is to put ourselves in a position where just in case we find ourselves where we can't get amendments—all it takes is one person to object, and there will be no amendments if this happens. We decided to go ahead and put this bill together and do it in such a way that the Members are actually drafting the bill. We have 700 Member items.

You might remember that back in January, we started talking about this, saying: If you want to have an amendment in the Defense authorization bill, even though it is not going to become effective until a year from December, you better get down there and do it because now is the time you can get that done. Well, we ended up with 700 Member items, and that was before we even got to the floor, and then more were added. We added another 140 amendments after that.

You can say that this bill was passed by you—I am talking about the Members, Democrats and Republicans—in the Chamber because these items all came out of it. We didn't do it the way it used to be done. We kind of eased into this, but it has worked very well. I commend Liz and John for the work they do in holding everyone together in making this a reality.

Where we are right now is, we have had a lot of our Members coming to the floor. My staff and I are continuing to work on the inclusion of additional amendments. If you will recall, 2 weeks ago, when we took a break for the Fourth of July, we agreed upon some legislation, some amendments that would be a part of this. They are all structured right now. We have already passed two—actually, passed four today. We have another bunch of amendments, including a managers' package. It was hotlined today, just today. We don't have the results of that yet. People may have objected to it, and I am just not aware—apparently, there have been some objections. I don't know what the count is. We will

keep trying to get as many amendments as possible. My experience is that this means we are nearing the end of the road.

I would have to say this about my partner in this effort—he has been my partner for a number of years, JACK REED, on the minority side. We have both worked hand in glove in trying to get as many amendments as possible, and we have set a record this year with either amendments or letters from Members.

I am going to do something that will make a bunch of people mad, but I don't really care. You hear so much negative stuff. I have said several times that when this President came in, up to the moment that we had the virus, we had the best economy we have had in my lifetime. All indications show that was true.

He did this in a way that was thought out, and it wasn't all a Republican idea. Back when John Kennedy was President of the United States, that is when they were expanding the Great Society. This is a quote. He said: We are going to have to have a lot more revenue to take care of the Great Society programs. The best way to increase revenue is to decrease marginal rates—marginal tax rates. And it worked. Unfortunately, he died right after that and could not see the benefits of the efforts of this great idea.

This was done again during the Bush administration. It was the first thing that was done by the Trump administration. But he did something different this time, and this is the reason that it produced much more revenue than the others had produced in years past. He said: We also need to reduce the regulations at the same time.

I am very sensitive to this because I chaired the Environment and Public Works Committee during the time the Republicans were in the minority. During the Obama administration, we had so many regulations, and that had to be changed.

Even the Chair is probably not aware that this is a regulation that was passed during the Obama administration, but it is one which said that if you are a domestic oil or gas company and you are in competition with China or somebody else, you have to give them your playbook—how you calculated your rates. That put them at a decided advantage.

When I was fortunate enough to get to know this President, prior to the time he took office, I was suggesting and he was saying: What would be a good place to start in reducing regulations?

I said: A good one would be to do away with that regulation that was passed.

I think it was only a week after he took office that we passed the first regulation. That is just one example. But then regulation after regulation after regulation—those of us who have grown up in the business world know that is what costs money. And liberals have never figured that out.

Anyway, this has happened. As a result of this, we have had really great benefits. I bring this up now because—put the Johnson family up. This is a family in Oklahoma. It is the Johnson family, Charlie Johnson. He has several brothers, and he has a son named Andrew. They are in the tree business. They find people who want to get rid of dead trees, unwanted trees, and they get rid of the trees. They are the best there are. They have been doing it now very competitively and doing it for years.

When he came to take a tree out during the 2 weeks—I am talking about less than 2 weeks ago—he said: We can do this, but I want to tell you that we are really busy now. In fact, our business is better than it has ever been in the history of our country. It is all because of what has happened with the President.

These are his words. He said: I know everybody hates the President. The media hates the President. But we love him, and let me tell you why. We are now doing better than we have ever done before. Our business is better than it ever has been.

He has a brother who specialized—when you are in the tree business, you specialize. If you look, you can't see the bucket, but the son is in the bucket. Another one is the guy who has developed a way of grinding stumps. Almost anyone can take a tree out, but to grind a stump, you have to have very expensive equipment.

A few days after I had seen these people, I got a visit by a guy named Brad Johnson. Brad is the one who specializes in stump grinding. He said: Our business is so good now—and they all credit the President with this—our business is so good that I decided I would go off on my own and buy a stump grinder. It is very, very expensive. No one ever thought it would be, but it is. Now I think he owns the only stump grinder in Delaware County in Oklahoma.

He said: I want you to do something. I know you will be going back to Washington. I am going to give you this, and I want you to give this to the President of the United States.

It says: "Brad's stump grinding." I am going to give this to the President of the United States and take his picture.

I only say all this to mention that good things are happening around here. Things had not been this good, except for the virus problem. No one had any control over that in terms of the President. When I stop and think about how good our economy was right before the virus hit, I think: If we had an average economy, where would we be today?

Anyway, that was the good news, and I was excited to tell them I was going to share this with a few other people.

Earlier today, I mentioned I would be coming down to the floor to talk about our troop basing in Germany. Those of us on the committee know we have been working on this for a long time.

Secretary of Defense Mark Esper was putting something together where he was going around and reevaluating our troop and asset distribution around the world. I disagree with some of the things he came up with.

Africa, for example, is an area where they are starting to have some very serious problems. If anything, it is going to end up taking more activity. Along with other Members, I will be receiving detailed briefings from the Department of Defense on plans to carry out the President's decision in the coming days and weeks.

Based on my conversation with Secretary Esper and the briefings I have received so far, the goal is to optimize our force posture in Europe, in part by moving some of our forces along NATO's eastern flank. It has always been in Western Europe. Going forward, as I think about the plan to realign our posture in Europe, I am thinking about the three guiding principles that I call the "3 Fs."

First is the forward presence—maintaining a strong presence in Europe that gives our troops what they need to deter Russia and, if necessary, to fight and win and defeat Russia. I like the idea of rotational forces in southeast Europe.

The second one is force protection. Really, force projection is more accurate. It is keeping strong, established bases for staging, air capacity, and more. For example, at Ramstein Air Force Base, we have invested quite a lot of money in that. It is going to work for any future use in readjustments that take place in Europe. What I am saying is a lot of things are going on in Europe that are going to be enhanced, as opposed to being transferred.

The third is families. This is kind of interesting. Take our Air Force in Tinker Air Force Base. There is a young lady who is the wife of a worker at Tinker Air Force Base. Her name is Janna Driver. This was 2 years ago. She told me that we have a problem at Tinker. When we privatized our housing, it worked out fine for a long period of time, but then it seemed to be that people got greedy in the housing. They talked about deplorable conditions in housing. I thought: My gosh, this is my home State of Oklahoma. Thank goodness it is just one military establishment.

