

of bipartisan work, with input from all of our veteran service organizations, dozens of Senators and Members of the House of Representatives, our partners at the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the leadership of the former Senate and House VA Committee chairmen, Senator Isakson and Congressman ROE.

Among its many provisions, this legislation invests in the education and employment of veterans to make certain they have the tools necessary to achieve success after service through expanded opportunities to use their earned benefits for longer periods of time and more opportunities for job training.

This bill will also give the VA the tools necessary to serve veterans at risk of homelessness in a more meaningful way during the pandemic and require the VA to provide greater oversight and support to our State veterans' homes.

It also includes provisions from the Deborah Sampson Act, a landmark bill that makes clear women who serve their country in the Armed Forces must have a VA that is as effective for them as it is for the men who also have served.

As I mentioned, this bill is named after two public servants. Johnny Isakson was my predecessor as chairman, and I have worked hard to follow his example of bipartisanship in working with our VA Committee ranking member, Senator JON TESTER. Legislation like this bill is the result of many months of work by members of our staff, stemming from a desire from both sides of the aisle to better serve our Nation's veterans. The important relationships that exist between Senators, our House colleagues, and our staff members result in a bipartisan solution like the one that passed the House today and that passed the Senate just a few days before.

I would also like to thank Dr. PHIL ROE. I served with him in the House of Representatives. He is the current House Veterans' Affairs Committee ranking member and its former chairman. I thank him for his partnership and his friendship as we worked together to serve veterans, since we both served on that committee in the House together.

The VA is making positive, measurable changes to better serve our veterans, and Congressman ROE and Senator Isakson deserve credit not only for being a big part of that change but also for being an example for the rest of us as to how we can work across the aisle and across the Capitol to improve the lives of our country's veterans and all of our fellow citizens.

I would also like to recognize Congressman ROE's counterpart, House VA Committee Chairman TAKANO, for seeing this bill to completion in the House of Representatives today.

I would like to thank my counterpart in the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, Ranking Member JON TESTER, the Senator from Montana, for his hard

work this past year in helping to lead our committee's efforts to do the right thing for our Nation's veterans. This bill is a testament to his dedication to serving our veterans and to his staff's tireless work on veterans' behalf.

One more thank-you certainly rests with our SVAC members for providing so many legislative solutions to issues that we have heard from the VA, from our VSOs and from veterans in each of our home States. I know that making certain our veterans continue to receive care and benefits was foremost in their minds during this pandemic, and I would like to thank Senators BOOZMAN, CASSIDY, ROUNDS, TILLIS, SULLIVAN, BLACKBURN, CRAMER, LOEFFLER, and each of our Democratic colleagues on the committee for their contribution to this landmark legislation.

Our veteran service organizations often speak for veterans who cannot speak for themselves, and they help Members of this body understand the issues and concerns that veterans may be facing across the country in addition to our own home States. I thank all of the VSOs that have worked on this bill, for many years in many cases, meeting with me and with our committee staff, explaining issues and working closely with us to make certain we find the right solutions for our Nation's veterans. I hope each VSO—veteran service organization—and its members will benefit from this legislation following the President's signature. I hope they will benefit for decades to come.

Finally, I want to thank our team at the Senate VA Committee for everything they have put into this legislation.

Thank you to Senator TESTER's staff for all of your thoughtful work drafting the language to help address real issues that impact real veterans.

Thank you to my VA staff, who have put in the work conducting oversight and responding to casework so we can understand the needs of veterans in Kansas and across the country and make meaningful, lasting changes so they may experience the American dream that they once fought so hard to secure for each of us.

Thank you to Chelsey Ladd, Victoria Lee, Scott Nulty, Kevin Ryan, Thomas Wilson, Michele Payne, Barry Walker, Pauline Schmitt, Thomas Coleman, Asher Allman, Jake Vance, Mark Crowley, Brian Newbold, Lindsay Dearing, Emily Blair, Kelsey Baron, Tiffanii Woolfolk, and David Shearman.

Finally, I want to recognize my staff director, Caroline Canfield, who is ending her service with my office and with the Senate at the end of this month. She has served as a tremendous asset. She is a tremendous asset and a force multiplier as my military legislative assistant, as my lead appropriations staffer, and now as my VA Committee staff director.

Our Nation's veterans and our military members are better off because of

the work she has done throughout her career and because of her tenacious "never take no for an answer" approach to doing all things right.

Caroline, you will be missed, but you are always part of the team. You deserve our gratitude for what you have accomplished on behalf of our Nation's military men and women and on behalf of our veterans.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: Executive Calendar Nos. 867 and 868.

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

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The bill clerk read the nominations of Anna Maria Ruzinski, of Wisconsin, to be United States Marshal for the Eastern District of Wisconsin for the term of four years; and Gregory Scott Tabor, of Arkansas, to be United States Marshal for the Western District of Arkansas for the term of four years.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Ruzinski and Tabor nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged and the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: PN2398 and PN2063.

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

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The bill clerk read the nominations of Irving Bailey, of Florida, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the United States International Development Finance Corporation for a term of three years (New Position); and Deven J. Parekh, of New York, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the United States International Development Finance Corporation for a term of three years (New Position).

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate

vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The question is, will the Senate advise and consent to the Bailey and Parekh nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO JAN BARAN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today I want to extend congratulations and best wishes to a friend, a skilled attorney in the areas of campaign finance and election law, and a devoted defender of the First Amendment.

