

Duckworth	Luján	Schatz
Durbin	Manchin	Schumer
Feinstein	Markey	Shaheen
Gillibrand	Menendez	Sinema
Graham	Merkley	Smith
Hassan	Murkowski	Stabenow
Heinrich	Murphy	Tester
Hickenlooper	Murray	Van Hollen
Hirono	Ossoff	Warner
Kaine	Padilla	Warnock
Kelly	Peters	Warren
King	Reed	Whitehouse
Klobuchar	Rosen	Wyden
Leahy	Sanders	

NAYS—44

Barrasso	Grassley	Portman
Blackburn	Hagerty	Risch
Boozman	Hawley	Romney
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Toomey
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Young
Fischer	Paul	

NOT VOTING—3

Blunt	Rounds	Tillis
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

The majority leader.

MOTION TO DISCHARGE

Mr. SCHUMER. Pursuant to S. Res. 27, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs being tied on the question of reporting, I move to discharge the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs from further consideration of Brian Eddie Nelson, of California, to be Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the provisions of S. Res. 27, there will now be up to 4 hours of debate on the motion, equally divided between the two leaders, or their designees, with no motions, points of order, or amendments in order.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second. There is.

The yeas and nays are ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, for the information of the Senate, we expect the vote to discharge the nomination to occur about 5:30 p.m. today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

VOTING RIGHTS

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I rise today in defense of the most sacred right we have in this country, and that is the right to vote. This right is fundamental to our democracy. It is the right to make your voice heard in our government.

But this right is under attack by ultraconservative State lawmakers who

are restricting access to our ballot boxes—the same people who continue to cast unserious, faceless and dangerous doubts on the results of the 2020 election.

I am not being hyperbolic when I say, if these attacks succeed, there will be grave consequences for our democratic system not just in those States, but throughout our country.

So as I have said time and again, we must pass strong Federal voting rights protections into law, because doing so is essential to making sure that our democracy stays a democracy. Democrats are rightfully exploring every potential avenue to ensure Americans' fundamental right to vote is not restricted.

We are voting on legislation this week—the Freedom to Vote Act—that has been the result of extended negotiations and discussions. And I appreciate all my colleagues who are working to craft a bill all of us can agree to, one that ensures that voters have equal access to the ballot box; that promotes best practices for voter registration and administration; and protects our elections from the very real threat of interference, both foreign and domestic.

This is a reasonable bill by any stretch of the imagination. And I challenge anyone to tell me what could be more controversial about making election day a public holiday or ensuring everyone has the opportunity to vote early, making sure everyone can request a vote-by-mail ballot.

These are simple measures to ensure that every American's voice can be heard. And I am glad that this bill includes protections so it will help give power back to the people in our government, making sure people pick their representatives rather than representatives picking their voters; by stopping special interest money from drowning out Americans' voices and votes; and by protecting and securing each American citizen's right to cast their ballot.

Again, nothing in this bill should be controversial if you care about the health of our democracy. So I hope our Republican colleagues will join us in supporting it, because I strongly believe protecting every American's right to vote should not be a partisan issue. And my Republican colleagues will have a chance this week to inspire confidence in our elections and make sure they are secure by voting for this commonsense legislation.

But if there are some who want to stand between voters and their due right to the ballot box, we cannot, as public servants, simply throw up our hands and say: Oh, well, we tried.

So Republicans choose to look the other way on implementing Federal voting rights protections because voter suppression tactics might benefit them politically.

Democrats must use every legislative tool needed to get the Freedom to Vote Act to President Biden's desk, including an exemption to the filibuster, because, as I have said, of all the critical

things we will vote on this Congress—and many are so important to our workers and families—this is the most important. It is about the future of our democracy.

And if our Republican colleagues are not willing to stand up for our democracy, we can't let them hide behind Senate rules and block Democrats from doing so on our own. The stakes are really simply too high to fail. One way or another, this Senate has to pass the Freedom to Vote Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

ENERGY

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor today to talk about what Americans are talking about all across the country, and that is the fact that energy prices are rising and doing it dramatically.

Energy is called a master resource for a reason. It powers our communities, our homes, our military, and our economy. It fuels the trucks that bring goods and groceries to market. It keeps the lights on at small businesses all across the country, and it heats our homes. This is the reason why higher energy prices mean higher prices in every other part of our life.

Now, over the last 9 months, people have been seeing this all across the country. Energy prices have gone up, and not just by a little. They have gone up a lot. It has contributed to higher prices for just about everything we do and everywhere we go.

The cost of a tank of gas is about a dollar higher now than it was when Joe Biden came into the White House. As a result, if you go to fill up at your local gas station, it is about \$25 more to fill your tank today than it was back in January, on the 20th, when Joe Biden took the oath of office.

Now, it is not just gasoline that has gone up; it is the gas we use to heat our homes. Natural gas powers over half of the homes that are heated across America. And the price is now at a 7-year high. So as a result, families are going to pay a lot more not just to drive, but also to heat their homes this winter.

And it is interesting because here in America, we have the energy resources we need; we are just not able to use them because of this administration.

Under the last administration, America became the largest producer of oil and natural gas in the world—in the world—America. America's energy dominance worked to help us reduce our trade deficit. It brought home more jobs, brought industries home to America. It fueled the best economy in my lifetime here at home in America. And as a nation, we became energy independent for the first time in 70 years.

Well, these were historic achievements by America's energy workers. In my home State, the State of Wyoming was proud to play a major role in these achievements. Wyoming is America's No. 1 per-capita exporter of energy. We

produce it in Wyoming, and we send it around the country and around the world. We power America and we power the world.

Yet, ever since Joe Biden became President, it has become a lot harder. Now, I talk to energy workers at home all of the time in Wyoming, all across the State, and what they continue to tell me is it has never been more difficult than it is right now. In just 9 months, Joe Biden has already become the most anti-American energy President in our Nation's history.

On his first day in office, he drew a target on the back of American petroleum energy, and he pulled the trigger. He killed the Keystone XL Pipeline, and that ended thousands of good-paying jobs at the height of a pandemic. President Biden also shut down oil and gas exploration near the Arctic. He banned oil and gas leasing on Federal land.

This has been devastating to Western States: Wyoming, Colorado, Nevada, and New Mexico.

Nearly half of Wyoming is Federal land, and now Joe Biden says that land is off limits to Wyoming energy workers.

Because of Joe Biden's radical anti-energy agenda, people in every corner of this country are paying higher prices for energy. We are paying more at the pump, paying more at the grocery store—paying all around.

Even one of the Democrats' favorite economists, Mark Zandi, says the American people are now paying \$175 more every month—\$175 every month—more than they were a year ago. That includes gas, groceries, rent. Joe Biden inflation—it is equivalent to \$2,100 a week. That is a heck of a paycheck cut for American workers.

So who gets hurt by this?

Well, it is struggling families. It is seniors. It is people living on a fixed income.