Then I found out it was in all five of our military establishments. Then I found out it wasn't just in Oklahoma. It was around the world.

This is something that is very significant because when you look at the problems that they have with so many people—and I will be addressing this in a little more detail in a minute because of the amendment that will be before us tomorrow—the problem is that we do something different than other countries do. I have heard this over and over, and I am sure the Presiding Officer has also heard.

We talk about all the money we spend on defense in the United States,

and yet we spend more money than Russia and China put together. They are our strategic oppositions out there.

That is true because the most expensive part of the military is the people. People don't understand that. We want housing, and we want to make sure there are schools for the kids. We want to make sure all these things are going on. That is what costs the money. That is the reason.

If you are in a communist country, they give you a gun and say: Go out and kill people—and the problem is solved.

We are concerned about our families. They make a lot of sacrifices. Every few years, our families have to move, change locations, and the kids have to change schools. They move to another area. Then, if the spouse has a job, they have to try to get a job.

By the way, in this bill we have some help. We get relief from some of the regulations that normally take a long period of time, so that spouses are able to get a job at a new location. That is something a lot of people are not aware of that is in this great bill.

They have to change hometowns, change houses, change doctors, and the kids change schools. Of course, they live with the reality that their servicemember is putting their life on the line to defend our country. We have to be grateful and never take that sacrifice for granted. That is why we should be trying to ease the burden of our military families in everything we do.

When it comes to this plan we are talking about, which is changing the forces around, primarily in Europe, that is what you hear more about. It is important that we do it right and we do it right away. It is going to take some time to do, but we need to get started.

The reason I am really excited about this program is that this is not something new. If I have good memories, you might remember back when Gen. Jim Jones was the Supreme Allied Commander of NATO at that time. I had gone to him and said: You know, one thing we really need to be doing is to start readjusting where we have our troops.

At that time, we had a lot of troops, as we do today, in Germany and a lot of training was taking place there. But because of the environmental movement in Germany, they were giving us restrictions, saying you can only train with live ordnance maybe every 4 days a week and not past sunset and all of that.

We were thinking that we were really doing a great thing for Germany by stationing all our people over there because of all the money they spend and all that. Yet they are not really trying to help us.

We did some surveying. This is kind of funny because John Bonsell, the staff director of my committee on the Republican side, and I went over to the different countries—Bulgaria, Poland, and other different countries in that

part of the world, in the eastern part of Europe. We said: Are you willing to help us out? They said: Not only can you use your ordnances as much as you want, but at the same time, we will help billet you and all that.

The program was good and strongly supported by Gen. Jim Jones at that time.

We did all we could to put that together, and we were visiting our allies about it. We already had Ukraine, Bulgaria and Romania lined up. They call that the lily pad approach to basic. It was something that would work. There is no reason not to do that.

Unfortunately, President Bush decided he didn't want to do it. We were unsuccessful getting that done. I have been fighting about that with other Presidents since that time. I have not gotten any of them to look at that and the great values that would make for us.

Anyway, that is something that is taking place right now. We don't know, but we are going to get a Member briefing tomorrow that is going to give us a lot of details on what is going to happen and what the President is proposing in that area of Europe.

I want to speak about one of the amendments that is next up. Senator SANDERS' amendment would cut defense spending by 10 percent. I happen to be very close with Senator SANDERS, but we have areas where we disagree with each other. This is one of those areas. I looked at this, and I thought: He has an amendment that would cut defense spending by 10 percent.

First of all, this amendment would break the bipartisan budget agreement of 2019 that we passed. Congress passed this agreement last December with a bipartisan support, and the President signed it into law. The fiscal year 2021 NDAA, or National Defense Authorization Act—the bill that we are working on right now, as we speak—fulfills this agreement and provides a total of \$740.5 billion for our national defense. I would have preferred to see a higher number at that time, but it is now the law of the land.

Even though the amount is lower than ideal, having budgetary certainty is critical. It is what our military leaders ask for every time they come before the committee that I chair and before Senator SHELBY's committee. They need on-time, predictable, and stable funding to do their job. And their jobs are only getting harder right now. Our adversaries are investing in their militaries and building new and advanced weapons systems and acting more aggressively than we have ever seen before in any of our adversaries.

The national defense strategy describes this. This is a document, by the way, that we adhered to. This is put together by six Republicans and six Democrats. It is one of these things where it was bipartisan. Everyone agreed on it. People who put this together were experts, and we have followed it to the letter ever since that time.

This is the National Defense Strategy Commission report, which is a bipartisan document written by six Democrats and six Republicans. They tell us that we need to increase our defense budget each year. We already know we need to be increasing our budget just to stay competitive. We have already agreed to this total.

Now, one of the criticisms I hear of our defense budget is that we pay much more than other countries. As I have already explained, we are the ones who have to pay to take care of our people—our troops, their families, their kids. Here is the problem with that argument: Other countries don't have to do that.

Beyond the troops, we also take care of the families and all that, while others don't do that.

This is significant. China and Russia are rapidly modernizing their militaries. When I say this in public and I talk to groups, I don't have credibility. It doesn't sound like it is possible.

I don't say this critically of the Obama administration. The Obama administration, by his own admission, had other priorities. One of them wasn't a strong military. During the last 5 years—and I am talking about 2010 to 2015, during those last 5 years of using the President's budget, he decreased the amount of money for our military by 25 percent. In 5 years, he decreased it by 25 percent. At the same time, Russia increased theirs by 34 percent, and China increased theirs by 83 percent.

Stop and think about that. Our adversaries were out there building and getting ahead of us in different areas. It is important to note that the bill exempts military pay and the defense health program, which means this amendment is actually the equivalent to a 14-percent cut. I am talking about cuts in airplanes and equipment and assets that are military assets. This means the nuclear modernization and key research that help us stay competitive with Russia. This is something that arguably cannot be done.

It means cuts to military construction, including schools for military kids, programs that support military families, and programs that support our troops' morale and welfare. It is just plain wrong.

Our military combat commanders tell me and the committee that they need on-time, predictable, and stable funding to do their jobs. This amendment would actually cut that by 14 percent in the areas that concern people. In the strongest possible terms, I urge a "no" vote on this amendment.

All this is going to happen while we continue to face the burden that a pandemic has placed on our military. Our military is a key part of the whole-of-government response to the virus.

Our competitors haven't given us a free pass while this is all happening. In fact, we have seen China and Russia take advantage of this situation, and

they have been acting more aggressively. At the same time, the Department of Defense is working to protect our troops and the civilian workforce from the virus, and this needs to continue to be a top priority. Everyone understands that. In fact, rather than cutting the defense budget, we actually need to support the military COVID response with additional funding.

