

Aviation Safety, the military had more than 6,000 noncombat aviation accidents since 2013, destroying 157 aircraft, at a cost of \$9.41 billion. Even worse was the human cost. There are 198 souls that have been lost in these tragic accidents, affecting hundreds more spouses, children, family, and friends.

When asked why these causes occurred, servicemembers pointed to inadequate training programs, risky maintenance practices, and spotty funding, among other reasons. Alabama is home to Fort Rucker, where every Army helicopter pilot comes to get their training. When I visited the folks at Fort Rucker, they told me about the very real need for increased flight training hours for our pilots, which requires more investment and prioritization in the defense budget.

This last week, two pilots were injured in a helicopter crash at Fort Rucker during flight training. I am sure General Francis and the U.S. Army safety center will do a thorough investigation and provide feedback on the improvements needed to ensure that this does not happen again. The safety of our flight program must be a top priority. We must listen to our men and women in uniform and invest in the proper training and safety measures that will prevent these crashes.

Alabama stands ready to continue to build our military so we can maintain our status as a preeminent fighting force in the world. We have got hundreds of contractors and more than 200,000 employed in the defense sector across the State of Alabama. These topnotch men and women support our military installations from shipbuilders in Mobile to Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, and many places in between. As Winston Churchill said, "Give us the tools, and we will finish the job."

We are willing and able, but those tools require sustained funding from the Federal Government. Telling our forces to fight a war with outdated tools is like giving a football team some leather helmets and decades-old poorly fitted pads and expecting them to compete against modern equipment. But that is exactly what President Biden's defense budget is asking our military to do. Frankly, it is a huge disappointment, coming from our Commander in Chief. We cannot let our men and women down.

Thankfully, it is Congress—not the President—which has the power of the purse. And, really, this should be our first order of business every year. It is that important.

In the coming weeks, I will be working with my colleagues on the National Defense Authorization Act and budget that will enable our military to do the job better today and prepare for all the challenges tomorrow. This debate is ultimately about whether or not we have the willpower to fight to defend our way of life and our great country.

Well, I am willing to keep fighting for the United States by investing in

the men and women who keep us safe. I urge my colleagues and President Biden to do the same.

REMEMBERING CURTIS T. SPROUSE

Madam President, finally, I want to take a moment to honor the life of a great person in Alabama, a war veteran—Curtis T. Sprouse.

Mr. Sprouse joined the U.S. Army in 1943 at the age of 17. He served in the 318th Infantry Regiment under General George Patton in the European theater, including the Battle of the Bulge. For his bravery, he earned the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, and Good Conduct Medal, among other honors.

He passed away in Dothan, AL, last week at the age of 98.

A year ago, I visited with Mr. Sprouse at a restaurant in Dothan, and we sat at a table known locally as the "table of knowledge." It is where locals have sat and talked for decades, where people are said to solve the world's problems with conversation. That day, Mr. Sprouse and I talked about his service, and I talked to him about my father's time, who at the same age today would be 98. We talked about World War II. We didn't end up solving the world's problems, but we did talk about how to humbly, graciously, and patriotically serve our great country.

Mr. Sprouse was a humble man, but it was men like him who defended our country and the world from evil. And, ultimately, they prevailed. We owe Mr. Sprouse a debt of gratitude we can never fully repay.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary work of the teachers in Arkansas and across the country.

As we prepare to celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week, it is clear that educators are in a class by themselves when it comes to resilience. Over the last 12 months, they have shown us what it means to be selfless and brave at a time when both were critically necessary.

I am especially proud of teachers in Arkansas who rose to the challenge of leading classes 100 percent virtually for the first time and then embraced reopening our schools in August 2020. The sudden transition to virtual learning was an extraordinary hurdle, as educators had to learn new technology and new teaching techniques overnight.

For all of us who have learned to use Zoom, it is worth taking a moment to imagine an online classroom with 30 wiggling first graders who want to show you their pets, or that you are teaching calculus to high school students who are preparing for an AP exam while attending class from their car at a Wi-Fi hotspot. Somehow, with great creativity and dedication, teachers embraced this mission and continued to do everything they could to reach each child.