Polls show that about half of the country lives paycheck to paycheck. Forty percent of the country says they couldn't afford to cover an emergency if the cost were above \$400.

Well, in the Joe Biden economy, people are paying five times that amount—the amount they can't handle for an emergency—just in the cost of annual inflation.

The Biden White House doesn't seem to care very much about it, doesn't understand it—clueless. Last week, the White House Chief of Staff retweeted a message which said inflation is a "high class problem."

He couldn't be more wrong. If the White House believes this, they are woefully—woefully—at a loss for understanding what is happening in this country, because what is happening is exactly the opposite of what the White House thinks. The White House Chief of Staff clearly doesn't understand the struggles of working families all across this country.

Now, the big Democrat donors in CHUCK SCHUMER's Brooklyn, NY, or

NANCY PELOSI's San Francisco—they are going to be just fine. It is the working families in rural America who are getting hurt the most.

And as winter is coming, energy costs are going to go up significantly. The U.S. Energy Information Administration—branch of the government—says energy bills will be up dramatically this winter compared to last.

This inflation nightmare is absolutely at a point where there is still no end in sight. The American people believe it is going to continue and it is going to get worse.

Democrats have finally been hit with the reality that people are worried about the high cost of energy. So what have they decided to do about it? What will the White House do about it? What will the administration do about it?

Astonishingly, in August, the National Security Advisor begged Russia and OPEC and the oil cartel to pump more oil. It is hard to believe that really happened. It is also hard to believe—my friend and colleague the senior Senator from Alaska told us in the Energy Committee that the United States is using more oil from Russia than we are from Alaska right now.

If you don't believe it in terms of the fact that the administration is asking OPEC and Russia to produce more oil to help lower the costs in the United States, just go to the White House website. They put it on the White House website.

Joe Biden would rather buy energy from our enemies and send American dollars overseas than produce it here at home. He would rather send American dollars overseas to our enemies than explore for American energy and the resources that we have, where we have the capacity to lead the world.

Last week, the Biden administration made an off-the-record call to U.S. energy-producing companies. The administration had the nerve to ask them to lower their prices at the same time that this administration has forced them to lower their production. It is economics 101: supply and demand. It is basic arithmetic.

And now the Energy Secretary says that we might have to use the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to try to bring more energy onto the market to help deal with the costs that have gone up as a result of the Biden policies. We went to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve during the first Iraq war and after Hurricane Katrina and during the Arab Spring. In other words, this is something we do in a crisis.

The Biden administration won't say it out loud yet, but let's admit it; there is a crisis, and it is one that Joe Biden and this administration have created. It is a crisis of Joe Biden's own making, and it is a crisis that Joe Biden could end tomorrow because we have the capacity at home to do it.

Instead, what are the Democrats doing? Well, they are threatening to make it even worse. Democrats in the Senate are pushing a \$3.5 trillion reck-

less tax-and-spending spree. Last month, one Commissioner of the FERC, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, told us at the Energy Committee that to pass this \$3.5 trillion bill would be "like an H-bomb" on America's energy markets. That is because the bill contains huge portions of what has become known to be the disastrous "green bad deal."

Here are just a few of the examples that are included in this \$3.5 trillion Democratic bill in the House right now: \$8 billion for a so-called Civilian Climate Corps. These are taxpayer-funded climate police. They will get free housing, free clothing, free college tuition, free childcare to go out and police the environment based on the climate.

The Democrat spending spree also includes \$10 billion for what the Democrats call environmental justice in higher education. The bill includes \$105 billion for what the Democrats call climate justice and then green energy subsidies.

Let's take a look at the subsidies. These subsidies include huge subsidies for people who buy and drive electric vehicles. And who buys and drives electric vehicles? Basically, people with lots of income, not the average American. The government is already giving billions of taxpayer dollars to electric vehicle manufacturers and owners. Nearly 80 percent of the tax credits go to households making at least \$100,000 a year. That is who this administration is beholden to. The spending spree would give up to \$12,500 to married couples to buy electric vehicles. A single person earning up to \$400,000 a year could get a subsidy. A married couple earning up to \$800,000 a year could get a subsidy.

Now, how are the Democrats going to pay for all these things, all these hand-outs? Well, they want to put more taxes on producing natural gas. What is that going to do to the average person trying to heat their home this winter? It is going to raise natural gas prices even higher. Oh, and at the same time, we would eliminate 90,000 American energy jobs. It is going to raise energy costs for people all across the country.

The administration's answer is the last thing we need in this country right now. We in this country have the best energy resources in the world. We also have the best energy workers in the world. It is time to let these good men and women do their jobs. American people don't need trillions of dollars more in taxes and spending and debt. We need more American energy. It is time for Joe Biden and the Democrats to get out of the way of affordable American energy. The people of this country need it badly.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEKEND

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I want to begin today by recognizing the service and sacrifice of our

law enforcement officers. This past weekend, Americans here in our Nation's Capital and around the country participated in National Police Week-end.

Being a law enforcement officer is one of the toughest and most dangerous jobs that there is. I think people on both sides of the aisle in this Chamber would agree with that. Law enforcement officers serve as a boundary between a functioning society and a lawless one. And, sadly, during the course of their vital duty to serve and protect our communities, some pay the ultimate price.

Alabama has lost four individuals in the line of duty to date this year: Deputy Sheriff William H. Smith, of the Baldwin County Sheriff's Office; Police Officer Marquis Dewon Moorer, of the Selma Police Department; Corrections Officer Maurice "Reese" Jackson, of the Robertsdale Police Department; Sergeant Nick Risner, of the Sheffield Police Department.

And our State has lost five individuals this year from COVID: Lieutenant Jeff Bain, of the DeKalb County Sheriff's Office; Police Officer Juan Manuel Gomez-Lopez, of the Pelham Police Department; Deputy Sheriff Harry "Buddy" Hutchinson, of the Blount County Sheriff's Office; Police Officer Brandon Ard, of the Orange Beach Police Department; Investigator Richard Wendell Humphrey, of the Baldwin County District Attorney's Office.

These nine individuals deserve our honor. They got out of bed each morning, put their uniform on, and went to work for our communities across this country.

To their friends and families, thank you for your sacrifice. It is a tough task, loving and supporting someone who goes to work each day, putting their life on the line to protect people they don't even know. They know only that they are fellow Americans.

And to every Alabamian who wears a badge and a uniform, thank you for all you do for our communities.

It is an unfortunate truth that many officers are being driven out of their profession by a wave of anti-police rhetoric on the heels of bad actors who operated outside their training. The Biden administration had jumped at every opportunity to demonize and demean the entire law enforcement profession. The President has shown that if the optics are bad enough, law enforcement will pay.

This was the case with Border Patrol agents on horseback in the Del Rio Sector in Texas just a few weeks ago. Reports of the agents whipping people turned out to be completely and utterly false.