Take this one example. The defense industrial companies have done a great job to ensure that their suppliers—primarily thousands of small businesses—stay open and keep employees paid.

In the CARES Act, we gave the DOD the authority and the tools to reimburse these companies to keep the defense workforce strong, but the DOD needs money to use these tools. If we don't help these companies, defense weapons programs and maintenance will suffer more cost overruns, and the defense industrial base will lose experienced and trained workers, which means schedule delays will be more likely. These will be primarily the small companies. These will not be the giants that are out there.

This would be a good investment for our national defense and a good investment for the American taxpayer. Now is simply not the time to be cutting our defense budget when we should be doing more. I know the author of the bill who would cut defense spending by 10 percent is very sincere and really believes in his bill, but it is not the time to do it.

I hope people understand that we are now in a position wherein there are actually different resources that are in Russia and in China that are better than ours. Hypersonic weapons are a good example. Hypersonic weapons are kind of state-of-the-art in both offense and defense, and they are ahead of us. They are ahead of us right now.

With this budget we are going to be passing, I think that we are going to be making broad steps to recapture those areas in which we had previously been the leaders but now are not the leaders any longer.

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.

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

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

#### STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT AND FAFSA SIMPLIFICATION ACT

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, in March, Congress and the President said to 43 million student loan borrowers that, because of COVID-19, your student loan payments will be deferred until October 1—no monthly payments for 6 months for student loan borrowers.

October 1 is just around the corner. So what do we say to those 43 million student loan borrowers today? I propose that we say this:

No. 1, if there is no income, there is no monthly payment. In other words, if you have a student loan, your monthly payment is zero—if you don't have any income for whatever reason.

No. 2, when you do begin earning income, your monthly payment will never be more than 10 percent of your income after you deduct the necessities of life, such as the cost of housing—rent or mortgage—and food.

No. 3, the same generous loan forgiveness that exists today for student loan borrowers will still exist. After 20 years of payments for undergraduate loans and 25 years of payments for graduate loans, if you still have an outstanding loan balance, your loan will be forgiven, and that will include all of the months your payment was zero because you didn't have any income.

These same policies—no income, no monthly payment—will be offered to students who take out new loans in addition to these policies being offered to existing student loan borrowers.

Under my proposal, new and existing student loan borrowers will be offered one other option for paying back their loans. This option would be like a 10-year mortgage: Make equal principal and interest monthly payments over 10 years until the loan is paid off. Some borrowers may prefer this option because it could mean paying less interest. Every borrower would be eligible to switch from one option—the income-based payment—to the other option.

The remaining good news in this proposal is that the concurrent bewildering system of nine different ways of paying off your student loan would be thrown in the trash heap and replaced by these two straightforward proposals: No. 1, the income-based repayment option, and No. 2, the 10-year, mortgage-like option. These changes will give some peace of mind to the 43 million current borrowers and the tens of millions of Americans who are expected to sign up for new student loans over the next 10 years.

These ideas are neither new nor my ideas. They have been recommended by higher education experts numerous times when having testified before the Senate Education Committee during the past 6 years while we have considered reauthorizing the Higher Education Act. The concepts have also been suggested by many Senators on both sides of the aisle, Democrats and Republicans, including Senators KING, BURR, RUBIO, MERKLEY, PORTMAN, WARNER, WICKER, MANCHIN, SHAHEEN, and COLLINS. All of them have suggested these concepts.

While we are simplifying the student loan repayment system, I propose that we also finish the job of reducing the Federal loan application of grants and loans—which everyone calls FAFSA—from about 108 questions to 20 to 33 questions. This is an enterprise that a number of us, both Democrats and Republicans, have been working on for years, including Senators MURRAY, BENNET, JONES, KING, COLLINS, WHITE-

HOUSE, GARDNER, CORNYN, STABENOW, TILLIS, and HASSAN. So, you see, there is an unusual amount of bipartisan support for both of these ideas.

Experts before the Senate Education Committee have testified that simplifying the FAFSA in this way would remove obstacles and would make it easier for more low-income Americans to attend college and would increase the number of Pell grants each year.

Last fall, Congress and the President took the first step in simplifying the FAFSA by allowing the Internal Revenue Service to answer 22 questions that applicants for grants and loans had already answered on their tax returns.

There are 20 million American families who struggle to fill out this essential but unnecessarily complex form each year who will be grateful to Congress if we will complete the job of simplifying the Federal aid application system at the same time we will make it simpler for 43 million Americans to pay back their student loans.

There is one more piece of good news in this proposal, and this news is for the American taxpayer. Simplifying the student loan repayment system, as well as the system for applying for student grants and loans, will save taxpayers about \$10 billion over 10 years, according to the Congressional Budget Office. This is because the simpler system will also provide more certainty in the repayment of loans.

On October 1, 43 million Americans with student loans are going to have to restart making their monthly student loan repayments. Congress deferred student loan payments in March, as I said earlier, when the CARES Act—the COVID-19 relief bill—was signed into law, but that deferment expires on September 30. There has never been a more important time to end the maddening complexity of student loan repayment and make it simpler for Americans to pay off their student loans.

Let me briefly review how the Student Loan Repayment and FAFSA Simplification Act will work. It offers student loan borrowers just two options: the standard 10-year repayment plan, just like a mortgage, or the income-based plan that I have described. For borrowers with no income, if they choose an income-based repayment plan, their monthly payments would be zero. If borrowers in an income-based repayment plan earn income, the borrowers' monthly payments would be based on the amounts of those incomes.

Let's take an example. The average student loan for a 4-year college graduate today is about \$30,000. So someone with \$30,000 in student loan debt who makes \$52,000 each year would be expected to pay 10 percent of that borrower's discretionary income, which is about \$274 per month. So if you have a \$30,000 loan debt and you make \$52,000 a year, your monthly payment is going to be about \$274 under this plan. Borrowers under the plan would never have to pay more than 10 percent of

their income that is not needed for necessities.

If we don't pass this legislation before October 1, here is what will happen: Because of the confusing repayment system we have today, too many borrowers will end up in an unaffordable, standard 10-year repayment, mortgage-type plan and will have payments so high that they will find themselves in default. When we are through with this pandemic—when the economy improves and when these borrowers are ready to tackle their debts—they will find that their student loan debts may have soared out of control.

I and Senator MURRAY of Washington State, who is the ranking Democrat on our committee, have been working on reauthorizing the Higher Education Act for nearly 6 years. We have held 19 hearings over that time. We are making good progress. In fact, I was hopeful we could mark up the bill this spring, but between impeachment and COVID, that just didn't work out.