When Arkansas schools reopened in the fall, they were faced with a tremen-

dous new challenge, from masks and social distancing to teaching classes, where some students were at their desks and others were on the screen. Arkansas teachers, once again, did the impossible for their students.

Over the last year, I have heard from educators who worried for their own health and safety but said their dedication to their students was stronger than fear. They learned new skills literally overnight, overhauled the curriculum, and reimagined every aspect of their classroom to comply with COVID-19 guidelines. Somehow, they also made our kids feel safe—safe enough to learn, set an example with their positive attitudes, and let students know how important they were, whether in the classroom or on a computer screen.

As they worked to maintain the academic progress of each child, they also provided a lifeline in an otherwise chaotic time. It is amazing to see the smiles on faces of the kids when they see their teachers. Even though nothing was normal, they gave students an escape back to normalcy by being there and continuing to do what they do best—teach.

When we look back at the heroes of this tumultuous time, it is clear that teachers will be among those we honor as society's most valuable players.

On behalf of the people of Arkansas, I want to thank our teachers for the great work that they have done this year and every year to bring out the best in each child and pave the way to a brighter future.

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

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

FOR THE PEOPLE ACT OF 2021

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, we are less than 100 days into the Biden administration, and already we can identify a pattern in how they are building their policy initiatives, interacting with Congress, and marketing their ideas to the American people. In every example, the governing rule can be boiled down to "what you see isn't what you are going to get."

So far, in this 117th Congress, every single major policy proposal that DC Democrats have forced into the spotlight has been based on a false premise. They have intentionally misled the American people and are now catering to the increasingly radical leftwing that gets further out of step with the rest of this country each and every passing day.

Consider last month's absurd \$1.9 trillion spending package. The Democrats billed this as "the American Rescue Plan" and "COVID relief," but only 9 percent—9 percent—of the total package pricetag went for testing, vaccinations, and healthcare jobs. The rest

they used on a massive blue State bailout and blatant redistribution of wealth.

It is the same story with this month's \$2.25 trillion spending package. They have done their best to pass this off as an "infrastructure plan," but even if you add up every single line item that is dedicated to roads, bridges, highways, interstates, ports, waterways, airports, broadband, and the power grid, only a little over one-third of that plan will pay for actual infrastructure projects. The rest—the rest—of that \$2.25 trillion is just another slush fund for union activism, climate change auditors, and Green New Deal fantasies.

S. 1, the so-called "voting rights" bill that my colleagues across the aisle have spoken so passionately about, completes the trifecta of bait-and-switch bills, advertised as one thing but that would accomplish something completely different.

Now, S. 1 isn't as much a taxpayer-dollar grab as it is a nearly unprecedented policy power grab that offers solutions in search of problems. It ignores the promises of federalism. It disregards the constitutional directive affording States—affording the States—power over their own elections.

It requires the use of ballot casting technology and voter registration systems that don't even exist yet, but I think you can bet that some politically connected companies will make a whole bunch of money coming to the market with this technology.

It would dismantle voter ID laws and prevent local, meaningful cleanup of voter rolls. Your local election commission wouldn't be able to purge their rolls of individuals who have died or moved away. We know that this leads you to a recipe for fraud.

Speaking of fraud, it would force States to allow ballot harvesting. That is right; it would mandate that they allow ballot harvesting. Everyone has heard of the perils that exist with ballot harvesting. It would mandate donor disclosure, opening private citizens up to harassment and violent attacks. It would upend the mechanics of local elections for officials and voters alike and cause chaos and confusion in every precinct in this country.

So why in the world would Democrats even try to pitch this mess as something that would protect voting rights? By all accounts, it would increase the likelihood for fraud and confusion. Well, I think that they are doing it for the same reason they slapped a "COVID" label on a \$1.9 trillion wish list and an "infrastructure" label on a \$2.25 trillion wish list. They know that if the American people caught on to all that they are doing, they would never win another election.

Now, think about that—if you know your policies are so unpopular with the American people that you have to cloak them behind different words, different phrases, words that the meaning of the word is evolving because they

don't stand up to scrutiny in the light of day. And that is what is happening.