We shouldn't be surprised. When their policies have failed and created chaos, the Biden administration has had a choice between doing what is right and making our government work better or shaming those expected to do more with less. The Biden administration has always chosen the latter.

The administration routinely chooses to hide behind platitudes and broken promises instead of addressing the crises of their own making.

And because of that, the consequences of this administration's illogical and inconsistent policies will be felt by Americans for decades. If we didn't think it could get even worse, this administration's weak border policies impact every aspect of our Nation's immigration system.

But the problems go far beyond the crisis we have seen unfold over the last 9 months at the southwest border. Just last week, Department of Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas issued guidance ending worksite enforcement operations, which is the authority the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, better known as ICE, uses to crack down on businesses who employ illegal immigrants and to process illegal immigration workers for removal.

Without the threat of removing illegal workers, this new guidance creates a pull factor, or a magnet, attracting more people to the United States through illegal means. Illegal immigrants come with the knowledge that the consequences for breaking our laws under President Biden is minimal or nonexistent.

But this is a departure from what Democrats used to think. In 2005, then-Senator Barack Obama said:

We simply cannot allow people to pour into the United States undetected, undocumented, unchecked, and circumventing the line of people who are waiting patiently, diligently, and lawfully to become immigrants in this country.

In 2009, Senator CHUCK SCHUMER said:

Illegal immigration is wrong, plain and simple . . . people who enter the United States without permission are illegal aliens and illegal aliens should not be treated the same as people who enter the U.S. legally.

And then, in 2006, then-Senator Joe Biden said:

Let me tell you something, folks, people are driving across that border with tons, tons—hear me, tons—of everything from by-products from [drugs] to cocaine to heroin, and it's all coming up through corrupt Mexico.

So why the change? It is politics. They are bending to the pressure from the far left to abandon enforcement of our laws in this country. And just look where it got us. How about the allegations of poor living conditions, rampant COVID-19 infection, and sexual misconduct between unaccompanied alien children and Federal contractors at Department of Health and Human Services housing facilities?

Nearly 2 weeks ago, I sent a letter to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services regarding the countless reports of mistreatment of unaccompanied minors while in Health and Human Services custody until released to a parent or legal guardian.

Because our country continues to face public health emergencies brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, Presi-

dent Biden kept title 42 in place at the border except for one piece. He made a huge politically driven exception: Unaccompanied children could be admitted regardless of public health emergency. This decision led to an onslaught of unaccompanied minors arriving at the border.

This administration has been so consumed by ensuring that the President receives constant good press that they rushed tens of thousands of children through processing facilities and into the hands of adults who hadn't undergone background checks. What is more is Health and Human Services failed to conduct background checks on the contractors working at the housing facilities where unaccompanied minors stay before being released to parents.

The administration repeatedly cut corners and endangered the lives of children just so they could provide pictures of empty Customs and Border Protection processing facilities to the press.

At every turn, it has been about headlines over sound policy, and it has backfired. That is absolutely no way to go.

Oh, and by the way, I have yet to receive a response from Health and Human Services Secretary Becerra on my questions. It has been weeks.

Now there are reports of yet another memo coming out of DHS, one that would protect those who acquired U.S. citizenship by fraud.

U.S. citizenship is the most valuable status that we have in this country, and it is coveted all around the world. It is the reason millions of people immigrate to the United States every year and have done so for many, many generations. They come here with the hope to capitalize on the opportunities that this country provides, the freedoms and liberties afforded to its citizens.

Allowing people to be naturalized through fraudulent methods devalues our sacred privilege. It cheapens the inherent principles of our great country. I sincerely hope the administration will not actually consider such a drastic change in policy. But based on what we have seen so far, I wouldn't be surprised.

By the end of 2021, Customs and Border Protection will have apprehended nearly 2 million people attempting to illegally cross into the United States. July and August each saw apprehensions of up to 200,000 per month.

Folks, that is astounding. That is 2 million people who decided the dangerous journey through South and Central America was worth the risk to illegally enter the United States through our southwest border, rather than to adhere to the laws and regulations we instituted for legal means of immigration.

These numbers negatively impact the U.S. job market and our economy. They put a burden on the taxpayer through increased spending of Federal benefits. These numbers overwhelm—

and I am talking “overwhelm”—our public schools and our hospitals, which are already maxed out.

Also, wide open borders are also an issue of national security, and you can bet that the longer the border remains open, the more drugs make their way into the United States. Customs and Border Protection has seized over 10,000 pounds of fentanyl this year, more than the last 3 years combined. Imagine the amount of illicit drugs President Biden’s open border policy have added to our opioid epidemic.

And while the U.S. economy continues to suffer due to the actions taken by the Biden administration in response to COVID, the cartel economy is booming.

Earlier this year, CBP estimated the cartels make about an average of \$14 million per day smuggling people and drugs into the United States. The cartels are running a multibillion-dollar business along our border, and the President is just letting it happen.

Never before have we experienced illegal immigration on this scale, and it can all be tracked back to the bad policy decisions of this President.

U.S. law allows for legal immigration, as well as pathways to work within the U.S. economy. When we allow people to continuously break our laws, we should not be surprised when more people join in. We should not be surprised when our laws no longer carry weight or authority in our country.

The fact that this administration is not only disregarding current law and regulation but actively advertising ways around them is incredible. It is lawless.

President Biden, or whoever in the White House is making these decisions, should be ashamed of themselves, putting people’s lives in danger. The President could stop this today if he wanted to, but reverting to the policies put in place by the Trump administration would be an admission that those policies actually worked.

We should all pray that when the consequences of these bad policies trickle down to our communities across this country, our law enforcement officers are still there to clean up President Biden’s senseless mess.

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. SCOTT of Florida. 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—S. 2997

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 2997, which is at the desk. Further, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to re-

consider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, reserving the right to object, the Senator will speak further about what he is attempting to do, but I want to make it clear, first of all, that this bill isn’t about protecting access to food assistance for moms and babies or ensuring children continue to receive healthy school meals. This actually is, unfortunately, a bill that is in search of a problem.

And if my colleague Senator SCOTT wants to work with me on eliminating barriers to access to SNAP or the WIC Program or school meals, I would be more than happy to work with him on it.

But let me just say this: This bill, again, is in search of a problem because there is no rule requiring vaccinations for families to receive food assistance, and no one in the administration is proposing that.

So let me just say that again: There is no rule requiring vaccinations for families to receive food assistance, and no one in the administration is proposing that.

So if we want to work together on how to support families in our country to help make sure children have the healthy food that they need in schools, that is terrific. But rather than spending time on bills like this, we should be encouraging people to get vaccinated to protect their families, protect themselves, and protect their community.

But this bill addresses something that is just not real nor will it be real.

And so I would object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, this time last year, we still didn’t know how much longer this pandemic would last. We didn’t know when the vaccine trials would be completed. Thankfully, by December, the vaccine had been approved and brought normalcy back to the lives of many Americans. The Trump administration worked with public and private partners, doctors and scientists across our country to develop a safe and effective vaccine in record time. It was a feat of science, and it was an example of what Americans can do when we are working together.