In January, I saw a consensus emerging. It was for simpler, effective regulations to make it easier for students to pay for college and to pay back their loans. We discussed the complexity of the Federal financial aid system. We heard from many experts. At one roundtable, the president of the University of Tennessee told me it took him months to figure out how to pay off his daughter's Federal student loan—this was from a college president—even with the money in his hand.

So this is not a new problem, and the solution I am proposing has been discussed by our committee and many Senators outside the committee for nearly 6 years. It will help both those who face loan payments starting on October 1 and the millions of students who will be graduating with student debt.

When it comes time to start repaying those loans, students will have to navigate through a complicated number of options today—nine in total. I don't want to go through them in detail because it would stagger the imagination. For example, there is the 10-year standard repayment. There is the graduated standard repayment. There are two extended repayment options. There are five different programs based on your income: the income-contingent repayment, the original income-based repayment, the revised income-based repayment, the pay-as-you-earn plan, and the revised pay-as-you-earn repayment. Those are all of the different ways you can pay off your student loans, which has confused the 43 million borrowers who have them.

Now, if I lost you wandering through that, you can get a sense of how those 43 million borrowers must feel.

The Student Loan Repayment and FAFSA Simplification Act ends that confusion. It will reduce those nine repayment plans down to two—one standard payment, like a mortgage, and one payment based on income.

In addition, the bill reduces the complexity for borrowers who wish to participate in the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program, which creates an incentive for borrowers to pursue jobs in public service.

Today, not all of the nine current repayment plans are eligible for public loan forgiveness, and borrowers can have a hard time figuring out which plan to choose. Under this legislation, a borrower who wants loan forgiveness can't choose the wrong plan because there are only two and either applies, whether you choose the standard 10-year repayment plan or the income-based repayment plan.

By the end of September, in less than 3 months, 43 million student loan borrowers will be required by law to begin monthly payments again on their loans. Many of these borrowers won't be able to afford these payments.

I propose that we say to those borrowers: We have a better option for you. No income, no monthly payment—whether because of COVID-19 or for any other reason. In other words, if you have a student loan, you may defer your monthly payment if you do not have any income. When you do begin earning income, your monthly payment will never be more than 10 percent of your income after you deduct the necessities of life, such as the cost of housing—rent or mortgage—and food.

Now is the time to reduce the complexity of student loan debt and finish the job of simplifying the FAFSA and at the same time save the taxpayers money.

I yield the floor.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS TO S. 4220

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MCSALLY). The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators CASEY, UDALL, SHAHEEN, Kaine, SMITH, SCHUMER, FEINSTEIN, CARDIN, WHITEHOUSE, LEAHY, TESTER, SCHATZ, CORTEZ MASTO, WARNER, and MENENDEZ be added as cosponsors to S. 4220, the Preventing Authoritarian Policing Tactics on America's Streets Act.

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

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS TO AMENDMENT NO.

2457 TO S. 4049

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators STABENOW, CASEY, UDALL, SHAHEEN, Kaine, SMITH, SCHUMER, FEINSTEIN, CARDIN, WHITEHOUSE, LEAHY, TESTER, SCHATZ, CORTEZ MASTO, WARNER, and MENENDEZ be added as cosponsors to Senate amendment 2457 to reform the Department of Defense to limit the use of Federal law enforcement officers for crowd control to S. 4049, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—AMENDMENT NO. 2457

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, when, in the course of time, America

should find a President in the Oval Office who chooses to bring the police tactics of dictators around the world to the streets of America, then that is the moment it is incumbent on every Member of this Chamber, who has sworn an oath to our Constitution, who is determined to practice civil rights of America, to stand up and say: Not now, not here, not ever, and we put an end to it.

That is why I brought forth this amendment—the Stop Secret Policing in America amendment—and ask for it to be debated on this bill, because it involves police powers, military powers of the United States of America, and it is happening right now.

What am I talking about? Well, let me give you some sense of what we have seen on the streets of America in the past few days—as I note here, authoritarian governments, not democratic republics, and unmarked authorities at the protests. Well, this is what we saw: Customs and Border Protection in military uniform, in combat camouflage, in the streets, no marking what the organization is and no unique identifier.

The head of the CBP said: No, no. They had markings and unique identifiers. But here they are. And to make it even worse, they look a whole lot like protesters from the far right who come to make trouble, dressed in camouflage, and they actually have things that look more like badges than the actual representatives of Customs and Border Protection.

What else did we see? Here is a Navy veteran standing in the street, who said he came down to the protest to simply say: Are you honoring your oath to the Constitution?

Here we have CBP officers beating him. Here is one baton. Here is another. They broke one of his bones, while this man here is pepper-sprayed in the face—a peaceful protester standing, being attacked by unmarked, war-prepared, dressed-in-camouflage forces deployed by the President of the United States.

What else happened? Well, they decided to not consult with the city and not consult with the State and not think carefully about what weapons they were carrying and how they use them, so impact munitions.

This protestor right here in the silhouette is standing, and he is holding what appears to be a sign above his head, or maybe it is a radio. Moments later in the video that shows this, he is shot down. You see him collapse on the street. A peaceful protestor, standing, making his case as guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States of America, and he is shot square between the eyes by President Trump's forces deployed without permission and no coordination with the local representatives or the Governor of the State of Oregon. This young man, struck down, shot in the head, in the hospital in critical condition. He is doing better now, thankfully.

Then these forces deploy away from the Federal buildings and go into the



streets and start snatching protestors and throwing them into unmarked vans—vans like this one right here.

One young man said: I was terrified. He said: I didn't know who these people were. They wouldn't identify themselves. There is a video of people saying: Who are you all? And they won't answer. They grab him. He thinks they might be those folks from the right-wing protestors who come in camouflage. He may be being kidnapped. He doesn't know. Even after he is thrown into a jail cell, it is not explained why they grabbed him off the street.

Secret police—unmarked—patrolling streets, throwing people into unmarked vehicles, and sweeping them away—that is what you get from authoritarian dictators, not a country, a republic where we have a constitution and we have rights.

That is what is going on here. That is what has to stop here in America.

Some of the headlines: Federal law enforcement use unmarked vehicles to grab protestors off the streets. A Navy vet asked Federal officers in Portland to remember their oaths; they broke his hand.

That is the Navy vet in the white sweatshirt who is being attacked, with two officers batoning him while another sprays him with pepper spray for standing in a peaceful protest.

Federal officers deployed in Portland didn't have proper training, DHS says. Well, they shouldn't have been there.

We need a bill to stop secret police in America. We need a bill done as an amendment on this bill right now, on this bill we are considering about military force, a bill that says that your organization has to be identified on a uniform; that says there has to be a unique identifier so you don't think you can just get away with anything and abuse people and never be held accountable; a bill that says that if you are there on a mission to defend monuments or buildings, you defend monuments or buildings; you don't go out through the streets—if you want to become crowd control in the streets and take over a city, you have to have the permission of the mayor or the permission of the Governor; and that the Federal Government, in transparency, in our democracy, has to tell us all, as participants, as this we-the-people government, that they are disclosing how many people, from where, are being sent to what city.

