

American couples who are pleading to give these international children a forever family here in our great country.

It seems that OCI's priorities are out of step with their statutory mandate. Also, they are out of step with the values of this country and basic morality. We need to change the policy of the State Department in this regard, I say to my colleagues.

I call on my colleagues on the Foreign Relations Committee to hold an oversight hearing to review the State Department's role in intercountry adoption, to examine the allegations of bias against intercountry adoption, and to hear from accrediting agencies and other stakeholders about their experiences in working with the Department of State and its accrediting entity. I think such a hearing would be revealing, and I think the results would be troubling to Members of the Congress.

I also call on the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations to investigate allegations raised against the U.S. accrediting entity in the State Department's Office of Children's Issues.

It is time, actually, to transition the U.S. central authority from the Department of State to a more receptive, more compassionate, and more understanding home, such as the Department of Health and Human Services. This would allow experienced child welfare professionals to oversee intercountry adoptions.

We have a great Secretary of State. I have known Mike Pompeo for years. I think he has got all he can preside over, and I don't for a minute think that the Secretary of State understands what this small entity in his State Department is doing. I think he must have no idea that this is going on, but I think the solution is to move this function from the State Department.

I would call on the Secretary of State to put a hold on planned changes down in this little agency populated by unelected bureaucrats who are hostile to adoption. I think we should put a hold on planned changes in the accreditation compliance system until there has been a full review of OCI's bias against adoption. The competence of their staff needs to be investigated, and we need to look, we need to give an open assessment, shining the light of day on the impact that this small group of bureaucrats is having on something that I think most Americans support.

The American people believe in adoption. They believe in giving orphans anywhere in the world an opportunity to have a forever family. They believe in giving couples here in the United States the opportunity to provide a home for these children who are less fortunate than most of us have been, most of us within the sound of my voice have been. I think the American people believe in a change in this inexplicably anti-American and anti-family policy.

Today, I am on the floor of the U.S. Senate to shine a light on this tragedy,

on this outrage. I ask my colleagues to remember the teaching of the Psalmist: "Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute."

I think Americans believe in the sentiments of the Psalmist in that regard. I think we are ready to heed the plight of the fatherless. Let's not neglect our duty in correcting the situation we find ourselves in and, once again, becoming the country that provides welcoming, loving outreach to children to be part of a forever American family.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

UIGHUR INTERVENTION AND GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN UNIFIED RESPONSE ACT OF 2019

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. What is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the pending business. The bill clerk read the following:

House message to accompany S. 178, a bill to condemn gross human rights violations of ethnic Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang, and calling for an end to arbitrary detention, torture, and harassment of these communities inside and outside China.

Pending:

McConnell motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the bill, with McConnell Amendment No. 2499, in the nature of a substitute.

AMENDMENT NO. 2499 WITHDRAWN

Mr. MCCONNELL. I withdraw the motion to concur in the House amendment with amendment No. 2499.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

The amendment is withdrawn.

MOTION TO CONCUR WITH AMENDMENT NO. 2652

Mr. MCCONNELL. I move to concur in the House amendment with amendment No. 2652.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. McConnell] moves to concur in the House amendment to the bill, S. 178, with an amendment numbered 2652.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask that the reading be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows: (Purpose: In the nature of a substitute) (The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for the motion to concur with amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill 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 motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 178, a bill to condemn gross human rights violations of ethnic Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang, and calling for an end to arbitrary detention, torture, and harassment of these communities inside and outside China, with a further amendment No. 2652.

Mitch McConnell, John Barrasso, Shelley Moore Capito, Marco Rubio, Lamar Alexander, Mike Crapo, Roy Blunt, James M. Inhofe, Kevin Cramer, Richard C. Shelby, Martha McSally, Pat Roberts, Tim Scott, James Lankford, Dan Sullivan, Todd Young, John Cornyn.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. I move to proceed to executive session.

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

The Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Brett H. Ludwig, of Wisconsin, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Wisconsin.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

TEXAS

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, each year, during the month of August, I look forward to traveling across my State—my very big State—to spend time with my constituents. It is the best way to learn firsthand how the laws and programs we enact here are working and to receive the feedback on legislation being considered by the Congress in the future and what I can do to better help the folks back home.

A typical State work period involves dozens of face-to-face events from every corner of my State, covering all ages, professions, and walks of life. Last August, I spent time talking with my constituents about everything from the Debbie Smith Act and GI benefits for student veterans to Project Safe Neighborhoods grants and the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement.

As we all know, 2020 has been anything but typical, and this August was no exception. These big, in-person events have been replaced with virtual ones, with face-to-face meetings, which now involve wearing masks, social distancing, and a heavy dose of hand sanitizer. Instead of the broad range of policies we might normally discuss, almost every one of them centered on the impact of COVID-19. No big surprise there.

I have heard from mayors, teachers, food bank employees, healthcare workers, restaurant owners, energy workers,

and countless others about how the resources that we have been providing them have helped them through this pandemic. From the Rio Grande Valley to Amarillo—opposite ends of our State—from Tyler to Orange in the eastern part of the State and all points in between, I masked up and met with Texans who are working overtime to keep their communities safe and to provide for their families. All the while, I continue to hold virtual conversations and telephone townhalls to hear from my constituents and share information about what we are doing to be helpful to them.