I had COVID, and I am grateful that I was able to get vaccinated. I hope that all Americans talk with their doctors and consider making the same decision. It is a personal decision every individual gets to make.

That is not how President Biden sees it. Lately, the Biden administration has decided to try and take this decision out of the hands of the American people. With this recently announced unconstitutional vaccine mandate for private businesses, King Biden again is saying that government knows best

and has taken choice away from families in Florida and across the country.

That is not what the American people expect government to do. Government’s role is to give Americans all the information and data it has so they can make the right decision for their individual family.

That is exactly what I did when I was Governor of Florida. In the face of life-threatening hurricanes, I made sure Florida families were informed. I went out and made sure everyone knew exactly what to expect and how dangerous the storm could be, but I didn’t issue mandates because that is not what governments should do.

When I was Governor of Florida, we had the Zika healthcare crisis, which impacted newborns. Rather than placing mandates on pregnant women or restricting their travel to areas with local transmission of Zika, we simply informed Floridians, worked to be as transparent as possible, and offered free Zika testing to all pregnant women in Florida.

But, again, that is not the approach—that is not the approach—Joe Biden has decided to take. President Biden has decided that threatening corporations and businesses and misleading the American people is a better option.

It is dishonest and authoritarian, and it is no way to lead a nation. Americans should be free to make choices they feel are in the best interests of their own health and the health of their loved ones.

In December, President Biden promised he would not require Americans to be vaccinated or require that they carry vaccine passports. But here he is, less than 10 months into his Presidency, breaking promise after promise and going back on his word.

How can the American people believe anything he says? Americans are sick and tired of the government telling them what to do and are more than capable of making the right choices to protect themselves, their family, and their neighbors.

But even as there are some of us in this Chamber who disagree about national vaccine mandates for private businesses, I wanted to try to find some common ground. Food stamps, supplemental assistance for women, infants, and children, and free and reduced lunch programs are programs run through the U.S. Department of Agriculture and provide food to hungry families and are some of the most basic of programs our government provides to those in need.

For kids who are at school and who come from families who are struggling, I am saying you shouldn’t have to be vaccinated in order to eat. Or for families who have trouble putting enough food on the table, I am saying you shouldn’t have to be vaccinated to get groceries.

I wish—I hoped—my colleague would agree. I offered a simple bill to say that families who need food stamps and additional support for women, infants,

and children shouldn't have to be vaccinated in order to have a full stomach.

I was a poor kid growing up. My parents struggled to put food on the table, but my colleague is telling families like mine growing up that they don't care about their personal choices: If you want to be able to eat, you have to get a shot.

This is ridiculous. This is un-American. This is an attempt by President Biden to take over every aspect of your life. I am not going to stand for it. The American people are not going to stand for it.

I hope every household in America sees what happened on the floor today.

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

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

BUILD BACK BETTER AGENDA

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, I want to talk about two things as we are waiting for Senator WYDEN.

First, I have been hearing all across the State of Florida, people are really concerned about the Democratic proposal basically to look at everybody's bank accounts.

The latest is that the proposal will take it from looking at every \$600 transaction or \$600 account to \$10,000. Well, if you look at it, almost everybody has a \$10,000 account because what they are talking about is cumulative dollars.

So why does the IRS want to look at everybody's accounts?

It is for one reason. The one reason is to take more dollars out of somebody's pocket.

We can't let this happen. We have a right to privacy in this country. We should be able to not have to tell the government everything we buy. If you want to buy a sofa or anything, you shouldn't have to tell the Federal Government.

So I completely oppose this significant overreach by the Democrats trying to look into everybody's bank accounts, because that is exactly what it would do.

SUPPLY CHAIN

Madam President, the second thing I want to talk about is the supply chain. We have a significant problem in the supply chain. Not only do we have a big problem, but if you look at what is going to happen with regard to the vaccine mandate, it is going to cause even more problems.

My dad was a truck driver. If he had to choose, he would have a tough choice if he wasn't comfortable, for whatever reason, getting the vaccine—and I took the vaccine and I had COVID—then he is going to lose his job, which is going to impact a lot of American families. It is going to cause the supply chain to be in worse shape,

and it is going to cause even more inflation.

So with President Biden's recently announced unconstitutional vaccine mandates for private businesses, the President is saying government knows best and is taking choice away from families all across our country, but clearly my State of Florida.

That is not what the American people expect government to do. The government's role is to give people information. Give them the information and let them make good choices. They will make good choices.

My parents didn't have much of an education, but they could make good choices. They figured out what was good for our family.

These decisions should be up to individuals, not government. That's why I asked consent to pass S. 2997, and, unfortunately, the Senate Democrats objected. I hope we can find some common ground.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2998

Madam President, I hope everyone here believes you should not have to receive a vaccine in order to obtain a Social Security check or Social Security disability check. Forcing families to choose between receiving Social Security and choosing to get vaccinated is a terrible choice.

That is why I introduced legislation to protect Social Security recipients and ensure that Biden won't be able to strong-arm them into compliance with his unconstitutional mandate.

As if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 2998, which is at the desk. I further ask that the bill 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?

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Parliamentary inquiry, Madam President. I am trying to juggle two things at once.

We are talking about the Social Security UC; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I reserve my right to object.

As chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and as a former director of the Oregon Gray Panthers, I take a backseat to no one when it comes to protecting Americans' earned Social Security benefits.

Now, we know Halloween is right around the corner and families are getting ready for festivities—decorating their houses, picking out costumes, and watching scary movies. My colleague from Florida seems to be getting into the spirit of all this by telling the American people scary stories about vaccines threatening their Social Security benefits. I don't believe the

American people are so easily tricked. This idea is as fantastical and ridiculous as a vampire living under your bed.

The fact that Republicans are trying to scare folks for political gain I think is just very, very disappointing. These bills that are rooted in political messaging aren't going to help to end this pandemic or take concrete steps to address actual challenges facing many of our constituents.

With that, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). Objection is heard.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, well, clearly I am pretty shocked. By objecting to this bill, my colleague is suggesting that it is acceptable for the government to deny Social Security checks to American seniors and checks to those who are physically disabled because they have made a personal medical choice to not receive the vaccine.

This is not farfetched. The Biden administration is already doing it to companies, and people are out of a job. The Social Security system is meant to help those who have spent their lives working in this country, and disability checks are designed to help those who cannot work. These checks are not a tool for government to impose its will on the people, just as it shouldn't be the position of the Biden administration to require companies to enforce the vaccine mandate.

But if you are on Social Security or your parent is receiving Social Security checks, this is what my colleague is suggesting by blocking this legislation: Get the vaccine or go broke.