This isn't just some small issue. This is the President saying yesterday—after bragging about what he has done in Portland to violate the rights of people—saying he is looking at New York and Chicago and Philadelphia and Detroit and Baltimore and Oakland—deploying these secret police tactics all over this country.

All I do right now is stand here and say: I want a vote on ending these secret police practices in America. I say to every Republican colleague and every Democratic colleague: I want a vote, and I am here in full partnership

with my colleague from Oregon who shares this indignation, this outrage over the violation of the Constitution, who will share those thoughts, and then we will, together, ask to have a vote.

What is this Chamber if it cannot take on and hold a debate and a discussion over authoritarian, secret policing strategies brought to the streets of America?

My colleague.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I thank my colleague this afternoon because he speaks today with passion and facts and clearly outlines what our constituents told us at home this past week, and I thank him for this partnership that Oregonians are seeing again on the floor of this great Senate.

Madam President, Donald Trump has deployed a paramilitary squad to our hometown in Portland. His secret police are terrorizing my friends and neighbors. People across the country need to understand that yesterday Donald Trump announced to America that your friends and your neighbors are next.

There are unmarked vans full of armed men in military gear snatching people off the streets. They take people away. They hold them. They interrogate them without justification and ultimately without charges.

Over the weekend, a very close personal friend, Sharon Meieran, an ER doctor and a mom, was protesting peacefully and was tear-gassed without provocation. She felt like she was seeing democracy pass right in front of her eyes.

Millions of Americans have seen the video of that local Navy veteran who was repeatedly beaten and pepper-sprayed and left with broken bones. People ask me: RON, what was his offense?

I am sure Senator MERKLEY gets exactly the same question: What did he do wrong?

He was standing motionless, hands by his side, speaking up for the liberty that he served to protect. People are stunned that this is happening on the streets of our hometowns. We have seen reports of agents ripping a mask off of a protester who is obeying commands, with hands in the air, only to pepper spray the protester's face. The secret police even threw flash bombs and tear gas at a "wall of moms." Here they are. Here they are in our hometown. You can see them, over the last couple of days: Moms and dads and now their kids are going to peacefully sing songs and protest for justice.

Oregonians are just standing up for what is right. Only the cowards of the Trump administration would try to convince America that these peaceful protesters, the "wall of moms," represent some kind of anarchist threat. It is nonsense.

I condemn violence by anybody—always—and I spent much of last week working for nonviolent solutions in my hometown and fresh approaches to re-

duce tensions on our streets. The fact is, the protests in Portland have been overwhelmingly peaceful. Crime in Portland and across Oregon was down before Donald Trump sent in his secret police.

Donald Trump did not send that paramilitary force to keep people safe. Donald Trump is doing it to create an image of chaos, to air it on far-right television, scare the country, turn them into campaign ads, but these are the people Senator MERKLEY and I are honored to represent. These are the people Donald Trump's paramilitary forces attacked and terrorized. He calls it a "great success." As we have indicated, he has a game plan to basically make Portland an experiment and to do it in other cities, especially, by his accounts, those with Democratic leadership and voters.

This kind of abusive exercise of power by a rogue President would have horrified our Founding Fathers. They wrote a wonderful Constitution to prevent exactly this behavior because democracy cannot survive in a nation that tolerates it. These tactics were used throughout the world a century ago to turn elected politicians into tyrants.

The President's first and most important job is to keep Americans safe. Residents of Portland are less safe and less secure since Donald Trump deployed the secret police to our streets. The same thing—and I say this to colleagues wherever you are from—the same things will happen in your communities where Donald Trump will send his paramilitary forces.

Frankly, when Donald Trump always talks about targeting Portland and other cities, I say to Senator MERKLEY, I wish he would target the coronavirus. I wish he would put a fraction of his passion for going after our cities into dealing with the coronavirus because while Donald Trump's secret police are out terrorizing Portland's moms and doctors and other peaceful protesters, we face a raging pandemic and record-high unemployment.

I want us to renew the supercharged unemployment benefits that people are going to lose this weekend. Donald Trump isn't doing any of that work. What he is doing is making Americans in cities less safe and not dealing with the coronavirus on top of it. He is attempting to cut resources for COVID testing and treatment. His administration is covering up data that the public health professionals rely on to do their job. He does it repeatedly, anxious to cut the lifelines of 30 million jobless Americans, sending them tumbling off an economic cliff right in the middle of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

He is not doing his job. He is ignoring his responsibilities. Both on the streets of Portland and in Washington, DC, when he walks away from dealing with the coronavirus, he isn't keeping Americans safe. He is putting them in more danger.

As I have said repeatedly, Donald Trump ought to attack the coronavirus pandemic and not the people of Portland. So that is why, very shortly, Senator MERKLEY and I will offer an amendment that will block Donald Trump from using these paramilitary forces in Portland or other cities where they are unwanted.

What we are seeing in our hometowns is these paramilitary squads brutally unleashed against peaceful protesters—moms and veterans, doctors and activists. All they want to do is speak out for liberty and justice.

What Donald Trump is now doing is incompatible with the fundamental principles of democracy laid out by our Founders and expanded throughout the generations. I believe what Donald Trump is doing, in light of his statement yesterday, to America, that he is going to go after one city after another, is totally out of control. The Senate cannot allow this to happen. That is why Senator MERKLEY and I are calling for the Senate to act.

I thank my friend and colleague for his leadership. He has made it clear that 100 percent of Oregon's U.S. Senators are going to keep pushing and fighting until this changes.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. The support is felt strongly throughout Oregon to stop the secret police in America, but it is a coast-to-coast feeling, and I yield to my colleague from Connecticut to speak for the other side of the country.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I want to thank from my heart our two colleagues from Oregon who are standing up and championing not just their hometowns, not just the constituents of their State, but they are speaking for every hometown and every citizen of our country from every party, from every corner of our great Nation.

Let me just say very simply, these pictures of heavily armed, unidentified individuals in camouflage fatigues driving unmarked vehicles, grabbing individuals and throwing them into their car, would be something we would associate with the worst nightmare of a two-bit dictatorship. Here we see it in the United States of America.

I spent almost my whole career in law enforcement before I came to this body, and I am embarrassed and ashamed that this kind of sadistic, cruel, hate-filled coup was done in the name of law enforcement. What we witnessed in Oregon was in no way law enforcement. It was a violation of the law and of individual rights, and it is coming to your hometown as well. The President has specifically named Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Baltimore, and Oakland. It will come to Hartford and my hometown Stanford and other cities in Connecticut. Have no fear, if the President will go to these abusive

extremes on the other coast of America, he will come to the east coast as well.