You know, it isn't just false advertising. It is not a falsehood. It is not misrepresentation. It is not an inaccuracy. It is not an accidental lie. This is an intentional lie. They are perpetrating this lie on behalf of a radical leftist minority of Americans whose ideas are so destructive that they wouldn't withstand 10 minutes of good, solid, robust, respectful bipartisan debate on this Senate floor.

Nothing about S. 1 will serve the best interests of the American people, and my Republican colleagues and I aren't the only ones who see the problems with it. Tennesseans are worried about this, too, because, in Tennessee, we did the work to clean up our voter rolls and implement fair voter ID laws. We cut down on fraud and increased faith in the electoral process.

This is how it is supposed to work. We do not need Federal intervention to protect the vote. So no wonder my Democratic colleagues chose to use the full weight of the Senate Judiciary Committee to scare the American people into believing they live in "Jim Crow America." Throughout the course of last week's hearing, which they called "Jim Crow 2021: The Latest Assault on the Right to Vote," they weaponized the pernicious lens of critical race theory against Georgia legislators and the thousands of election officials and volunteers who work year-round to bring as many eligible voters to the polls as possible.

Everyone should exercise their right to vote. We should protect one person, one vote. We should encourage people in our local communities to cast their ballot. But my friends across the aisle, they are desperate, and they are desperate to distract from what S. 1 would actually do, so desperate to distract from what it would actually do that they are willing to project the evil hatred behind slavery, segregation, and race-based violence, projecting that onto people whose only goal is to protect the vote from criminals who would seek to defraud it and make certain that individuals are registered to vote, that they vote, and that legal votes are counted and those improperly cast are not.

Now, my friends across the aisle have an invalid premise, and they should all pause and question their motives. The American people should be worried about what is happening in this Chamber when no one is looking. They should feel outrage at an administration that deliberately tries to manipulate them into supporting destructive, wasteful, and dangerous legislation.

I think these bait-and-switch tactics are going to backfire. I think the scare tactics are going to backfire because instead of being scared into submission, which is the agenda of the left, the American people are going to be scared into action.

Based on the contents of H.R. 1 and S. 1, I guess that they are more famil-

iar with the ins and outs of their neighborhood polling places than DC Democrats could ever expect to be. And that doesn't bode well for the administration or the current congressional majority.

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. PETERS. 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. PETERS. Madam President, I also ask unanimous consent to deliver my complete remarks prior to the vote.

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

CONFIRMATION OF DEANNE BENNETT CRISWELL

Mr. PETERS. Madam President, I rise to recognize a historic confirmation that took place last week. On Thursday, the Senate confirmed Deanne Criswell to serve as the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. I would like to thank Senator PORTMAN for his support and for working closely with me to see that Ms. Criswell was swiftly confirmed for this critical position.

Ms. Criswell is an experienced, crisis-tested leader, well deserving of the unanimous bipartisan support that her confirmation received. As she takes the helm of FEMA, Ms. Criswell brings more than 25 years of emergency management and disaster response experience at the Federal, State, and local level.

Having served as an emergency management commissioner for one of the largest and most diverse cities in America, Ms. Criswell knows what it takes to ensure the coronavirus vaccination distribution is efficient and effective and that every community has the resources that they need to recover from this pandemic.

As a former member of the National Guard and a firefighter, she understands the needs of our heroic first responders as they continuously protect Americans on the frontlines.

However, the pandemic is just one of many challenges that FEMA faces, and Ms. Criswell understands that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to disaster response and every crisis, from hurricanes to historic flooding and wildfires, to the COVID-19 pandemic, requires a coordinated strategy.

There is no doubt that Ms. Criswell's experience in emergency management, extensive record of tackling crises on a local and national level, and the desire to work on a bipartisan basis to improve our Federal disaster response in every community are exactly what is needed to meet the challenges that we are facing now and those challenges that lie ahead.

NOMINATION OF JASON SCOTT MILLER

Madam President, I rise to speak about the nomination before us today,