As we all know, prices are going up, and the Social Security Administration just announced a record cost-of-living increase in benefits to keep up with Biden's inflation crisis. Individuals dependent on Social Security still need to get gas and groceries to survive. By objecting to this simple bill, my colleague is comfortable offering an ultimatum: Get the vaccine or go broke. It is wrong—it is wrong to the core—and the American people know it.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2999

Mr. President, perhaps my colleague may agree with me on a different point—that vaccine mandates shouldn't be tied to participation in Medicare, Medicaid, or CHIP. There are more than 60 million Americans on Medicare and more than 80 million Americans receiving Medicaid or CHIP assistance. These programs are important for ensuring that our families, our seniors, and our kids can stay healthy and have access to a doctor. No one should be deprived of healthcare because they have chosen not to receive the vaccine. It would be simply unethical to do so. It seems like pretty common sense.

My proposal would protect individuals on Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP from any overreaching vaccine mandates, like the President has done with

companies, and ensure that a personal medical decision does not strip them of the access to healthcare they need.

Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 2999, which is at the desk. I further ask that the bill 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 Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, again, this deals with an area that is in the province of the Senate Finance Committee. There, I made a special priority of ensuring that Americans who count on Federal healthcare programs can actually get the care they need. The notion that Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP coverage could be subject to vaccination status is just nonsense.

Contrary to Republican views that Federal coverage should be contingent on filing extensive paperwork, as conservative Governors have pushed in States from sea to shining sea, Democrats believe healthcare is a basic human right and should be available to all.

Millions of Americans have received the COVID-19 vaccine through the Medicare and Medicaid Programs. That ought to be celebrated as a success rather than scaring people about their earned benefits being taken away.

These bills—now two of them—are thoroughly about political messaging and aren't going to help to end this pandemic or do anything to address challenges facing so many of our constituents.

With that, again, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, first of all, let's remember that the President is requiring a vaccine mandate if you have a job. So there are people there who are going to lose their job because they, for whatever reason, are uncomfortable getting the vaccine. So this is not farfetched.

I thought my colleagues had gone too far by suggesting it would be acceptable for the government to tie vaccines to Social Security checks, but this is another level of insanity. My colleague is comfortable denying healthcare to someone because of their vaccine status. It is really quite ironic because for the past 10 years, we have had Democrats falsely claim Republicans want insurance companies to be able to deny coverage based on preexisting conditions. But here we have it right here on the Senate floor—Democrats are doing exactly what they have falsely accused Republicans of. They want to be able to deny healthcare to Americans who have not received the vaccine.

Does anyone really think that denying healthcare to people who don't

want to get the vaccine for whatever reason is truly in the best interest of public health? What do you do when someone is a bit hesitant on the vaccine? And we all have met people like that. For my Democratic colleagues, the answer is simple: Take away their healthcare.

Do you need to refill your arthritis prescription? It seems Democrats want to make sure that pharmacists charge you more unless you get the shot. Maybe it is time to get your physical. If you have been on Medicaid, you are left with two options: Either get the shot or go home because the Democrats don't want you to get your ears checked or your blood work completed unless you have met their standard of getting the shot.

Whether you like it or not, some people are not comfortable. It doesn't matter how poor you are; they are willing to strip you of your health insurance and take away your ability to get your prescriptions unless you get the vaccine.

The American people know these choices are wrong, and the fact that my colleagues stand by their decision I think is outrageous.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3000

Mr. President, now, hopefully, we can get to some common ground. I think our colleagues disagreed on some of these things, but let's see if we can find another one they will agree on, and that is access to housing.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development provides a wide variety of housing programs meant to help individuals and families in need of a home and those who are struggling and down on their luck. They help with everything from loans to first-time home buyers to homeless shelters and housing assistance. More than 5 million people currently receive some kind of housing assistance from HUD.

I can't imagine anyone would think that the government should mandate vaccines for Americans who need to have basic access to housing or be able to limit, if you don't want to get the vaccine, your access to housing.

Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 3000, which is at the desk. I further ask that the bill 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 Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. BROWN, reserving the right to object, I don't want to laugh. This is too serious. But we have the chairman of the Republican Senate campaign committee who comes down to the floor—he knows better. I mean, he just knows better. He knows this is a political stunt. It is what he does.

I don't think the chair of the Senate Republican campaign committee gets paid extra to do this kind of stuff, but

it is just clearly a political stunt. He knows. He doesn't really know—I don't know what he knows, but I do know that I haven't seen his interest in housing since he has been in the Senate. I am the chair of the Housing Committee. When I was ranking member with Senator CRAPO, for whom I have great respect, I didn't see any. But all of a sudden, he has this interest in low-income people's housing to make sure that they have safe, accessible, affordable places to stay.

He knows—he should know; I don't know how he would not know—that HUD is not requiring proof of vaccination for people to use their services. There is no hint of any of us—I mean, because I am lucky enough to be chair of this committee, I do more in housing than perhaps anybody in this body—at least one of the three or four who do the most—and I don't know anybody who is saying we are going to require proof of vaccine. So it is just a political stunt.

I don't know if the Senator from—I think it is Florida; I am not sure—the Senator from Florida is going to, as soon as this is over, take down these debates and show how he is standing up for people's access to housing, especially low-income, but he is proposing that the Senate take up and pass a bill to address a problem that just isn't happening.

The sad part is, we know how real housing issues are in this country. It isn't a stunt for people trying to figure out how they are going to pay the rent. We know that before the pandemic, 25 percent of renters in this country were paying more than half their income for rent. That means if the car breaks down, it means if their child gets sick, it means if they have a minor workplace injury and they miss a week of work, it means that then their lives are turned upside down because they are evicted.

I wish I saw my colleague and the other officers of the Republican Senate campaign committee out on this floor fighting for those renters, fighting for those low-income people who are paying \$700 or \$800 a month in rent in Hartford or in Cleveland and could pay less if they owned a home, but they don't have the downpayment. It would be great to see them come out on the floor and work with us—work with us—the Senator from Connecticut and me and others, to help low-income people come up with that downpayment. There are 27,000 Floridians who were experiencing homelessness even before the pandemic.

So I just wish I saw this concern and these concerns in other ways. Housing is a foundation for opportunity. It is the biggest cost most families face. The cost is way too high. We can't build an economy that works for everyone when housing prices eat up more of families' budgets year after year. We can work to fix that.

I encourage the Senator from Florida to join us to fix the real problems in

rural areas, in big coastal cities, in small towns on Lake Erie or the Atlantic Ocean. It is a national problem that needs a national response and a national, significant investment. Let's take housing problems seriously. Let's stop the political stunts. Let's work together for the people whom we serve.

Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, well, first off, the Senator might not know I grew up in public housing, so I do have a little bit of knowledge about public housing, and we had public housing for my constituents as Governor of Florida. So I watched my friends struggle to make do.

Let's all remember that President Biden promised us that he would not require anybody to get the vaccine or require vaccine mandates, and that has clearly changed.