Let me just state the requirements of this amendment: identification of each officer, limiting Federal agents to their proper role in protecting Federal property, transparency and deployment of these officers, identification of them, and accountability are basic tenets of law enforcement.

We should not have to address this issue on the floor of the U.S. Senate, and we are doing it only because the President has broken the norms. He has disrespected the law. Every Senator in this body, regardless of party, should be standing up and speaking out in support of this amendment. I thank my colleague for speaking our truth to power.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. On behalf of two Oregon Senators and my colleague from Connecticut and the 34 other Senators who are standing up for democracy, rights, and against secret police, I ask unanimous consent to call up amendment No. 2457, an amendment to limit Federal law enforcement officers for crowd control; that there be 2 hours for debate, equally divided between opponents and proponents; that upon disposition of the Tester amendment, the Senate vote in relation to the amendment, with no amendments in order prior to the vote and with all other provisions under the previous order remaining in effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. INHOFE. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Well, first of all, I don't know how long I have sat and listened to this—a long time—probably not as long as it seems. "Secret police, sadistic, cruel." I am beginning to come to the conclusion that they are not going to be supporting Donald Trump for reelection.

I rise to object to my colleagues' request for unanimous consent. This body has worked together to carefully consider each and every one of the 739 amendments filed on the NDAA. It never happened before. We adopted those amendments that have broad-based, bipartisan support. The majority and minority have worked together to determine which amendments would be brought up for a vote. Senator MERKLEY's request for a UC circumvents that process.

Further, this morning, the Senate adopted my commonsense amendment that will ensure that law enforcement has the right equipment and the right training. Senator MERKLEY's amendment flies in the face of that responsible approach.

His amendment would hamstring Federal and civilian law enforcement and our military, even when operating

in a title 32 status under the control of the State government. This would hinder their ability to keep our communities safe. For these reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. I say to my colleague from Oklahoma, that if these secret police were released on the streets of Tulsa, you would be down here defending your constituents, but you have a responsibility to defend all constituents across the country, the rights of all citizens in the United States of America.

I am not asking you to support my bill. I am not asking you to make the argument for it. I am asking for the simple courtesy that this Chamber do the job it is vested with under the Constitution, which is to take up serious issues that arise in America, hold a dialogue about them on this floor, and take a vote to show the American people where we stand in the hopes to solve the problem.

I have no doubt that I wouldn't get 100 votes. You raise some interesting points. You note that my request to debate a very serious issue in America circumvents process. I can state that for 200 years this Chamber believed it was here to address serious issues, and they didn't raise process issues to keep serious issues from being debated. You didn't need unanimous consent. Just a few decades ago, I was here watching this Chamber working the Tax Reform Act and watching each amendment completed, and as soon as it was done, the next Senator asked for the recognition of the Chair. In fact, normally there would be about 10 Senators saying—and it was always "Mr. President." Now it is often "Madam President." But they were getting attention because the next person who spoke got the next amendment.

This system has taken away the fundamental responsibility of Senators to be able to introduce important issues in America, have them debated, and voted on. My colleague says: Well, we have a new process where the majority leader and the ranking member of the committee consult and decide what should be considered. That concentration of power is totally at odds with the vision of this Chamber developed by our Founders.

Mr. INHOFE. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. MERKLEY. I will not yield until I am done. That was one of his arguments; that it circumvents process.

The second is, he said it takes equipment away and training away, and yet my bill doesn't deal with equipment or training. So, clearly, that argument doesn't stand.

Then he noted title 32 status under the control of the Governor, but this bill says an expanded role of crowd control occurs under the permission of the Governor, not without it.

So this is why these issues should be debated on this floor. I call on all my

colleagues to return the Senate to a place where serious and important issues regarding the rights of Americans can be considered and not shoved aside because one Member doesn't want them addressed. That is a challenge for this Chamber, but we have a bigger challenge, which is how do we defend the rights of our citizens if we can't put an amendment on the floor and have it debated and voted on?

So, to all my colleagues who believe the secret police have no role in America; that unidentified officers, delegated without proper training, without consultation, without coordination, who are beating up peaceful protesters have no place in America; that they are being thrown into a van, and you don't even know what that van is or who those people are has no place in America; that the tactics of Duterte in the Philippines and Putin in Russia and Erdogan in Turkey have no place in America; who believe in a "we the people" government; those colleagues I thank, and let's bring this issue to the floor and have the debate and have the vote.

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

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

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS—AMENDMENT NO. 2457

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators ROSEN and HASSAN be added as cosponsors to Senate amendment No. 2457, to reform Department of Defense to limit the use of Federal law enforcement officers for crowd control, and to S. 4049, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021.

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

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. My apologies to my colleague from Wyoming. I think we are not in quorum call.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. You are not.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS—S. 4220

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators ROSEN and HASSAN be added as cosponsors to S. 4220, the Preventing Authoritarian Policing Tactics on America's Streets Act.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor today to discuss our economic recovery. Let me be clear. Our economy will not shut down again. Government will not forcibly close businesses for a second time.

Yes, America is coming back from the coronavirus. The prepandemic economy was strong; it was healthy; and it was growing. Every part of the economy had record job growth. Unemployment was at a 50-year low. Shutting down the economy slowed the spread of the virus, but it did not eliminate it. It saved lives, and it bought us time.

Reopening was never conditioned on having a vaccine, nor was it conditioned on eliminating the virus entirely. Businesses, large and small, are today continuing to reopen, and they are opening in a safe, scientific, and sensible way. I saw it all across Wyoming the last 2 weeks as I traveled the State.

In Casper and Cheyenne, Main Street is busy again. Mom-and-pop businesses are bringing back workers. Cody was full of activity over the Fourth of July. Yellowstone is welcoming thousands of visitors, and people are heading to all of the activities in Thermopolis. The rodeos have been a huge success. Wyoming is literally back in the saddle again.

Businesses all over the country are bouncing back and bringing back workers. In June, the economy added nearly 5 million jobs. It shattered all forecasts. This was by far the largest ever monthly jobs gain in U.S. history. More than 7 million people have been hired back in the last 2 months. May and June job creation set records.

The recent rise in new COVID-19 cases, to me, as a doctor, is troubling. Still, it is no reason to stop reopening, as long as we open in a responsible way.

Now, people have made great sacrifices. We all did what the experts said we needed to do. Now Americans are ready to get back to business and get back to work. People don't want another shutdown, and you know that. You have seen that in your own home State, and they most assuredly don't want laws coming out of Congress that make it easier to stay closed and harder to reopen. As a doctor, I know we can flatten the virus curve without flattening or flatlining the economy. People can resume normal life and stay healthy.