These conversations, as I said a moment ago, always help me better understand the effectiveness of the legislation we passed and provide valuable feedback about what is needed in the next coronavirus relief bill.

With the school year now officially underway in most of Texas, additional support for our students and teachers is one of my top priorities. I have had the chance to speak with K–12 students and teachers in Odessa, Lubbock, and Canyon, and college students and administrators in Angelo State University in San Angelo, as well as Texas Tech University and Texas Tech Health Science Center in Amarillo. Some joined us socially distanced on campus and others connected virtually.

I was able to hear from both students and teachers about this unprecedented school year and the challenges—the extra challenges—brought on by COVID–19. Whether in person, online, or some combination of the two, education looks a lot different this year, and we need to provide schools with the funding to keep kids in the classrooms safe and those at home on track for a great education.

Congress has already passed \$30 billion in emergency relief for education, including more than \$2.6 billion for Texas. This funding has helped our school districts, colleges, and universities prepare for the fall, but, to be honest, more is needed.

For those learning in person, additional funding can cover cleaning services and equipment to prevent children from catching and spreading the virus. For those learning virtually, it could provide additional hardware and internet hotspots so they can do their studies online.

I visited one high school in Ector County—that is Odessa, TX—where they are using a blended or hybrid in-person and online instruction model. Ector County ISD began this year with online instruction for students who have internet access at home and in-person instruction for those who did not. Of the roughly 33,000 students in the district, about 4,200 were in the classroom on the first day. And I can assure you, it is not the only school district in Texas whose students have difficulty accessing the technology needed to learn from home.

More than 2 million Texas households don't have reliable internet ac-

cess, and it is leaving our students on the wrong side of the digital divide. Internet access is no longer a luxury or just a convenience; it has become a necessity, and we need to do more to ensure that students across Texas and across the Nation have access to reliable broadband.

The CARES Act, which we passed in March, provides some relief on this front. It gave libraries \$50 million in grants for digital connection. The demand for these funds was much higher than was available, and it became obvious we need to do more to help those who are on the wrong side of the digital divide.

The Senator from West Virginia, Mr. MANCHIN, and I teamed up to include and introduce the ACCESS the Internet Act, which will provide funding to both the Department of Education and libraries to make reliable internet a reality.

In addition to supporting virtual learning, this would also make access to telehealth more available to families. This has really been one of the most surprising positive developments out of this pandemic, and that is actually greater access to healthcare through telehealth, both physical and Mental Health Services online.

Our bill includes funding for healthcare providers, including the Department of Veterans Affairs, to get more patients connected so they can utilize these telehealth services. As we make a push for progress on the next relief bill, I will continue fighting for resources for our students and teachers, and that includes reliable access to the internet.

Despite this August work period looking much different from years prior, I was still able to connect with tens of thousands of Texans virtually and over the phone and safely meet many of them in person. As I traveled, I was able to see how schools, our healthcare facilities, our food banks, local governments, and more have been able to use the Federal coronavirus funding provided for in the CARES Act. The feedback and insight I received was invaluable to my work in the Senate, and it is more important than ever as we continue negotiations on the next coronavirus relief bill.

This is going to be a busy month in the Senate. We need to pass legislation to bolster our response to this virus, support our students and teachers, help those in need of financial assistance, and ensure that our healthcare response remains robust.

We are just 3 weeks away from the end of the fiscal year, including a government shutdown unless we can reach an agreement on a funding bill. Complicating matters even further, we are at the peak of hurricane season, which may not seem like as big a deal in DC, but I guarantee, we have our eyes on these tropical storms in the Gulf of Mexico that could well end up onshore. Hurricane Hanna, for example, struck South Texas in July and hit our farm-

ers and producers hard, as well as flooding out many, many homes and displacing families. A couple of weeks ago, Hurricane Laura tore through the Gulf of Mexico.

Though the brunt of Laura hit other neighbors in Louisiana, for which we are very sorry, we are very glad that it did little damage in Southeast Texas, but it still did some significant damage. I was able to join the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Senator CRUZ for a visit to Orange to survey the damage and speak with local officials about the impact of the storm. I am committed to providing my constituents in Texas with the resources needed to recover from whatever this hurricane season may bring. I will be keeping a close eye on the weather forecast as we move through what has already been an active hurricane season.

We have a lot of work to do in the next few weeks. Though we weren't able to make progress on a coronavirus bill in July, I was on almost virtually daily conference calls with the White House and Secretary Mnuchin talking about the way forward. I am more optimistic today than I have been to this point that we will, ultimately, reach an agreement. I hope my colleagues have also heard from their constituents about how important relief is and that we can come together at such a critical point in our fight against COVID–19.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, in the 3 weeks since the Senate last met, America eclipsed 6 million confirmed cases of COVID–19. Nearly 190,000 Americans have died, and those totals climb by tragic amounts each day. Too many businesses remain closed, schools begin the year under a dark cloud of uncertainty, and our economy faces the greatest crisis since the Great Depression.

The United States is 11.5 million jobs short of where we were at the start of February, and the number of jobs that have been permanently lost is rising at an alarming rate. All of this reflects a tragic reality: President Trump has led the worst response to COVID–19 of any nation on Earth. It is what it is.

The economic pain of the pandemic was mitigated by our action in March when Democrats insisted on a robust stimulus bill that became the CARES Act. One of our policies included in that bill, enhanced unemployment benefits, has kept nearly 12 million Americans from poverty. Those benefits have