So, you know, my parents didn't have much of a formal education, but they worked hard, and they made the best choices they could with the information they had, and they focused on the well-being of our family. So it is baffling to me that my colleague might be willing to tell a family like mine that a vaccine was a precondition to have a roof over their head. I am surprised that Senate Democrats are willing to look in the eyes of struggling families and say: We can't help you unless you have been vaccinated first—which is actually going on right now when you are telling people in this country that if you don't get vaccinated, you lose your job. You will lose your job, so you will not be able to pay the rent; you will not be able to afford your house; you will not be able to afford to put food on the table. That is exactly what is going on. So this is not farfetched.

These HUD programs were not meant to be used to force somebody to get a vaccine. So I am shocked that my colleague would object.

My colleagues have objected to several proposals. All my proposals are designed to make sure that there is no government overreach. Why is this important? Because let's remember, Joe Biden promised he would not require anybody to get a vaccine, and he went back on that promise. I don't believe anybody sitting on this floor should ever be in a position to say that they are OK with somebody not getting in a government program because they haven't had a vaccine—food assistance, Social Security, healthcare, or housing, any of them.

Now, look, I want to be clear. I had COVID. I got the vaccine, and I hope every American will consider getting the vaccine. But it is a decision that every American gets to make. They should talk to their doctor and make a decision for their family, and our government should never be in a position to tell somebody to get a vaccine.

We can't give people an ultimatum to comply with unconstitutional man-

dates or go without anything—Social Security, healthcare, housing, food benefits, or a job—which is going on all across this country right now. It is a gross overreach by the Federal Government at a time when we need more information and more compassion, not mandates from an administration more focused on advancing its socialist agenda than looking out for every American.

So, unlike Joe Biden and Democrats in Washington, I don't believe the government knows best. I grew up in a family—and my parents didn't have much of an education, but they did the best they could for our family. They worked hard. They made choices to make sure we all stayed safe. They didn't rely on a government program other than to get information. They were trying to get good information from the government and make their own choices.

So with that, I am very disappointed that my colleagues would disagree.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

CHILD TAX CREDIT

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I have a message for Ohio voters, my great State of 12 million people.

To Ohio voters, to parents, I say: Check your bank accounts.

On Friday, most Ohio parents—the parents of more than 2 million children, 92 percent of children in our State—most Ohio parents, once again, saw \$250, or \$300, or \$600 in tax cuts directly deposited in their banks accounts, or maybe they got the check in their mailbox.

To parents, I say: We know how hard you work at your jobs and raising your children.

Any parent—any parent—knows how much work it is to take care of children, especially young children.

I am the lucky, proud grandparent, grandfather of eight grandchildren. I watch my children—five of our grandchildren live in Ohio; three of them live out of State not too far away. I watch them. I watch how hard they work, how difficult it is to take care of young children. And it has only gotten harder, of course, we know, over the last year and a half.

So often I say to these parents: Your hard work doesn't pay off like it should.

We have seen what happened over the past few decades: productivity goes up, stock prices have soared, executive compensation is off the charts; yet wages have barely budged.

Meanwhile, you know how expensive it is to raise children: healthcare, school lunch, diapers, clothes, school supplies, braces, sports fees. The list never seems to end. One of the biggest expenses, of course, for so many families is childcare.

Parents feel like they are stuck. The more they work, the more expensive childcare is. You feel like you can't keep up, no matter how hard you work.

It is why we passed the child tax credit—the largest tax cut for working families ever. It is about finally, finally, making your—Ohio parents—your hard work pay off so you can keep up with those extra expenses that keep coming when you are raising a family.

Stories pour into our office from parents from Sandusky to Portsmouth, from Ashtabula to Middletown and Hamilton, from Toledo to Gallipolis—stories we hear over and over about these tax cuts; stories about how expensive childcare is, how parents are using their money to afford childcare so they can go back to work or, in some cases, work overtime.

Kristen of Columbus said she is using this to pay for “Daycare. For two kids [at] \$600/wk.”

Brittany said, “Daycare.”

Ellie said, “Daycare.”

Alex in Cleveland: “Every penny goes to daycare. 4 kids in daycare . . . \$800/week.”

These tax cuts mean more parents are in the workplace. They can afford to go to work. It is that simple.

And let's be clear. Getting \$300, getting \$600 a month per child in tax cuts doesn't discourage anyone from getting a job, or doesn't cause any of them to quit.

I am going to leave my job that pays \$30,000 a year because I am getting \$3,000—said no one ever to us.

There is no way you could afford to raise a family on that. You still need a job. These tax cuts help parents afford that job.

It is all about dignity of work. I can't count the number of families that said: You know—I said on this floor a few minutes ago that 25 percent of renters in this country spend half their income on rent. So we know how anxious those families are on the last week of the month.

One of the things I have heard perhaps more than anything else about this child tax credit is: The last week of the month, we don't have to deny our kids dessert, or we don't have to cut something else because some of that anxiety has been lifted off our shoulders because we are getting \$250 per child in the child tax credit.

It makes a huge difference in just their lives. As I said, it is about the dignity of work. All work has dignity, whether you punch a clock or swipe a badge, whether you work for tips, whether you are on salary, whether you are caring for children, whether you are taking care of a sick parent.

Raising children is work. Raising kids is a hell of a lot more work than moving money from one overseas bank account to another, or than checking your balance in your stock portfolio.

That didn't stop MITCH MCCONNELL from rewarding the wealthiest CEOs and hedge fund managers and Swiss banks account owners. We remember what happened. We looked down the hall in Senator MCCONNELL's office, just 100 feet or so down there, and you see—particularly 3 or 4 years ago, you

saw the lobbyists lining up there as he was doling out to the wealthiest CEOs and the hedge fund managers and the Swiss bank accounts holders and the politicians, doing their bidding: pass that tax cut for the wealthy and for corporations and outsource jobs.

Don't think a lot of those CEOs didn't take the tax cut, outsource jobs, set up manufacturing in those countries, and sell back in the United States. And then they took part of the tax cut and did stock buybacks to make themselves richer.

Senator McCONNELL and the leaders in this body all knew that is what that was all about. But when it comes time for a tax break for families making \$10- or \$20- or \$50- or \$75,000 a year, they are absent.

We know that it was a partisan vote. Every Democrat voted for the biggest tax cut in American history. Every Republican voted against the biggest tax cut in American history. Fortunately, there were more of us than there are of them. It was 51 to 50.

They promised their tax cuts for the rich would trickle down. We know they never do. They keep the money for themselves. They spent that money on stock buybacks.

Now, as I said, without a single vote from Republicans—I don't like to be partisan around here. I represent a State that leans Republican. A lot of Republicans vote for me because I work with them and want them to succeed, as I want everybody to succeed. But we also know this tax cut shows whose side you are on.

It is a pretty simple contrast—are you on the side of workers, or are you on the side of these big corporations that outsource jobs? Do you want tax cuts for billionaires and decamillionaires, or do you want tax cuts for working families?