The key, of course, is for all of us to do our part and take the proper precautions, and we know what they are: Social distancing, good hygiene, and, of course, wearing masks. As a doctor, I know masks help lower the infection spread, especially indoors when we can't socially distance. Together, we can manage the risk, and, as a nation, we can move forward.

Millions of Americans are returning to work and doing it safely. Congress's rapid response to the pandemic back in March set this recovery in motion. Medical workers now have better tools for virus testing, for treating the disease, and for developing a vaccine. Americans are doing everything they can to protect the most vulnerable. We are taking care of seniors and people

with chronic medical conditions. The country is conducting a record number of tests. More than 45 million people have been tested. I think the number is now close to 50 million. There are well over 700,000 tests each day.

Widespread testing allows us to pinpoint virus hotspots so we are able to surge aid where it is most needed. Hospitals now have more effective COVID-19 treatments. I talked to doctors around the State of Wyoming and around the country. We are seeing incredible progress in vaccine trials. A successful vaccine is vital to beating the virus.

Now, it is key to the economic comeback as well. Scientists hope to have a vaccine ready in record time—actually, before the end of this calendar year. All this progress has given businesses the confidence to reopen and to put people back to work. A solid majority of Americans now will tell you that they see their finances as being stable.

Consumer spending the last 2 months has been way up. Manufacturing has started to take off again. Simply put, the pro-health, pro-jobs policies that this Senate has put in place, those policies are working. We are only getting started.

Now Congress must build on the CARES Act successes. The next bill, the one that we are working on now, cannot be a bloated bailout bonanza. We will not pass Speaker PELOSI's bill from Handout Heaven. No, the next aid measure must be focused. It must be focused on healthcare and safety and schools and jobs.

Here is my three-part test for the next pandemic package. Will it save lives? Will it save lives with testing, treatment, and vaccines? I am very optimistic of what I have seen about the research with the new vaccine. Will it protect our medical community and small businesses and schools from frivolous lawsuits? There are 3,500 that have already been filed across the country by sue-and-settle lawyers focused on coronavirus. And will it get people back to work and children back to school safely?

We must help schools reopen in a safe way. Children need to get back to school. It is essential for their well-being. That is why the Nation's pediatricians—the American Academy of Pediatrics—is urging schools to reopen, and they say with the children physically present—with the children physically present. Remote learning, we know, for very young people, has not worked. Children cannot lose another year of school. To lose a full year of school for these young people would be devastating. It would be a learning loss, as well as a loss of the ability to learn and making it that much harder to pick up further down the line. And if kids aren't in school, many parents can't go back to work. Most people with their jobs cannot work from home.

So I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, my Democratic colleagues, to join us, to join our effort to

reopen our economy and reopen our schools.

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

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

S. 4049

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam President, I am proud to talk about the National Defense Authorization Act, which has come to this body with a strong bipartisan vote from the Armed Services Committee where I serve. I am proud to have helped to craft this legislation, and I am proud to be voting for some of the amendments that have been permitted votes on the floor.

One that has not been permitted relates to the Insurrection Act, a 213-year-old law that has been invoked at various points in our history to protect civil rights as it was during the era of desegregation, but President Trump has threatened to use this slavery-era law to silence calls for justice from Americans protesting centuries of racist oppression.

In effect, he has threatened to invert the Insurrection Act to deprive Americans of their First Amendment right. So I introduced a bill called the CIVIL Act that would preserve Presidential accountability to Congress whenever the Insurrection Act is invoked. It would require the President to consult with Congress prior to invoking the act and provide certification to Congress to justify the use of this authority. It has other provisions.

It was voted down in the markup of the Armed Services Committee, but I sought a vote on the floor. Apparently, it will not happen.

If the President uses force against Americans at home, Congress should demand at least the same check that applied to his use of force against adversaries abroad.

I offered this act as an amendment, and I am grateful to all my Democratic colleagues on the committee for supporting it. I am also grateful to the House of Representatives, which, just yesterday, passed an NDAA amendment to its bill modifying the CIVIL Act, which I introduced. It is called the Curtailing Insurrection Act Violations of Individuals' Liberties. I would like to thank my colleagues on the House side who supported this amendment, particularly Congresswoman ESCOBAR, who led the charge in the House Armed Services Committee and on the House floor.

I urge our colleagues, whether it is now in the course of considering the NDAA or at some point in the future, to hold the President, any President—we are talking not only about this President but any President—accountable when he uses military force

against Americans. When the American military and troops of our country are used against Americans, there ought to be at least the same accountability as when American troops are used abroad, with the same kind of checks—maybe not identical, but the same kinds of checks—because the President using troops against our own citizens denies, potentially, fundamental freedoms, and the need for accountability is even more urgent. Our military should defend liberties, not endanger them, misdirected by a misguided President.

Despite my disappointment in the Senate's lack of action to curtail the President's unaccountable use and abuse of military power, I am proud of a number of provisions that I also authored in this bill that invest in our most valuable military asset, our servicemembers and their families.

I am grateful to all of the military spouses and advocates from across the country who shared their challenges with me and my office. Their stories, their voice, and their faces made an immensely impactful difference. We used their experience to craft these overdue policies.

I want to say to those families—to the spouses and loved ones—that they serve as much as the men and women they support in uniform.

The NDAA includes important provisions that I championed to hold commanders accountable to military families, make childcare more affordable, expand support for military moms, and prevent mental health discrimination. These measures are profoundly important.

Provisions I authored with Senator KAINE will make childcare more affordable by authorizing hardship waivers, requiring fee reductions for families with more than one child. And the NDAA will support those military moms by extending TRICARE to include other kinds of services.

The Connecticut military industrial base will benefit from the increased expenditure and the robust investment in two Virginia-class submarines. My priority during the negotiations on the conference committee will be to advance this cause.

These provisions for expanding our production of submarines and other military platforms must also focus on our supply base, on the workforce that keeps us safe, and on men and women who comprise, indeed, the most talented workforce, using and building unmatched military technology to keep our countries secure.

We should keep in mind the families of our military and continue fighting for even more provisions that enable them to continue their great work, but these military platforms assure that our troops will never have a fair fight—that they will always be superior, no matter what the terrain or arena or the fight.

I am pleased that the NDAA makes robust investments in Connecticut's industrial base. I will make as my top

priority during negotiations of the conference committee to restore full funding for two submarines, even beyond the commitment in this NDAA, to a second Virginia-class submarine in this budget authorization.

I was pleased, again, to see action by the House, which provides for two fully funded Virginia-class submarines in the House Armed Services Committee version of the NDAA.

In addition to fully funding the first Columbia-class submarine—a historic milestone for this program—the Senate version added an additional \$175 million for Columbia-class supplier development. The heroes in this story are not only the big contractors. They are the supply chains—not only the companies with hundreds of employees but the components makers and the parts manufacturers that may make tiny pieces of the submarine by comparison to its massive length. They are all heroes of our defense industrial production.