After more than 35 years, Jan Witold Baran is retiring from the law firm Wiley Rein LLP at the end of the month. Throughout his distinguished career, Jan has successfully represented thousands of clients, including me. He has put his brilliance to work defending all Americans' rights to participate in our democracy and express themselves through voluntary contributions to the candidates of their choice, so that a few elite gatekeepers cannot control the public discourse in our country.

When you consider Jan's background, it is no surprise he is committed to preserving freedom. Jan was born in postwar Europe to a Flemish mother and Polish Catholic father. Before Jan was born, his father had survived 2½ years in concentration camps including Auschwitz, before he was liberated by American troops at Dachau. Jan's father was incarcerated because during his tenure as mayor of a small town in Poland, he refused to turn in his rifle to the Gestapo. Clearly a stubborn dedication to freedom under law is in Jan's bloodline.

Next year will mark the 70th anniversary of the Baran family's immigration to America. I am sure his parents would be extremely proud of what their son has accomplished. A decorated scholar from Vanderbilt Law School; general counsel for the National Republican Congressional Committee; a trailblazing attorney at the FEC; general counsel to the 1988 campaign of President George H. W. Bush; counsel to the Republican National Committee.

President Bush appointed him to the Commission on Federal Ethics Law Reform and as Ambassador and Chairman of the U.S. Delegation to the World Administrative Radio Conference.

Jan Baran has been an integral part of legal teams that have defended Americans' political speech rights before the U.S. Supreme Court. He was part of my team when I challenged the constitutionality of the campaign finance law known as McCain-Feingold. From *McConnell v. FEC* to *Citizens United* and beyond, Jan was in the middle of these important battles. Through these episodes and many more, I personally have witnessed and appreciated Jan's candor, sharp legal mind, and strategic thinking.

Washington can be a transient place, but Mr. Baran has stayed in the fray for more than 40 years and given his best every day to uphold free speech and defend the Republic. I am not sure if the people of that small town in Poland know that the son of their wartime mayor's son built such a distinguished career in just one generation. His talent, perseverance, and commitment to his country are a credit to where Jan came from and the life he has led along the way. I extend my warm wishes to him and his wife Kathryn, their four children, sons-in-law, and grandchildren.

MOZAMBIQUE

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise to call attention to the rapidly burgeoning Islamist insurgency in northern Mozambique, which is dragging that country into ever-increasing violence and chaos. In the past decade, Mozambique has taken steps to resolve a decades-long civil war and while peace remains elusive, with longstanding support from the United States, there has been progress. This progress, when coupled with the 2010 discovery of enormous natural gas reserves in the remote northern province of Cabo Delgado, could have changed the development course of the country. But a new conflict has emerged in Mozambique that threatens all of the potential gains for the citizens of the province and the entire country.

The origins of this extremist insurgency share traits with many others globally: a marginalized community's grievance against corrupt and distant rulers, fueled and brutally exploited by radical Islamist ideologues, has allowed extremism to take root and gain traction, while the innocent majority of the local population bears the cost. The extremists have proclaimed allegiance to ISIS and have rapidly developed increasingly sophisticated military capabilities; Mozambique's poorly trained security forces have proven unable to vanquish the group. It is an insurgency on the advance. It has seized seizing entire towns and now controls considerable territory.

The insurgents, who have attracted foreign fighters and recently launched

attacks into neighboring Tanzania, have used horrific acts of terror—including systematic use of arson, murder, often including beheadings, and kidnapping—to force compliance with their aims. Their acts have effectively displaced more than 500,000 people in Cabo Delgado, creating a severe humanitarian crisis. In 1 week in November alone, more than 10,000 people fled to the port city of Pemba, many in rickety, unsafe boats. A significant of these internally displaced persons now languish in crowded, unsanitary conditions.

What can be done to solve this crisis? And what should be the role of the United States, which today appears to be retreating from Africa? This year has perhaps taught us more than any in recent memory that stability and security around the world can directly impact the stability and security of the United States. We have a sustained interest in helping to support innocent, suffering people and promoting stability.

The security aspect of the threat requires a security solution. However, the Mozambican security forces have demonstrated that they cannot effectively respond to this threat without assistance. It is clear that they lack proper training and equipment, and a substantial body of reporting has established that elements of these forces have frequently committed serious human rights abuses, as well as engaged in petty corruption targeting the local impoverished population. The Mozambican Government must take steps to ensure that state security forces are not only effective, but that they also engage in such a manner that earns the trust of the population they are charged with protecting.

The good news is that the international community has begun to respond. The U.S.'s counterterrorism coordinator recently visited Maputo to offer our assistance to the government. European countries have also pledged to assist with building Mozambique's security capacities. Any such counterterrorism support must include rigorous human rights training, as well as improvements in civil-military relations and effective intelligence-gathering. The government should also be pressed to reduce its reliance on local militias, who have even less training and accountability than government troops.

The humanitarian crisis also demands immediate action. Of the half million people who have been displaced, 41 percent are children. The provinces of northern Mozambique that host most of these newly displaced people are among the poorest in one of the world's least-developed countries and have little capacity to assist those affected by the crisis. In total, more than 1.3 million people in northern Mozambique are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance and protection, according to the U.N. The international community must step up and fully fund