Overwhelmingly, Americans from all over the country, from all kinds of backgrounds agree with that. Everyone is lining up behind extending the child tax credit expansion: the faith community, the civil rights community, the children's advocacy community, Catholic Charities, Bread for the World, RESULTS, the Coalition on Human Needs, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the Children's Defense Fund.

So many others are writing us in the last week in support of keeping these checks going, in support of extending the child tax credit 1 year, 2 years, 3 years, 5 years, 10 years, making it permanent, because every single month we show parents and workers we are on your side.

So count on it. Starting July 15, first check; a month later, mid-August, second check; a month later, mid-September, third check; just last week, the fourth check. Two hundred and fifty dollars if your child is between the ages of 6 and 17; \$300 per child if your child is under 6. It has been like clockwork. It has made a difference.

We haven't quite reached everybody in my State—2.5 million children are

eligible, 2.4 million. We have reached about 2.3 million of them. So we are still working to find those other parents who don't know about this for their children.

But think of what that has done for 92 percent of my State's children. Ninety-two percent of the kids in my State, their parents are benefiting from this.

One man said to me: You know, for the first time ever, I can buy my child—I can buy my daughter fastpitch softball equipment.

At the same meeting, a woman, a mother, told me: You know, for the first time ever, my son can go to summer camp now, first time ever.

Other parents were talking about childcare. One family said: You know, we can put aside \$100 a month so my daughter can go to Sinclair State Community College, or maybe the University of Dayton, or maybe Ohio University.

Other families talk, as I said, Mr. President, about rent, the anxiety they feel at the end of every month to come up with that rent check so they don't get evicted.

Every single month, we are showing parents and we are showing workers we are on your side. We will keep doing that. I hope more Republicans join us and we can do this bipartisan, but, either way, we will not stop fighting to make sure parents' hard work pays off for years to come.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

IRS

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, in the past few weeks, I have been working with my colleagues in the Senate to draw attention to the privacy concerns of requiring all financial institutions to report to the IRS on the inflows or outflows on every checking, loan, and investment account above a certain threshold.

Under the guise of closing the tax gap, Democrats have proposed to drastically expand the powers of the IRS and turn banks and credit unions into private investigators for law-abiding Americans. The proposal as it originally came out in the "Green Book" from the White House required that every single financial account—not just bank accounts, not just credit union accounts, but all financial accounts that have more than \$600 worth of inflow or \$600 worth of outflow in a given year would have to have that reported to the IRS.

We have been pointing this out to people across America now for several weeks, and the uproar is loud. The message has been getting heard obviously because now the administration and the IRS are saying: Well, we didn't really mean just everybody who has a \$600 inflow or outflow of their account. We are willing to raise that to \$10,000—so that you don't have to have the IRS snooping on your financial data in your financial accounts unless you have more than \$10,000 worth of income or more than \$10,000 worth of outflow in your account.

And they said: And we are not even going to count wages or interest or government benefits in that.

Well, let's see what that really means. Does that really reduce the scope of this spying on Americans' financial accounts, this dragnet, letting the IRS have access to everybody's account? How many people don't have \$10,000 worth of income or outflow in their account?

Let me just give you a few data points. From the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average household in America—the average taxpayer in America spends about \$61,000 a year. What do they spend that on? The average is housing, \$20,000; transportation, \$9,700; personal insurance and pensions, \$7,296; healthcare, \$4,968; groceries, \$4,464; restaurants and other meals, \$3,459; entertainment, \$3,226; other, \$2,030; cash contributions, \$1,888; apparel and services, \$1,866; education, \$1,407; and personal care, \$768—for a grand total of the average American running \$61,224 through their personal accounts in a year.

So does raising the total to \$10,000 really stop the IRS from accessing very many people's accounts? No. The IRS today, because of the pressure that we have been putting on them, said today: Well, you know, we already have data from everybody's account on their paychecks; and we already have data on their interest that they get on their various accounts, which has to be reported to us; and we already have data on Federal benefits, like the COVID payments that have been made to people. So we don't need to have those data points collected in this new, massive privacy violation. We can leave those out. But we need—and this is what the IRS said today, trying to defend this: But we need to have access to the other sources of income that people have.

Now, in that very same document, the IRS said: Well, we are not going to audit anybody who makes less than \$400,000 a year. Well, that wasn't what the Green Book said. They didn't say we will change our proposal to forbid us from auditing anybody who makes less than \$400,000 a year. All they said was: Take our word for it. We promise. We will only audit rich, rich people who are billionaires.

Well, if that is really the position they are taking, then why don't they put it in the bill? Why don't they put it in the proposal? Why don't they put right in the proposal that they cannot, secretly or publicly, access the data of private individuals in their private accounts if they make less than \$400,000 per year? It would be really simple, wouldn't it?

But the IRS didn't say that, and the reason they didn't say that is because that is not what they intend to do. Remember, they started out at \$600. That tells you what they wanted. Now, they said: Well, we think we can get away with \$10,000—because they know that still covers everybody.

Think of a family that doesn't spend more than \$10,000—yeah, that spends less than \$10,000 in a year in their financial accounts. Think of a small business in America that doesn't run more than \$10,000 a year of income and expense through their accounts. It will pick up every small business in America; it will pick up, I think, every family in America; and nothing will be changed. The IRS will have data on every American's account.

Then they say: Well, OK, but it is only two numbers. It is just the total of your income and the total of your outflow.

Well, everybody can kind of intuitively tell that that doesn't make sense. What would they do with those two numbers? What they will do with those two numbers is use their algorithms to figure out which taxpayers to audit—or which taxpayers that they don't even need to audit; they will just send them a notice of deficiency and say: Well, we think you should owe more taxes, and this is what we think you should owe us.

And if the taxpayers don't comply, then the IRS can go ahead and audit them. And guess what happens when they audit them? They get access to every single transaction in their account.

I asked the IRS Commissioner about whether this proposal involved transactional data or just totals, and he said: Well, we already have access to their transactional data if we want it. That is not a direct quote, but that is the essence of what he said. And it is true. If they want to audit you, they can get access to your bank accounts already.

So the question is: Who are they going to audit? Now, today, those who are trying to defend this say: Well, we are only going to audit people who have, as they said, \$10,000 worth of inflow or outflow, and we will even exclude wages, which are already reported, and we will exclude government benefits, which are already reported, and we will exclude interest, which is already reported, and we won't look into anybody's account if they make under \$400,000.

Well, that is actually not true. They just said they wouldn't audit those accounts. How can they make the money they are trying to make out of this proposal if they don't?

Let's look at this in another perspective. We asked the Joint Committee on Taxation to tell us what they think the distribution of audits and tax collections would be from Americans in all income brackets of this proposal, and the Joint Committee on Taxation said: Well, you know, we can't tell you that because they haven't given enough detail on their proposal. So we can't tell you what their proposal is going to do because they haven't told us just the details of how their proposal is going to work.