People are the foundation of the submarine industrial base, and this bill authorizes an additional \$20 million in workforce development funding. I will seek to expand the supplier development program, which provides the kind of support that the supply chain needs.

We must ensure that the final bill preserves not only the necessary levels of funding for the Virginia-class and the Columbia-class submarines but also for continued growth of our fifth generation fighter fleet. It is a key component of our national defense. The Senate version of the NDAA authorizes the growth of the F-35 fleet by 93 aircraft, including 14 aircraft above the President's budget request.

I remain a staunch advocate of the CH-53K program. I was happy to see the House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee fund nine CH-53K helicopters. I am going to work to ensure that the final NDAA also authorizes nine helicopters.

I want to congratulate and thank Sikorsky, Pratt & Whitney, Raytheon Technologies, and, again, the many suppliers throughout Connecticut that contribute to an aerospace program second to none in the world.

Finally, let me talk a little bit about the Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act of 2020. Later this week, we will vote on an amendment to the NDAA based on a bicameral Fair Care for Veterans Act of 2020.

In March, I, along with Senator TESTER and 30 Senate colleagues, introduced this legislation to require the VA to provide benefits for veterans suffering from bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, Parkinsonism, and hypertension.

The National Academy recognizes that these illnesses have an association with herbicide exposure. It reached that conclusion in 2016. Since then, I have been fighting, along with many of my colleagues, to get the VA to include these four conditions as presumptive conditions linked to Agent Orange,

only to have this administration's officials block us at every turn.

Despite the scientific proof—the incontrovertible science that these conditions are linked to Agent Orange—and despite more than 83,000 veterans who suffer from these conditions, the Trump administration's VA resisted and refused to acknowledge the connection.

I look forward to voting to add bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and Parkinsonism to the list of Agent Orange presumptives. One condition in our bill, hypertension, was not included in this NDAA amendment, but I am committed to adding it during conference. It is supported by the science as a condition linked to Agent Orange.

The Trump administration says it doesn't want to spend the money to cover the four conditions in this bill, but when we send people to war, we make a commitment. We make a commitment, and we accept an obligation to treat them, no matter what the cost, no matter what the cause of their service-related injuries are when the science and the facts support it. Facts are stubborn things, as many have said. To the veterans in Connecticut and nationwide, I will never stop fighting to get good healthcare for our veterans. I know this issue is bipartisan in its support.

I look forward to voting in favor of the fiscal year 2021 NDAA, but I also think our colleagues must recognize that military spending alone does not guarantee our national security. These weapons platforms and the hardware that we produce does not constitute, alone, our national defense. It is the quality of our people, whether they are in the supply chain or the defense establishment or our troops on the ground or in the air or at sea. To recruit and train the best possible military, we need to have a strong non-military infrastructure. Education, healthcare, housing—our national defense includes those essential components.

So I believe that we must scrutinize this budget with a view to reducing any expenditures that are unnecessary.

I will state as a matter of principle that when we vote on this NDAA, I will be supportive of amendments that might potentially achieve more equity and effectiveness in the way we make commitments in support of our national defense. We must interpret as broadly as is necessary how that defense must be supported.

It is not alone the money in this NDAA; it is also what we commit to racial justice in this country; the quality of our policing and our education, which should not depend on a young person's ZIP Code; the quality of our healthcare, which right now has racial disparities that are inexcusable; housing that often results from redlining; and protections in the workplace, which could be achieved by a fairer, more effective use of OSHA.

The quality of our society and our projection of power abroad depend on

our quality of life and the quality of services that we provide on education, healthcare, housing, and all of the other infrastructure, including transportation. We need to consider those factors and do what is necessary to assure that our warfighters and our military never have a fair fight, that they always predominate on the battlefield. We must protect our veterans to whom we make the commitment that we will always have their backs when they come home.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 643.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The clerk will report the nomination. The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of William Scott Hardy, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of William Scott Hardy, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

Mitch McConnell, Chuck Grassley, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Michael B. Enzi, Tim Scott, Marco Rubio, Lamar Alexander, James E. Risch, David Perdue, Bill Cassidy, Pat Roberts, John Cornyn, Lindsey Graham, Thom Tillis, Deb Fischer, Mike Crapo, Kevin Cramer.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

#### COMMANDER JOHN SCOTT HANNON VETERANS MENTAL HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I am here this evening to discuss a tragic issue that is affecting way too many Americans across the country. This tragedy is mental health and suicide. A majority of Americans are encountering an unprecedented amount of stress due to COVID-19, and resources previously used to help individuals cope are even more limited. What is more concerning is that compounding

stressors and depleted resources increase the likelihood of public health disparities like the one I am discussing today. If there ever were a time to invest in mental health, it is now.

In a recent article from the Journal of the American Medical Association, researchers discussed several risk factors that put our Nation collectively at a higher risk for suicide. These risk factors include economic stress, decreased access to community and religious support systems, lack of access to adequate mental health and suicide prevention services, and social isolation. This has unfortunately caused a severe lack of personal and social connection, which we know to be a protective factor against suicide.

This evening I want to specifically highlight veterans as they face unique risk factors for suicide, in addition to the increased stress around COVID-19. Research illustrates that veterans have a higher rate of suicide and certain mental health conditions than their civilian peers. We know there is not one single explanation or reason for suicide, and there is no one single treatment or prevention strategy.

While post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injuries are prominent among veterans and are known as an invisible wound of war, we now realize other conditions, such as depression, anxiety, and substance use disorder, also contribute to suicide among veterans and all Americans.

Our veterans are fighting new battles, and the stress caused by COVID-19 has only exacerbated these issues. Just recently, two veterans from different generations, who lived on different coasts and fought in different wars decades apart, died by suicide. One was a 74-year-old veteran who died on the campus of a VA facility in San Diego, and the other was a former Green Beret in Washington, DC. They are two of the 20 veterans who are lost each day to suicide—a number we know as far too great.

The Army recently lost a respected soldier known as "Captain America." Master Sergeant Marckesano fought in Afghanistan, and according to news reports, 30 soldiers from his former unit have died by suicide since their 2009 deployment. Until the end, Master Sergeant Marckesano was encouraging members of his old unit to reach out and talk if they found themselves struggling, telling them "Don't let the valley win." Even soldiers who try to be strong for others find themselves in a circumstance where they don't see another option, and they lose their battle.

Another veteran I want to highlight today who fought a battle with his mental health was Commander John Scott Hannon. Commander Hannon's DD-214 illustrates that he was a decorated Navy SEAL, but he was much more than his service history and the wounds he bore as a result. His family and friends remember him as a passionate mental health advocate for veterans with a gentle heart and a fierce