But Joint Committee on Taxation did say: You know, what we can do is

look at the tax gap, which this is supposedly aimed at addressing, and we can tell you where that tax gap falls among the various income cohorts. So we asked them to do that.

They indicated that the tax gap falls mostly in ineffective or less than accurate reporting on schedules C and schedule E. So they went through and they looked at this. So if you look at the Joint Committee on Taxation's report and the tax gap that is available for the IRS to go get, here is what would happen: 40 to 57 percent of the tax gap collections would come from taxpayers making \$50,000 or less. If you add in up to \$100,000, 65 to 78 percent of those making less than \$100,000 would be part of the tax gap that they would be going after; 78 to 90 percent from those making less than \$200,000; and only 4 to 9 percent would come from those making \$500,000 or more.

So if you want to know what the IRS wanted, you can look at this data on the tax gap; you can look at the data on where the tax gap lies; and you can look at their very first proposal that was down as low as \$600. And you know then what the IRS is seeking to get.

Americans should be outraged that the IRS is seeking to make banks, credit unions—I don't know—Venmo, PayPal, credit card companies, everybody who handles financial transactions, report to them, if you hit some level, whether it be \$600 or \$10,000 of either income or expenditure. And then the door is open. Then the IRS can use its algorithms and decide whether to do a deeper dive on you.

And if they use the data from the Internal Revenue Code and from the tax reporting that has already gone on, 90 percent or more will come from people making \$200,000 or less. Or the IRS will have to forgo that; in which case, they will be trying to collect on only 4 to 9 percent, which is the people making over \$500,000.

Either way you look at it, either they are going to be collecting money—and that is billions and billions of dollars—from people who make less than \$400,000 and mostly less than \$200,000 or \$100,000—or they won't make the tax collections that they are claiming they are going to get to justify the spending they want to make in their spending spree, in this big tax-and-spending spree that they are trying to cram down through Congress.

Let's look at it from another way. Does Treasury envision gathering information on all of a—let's take a teacher. So if you have a teacher, does Treasury envision gathering information on all of the teacher's savings, checking, PayPal, Apple Pay, and Venmo accounts and somehow expect financial institutions to crosscheck these transfers to see if the threshold has been tripped? And at which point must additional reporting be done?

It is very important to point out here: When I said earlier the White House and Treasury haven't really said what their plan is, it is because they

don't want people to know what the real plan is.

There is a telling sentence in the Green Book, put out by the White House, about this plan. It says that broad powers will be given to Treasury Department to issue by rule and regulation the details of how they are going to utilize and access this data.

So if you have got a Treasury Department which has already proven it can't keep the data it has safe and that its data will be hacked; if you have a Treasury Department that has already proven that it will not avoid utilizing the data it has for political purposes, that it will not weaponize the data it collects to punish or try to diminish the effect and influence of people with different political points of view; if you already have an IRS that has proven that it will take those kinds of actions, and that it is available to be accessed for its private data to be hacked, what can Americans expect from that?

Again, those today who have talked about it said they have fixes that, as I see it, don't really fix the proposal because it has fundamental flaws. The IRS does not need to have access to the accounts of every American who spends more than \$10,000 or every American who has income of over \$10,000.

Industry has already spoken up about these changes that were proposed today. The American Bankers Association says that even with the modifications announced today, this proposal goes too far by forcing financial institutions to share with the IRS private financial data from millions of customers not suspected of cheating on their taxes.

The exclusion of payroll and Federal program beneficiaries does not address millions of other taxpayers who will be impacted by this proposal. Not every nonwage worker is a millionaire. How about self-employed hair stylists, convenience store owners, and farmers, just to name a few?

If enacted, this new proposal would still raise some of the same privacy concerns; increase tax preparation costs for individuals and small businesses; and create significant operational challenges, particularly for community banks. The list goes on.

Americans must speak up loudly and say "no."

When asked if she was going to put this in the next bill, NANCY PELOSI said: "Yes, yes, yes, yes."

Americans should say "No, no, no, no."

I yield to Senator GRASSLEY.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Thank you, Senator CRAPO, for leading this effort to point out what is wrong with this \$4.2-trillion reckless tax-and-spending spree. It is a massive government intrusion into the daily lives of American families.

Under their vision for America, there isn't any aspect of life in which the government shouldn't perform a leading role. From cradle to grave, childcare to healthcare, college to career, the Federal Government will be

there in your lives, shaping your every decision.

Their plans go well beyond shoring up the social safety net to prevent those in need from falling through the cracks. And everybody agrees that people that have needs, there is a role for government. But that doesn't include 320 million Americans.

No longer, then, will the Federal Government's primary role be about lending a helping hand so individuals can get back on their own feet. Instead, government would be the ultimate helicopter parent, constantly hovering, regardless of need.

Even wealthy households would be in line for generous handouts to procure Federal Government-approved childcare, send their kids to a Federal Government-structured preschool, purchase Federal Government-approved health insurance on the individual market, and obtain Federal Government-provided paid family leave.

Isn't that a staggering list of things that the Democrats are proposing in this 4.2 tax-and-spending spree they are pushing?

On the one hand, my Democratic colleagues rail against the wealthy paying too little tax. On the other hand, they want to shower the wealthy with government benefits, not to mention hand the wealthy, for instance, \$12,500 to purchase a luxury electric car and make Federal taxpayers subsidize the State tax bills of millionaires.

Can you believe the inconsistency of their arguments?

Tax the wealthy; give to the wealthy. At the same time, Democrats have decided that the best way to crack down on billionaires evading taxes is to snoop on the middle class. You just heard Senator CRAPO speak at length about that. Under their proposal, every American's bank account with \$600, or even if it is \$10,000, of annual taxations would be subject to the peering eyes of the IRS.

Democrats are betting the promise of free gifts will be too enticing for Americans to resist. However, Americans understand anything advertised as free comes with strings. Particularly, if it is free from the government, there is going to be strings attached. Those strings include higher taxes today and in the future and any loss of control over intimate family decisions.

Liberal Democrats, in their progressive bubble, are under the mistaken impression the general public is clamoring for evermore government programs. Now, in reality, Americans have long held a healthy skepticism of Big Government. A recent Gallup poll shows this continues to be true to this very day. According to Gallup—I think it was a weekend poll—nearly 80 percent of Americans say that they prefer lower taxes and less government, or would like to see no change in either. Only 19 percent said they wanted more taxes and more government.

President Clinton—up until 21 years ago, the President of the United

States—understood this well when, in 1996, he declared in a State of Union message, “the era of big government is over,” and then worked with Republicans on comprehensive welfare reform.

Why can't those things go on today?

Hopefully, President Biden and Senate Democrats come to their senses and realize this before taking our Nation down the path of fiscal ruin. And I would define “fiscal ruin” by a Democrat by the name of Larry Summers, former Secretary of the Treasury in the Clinton administration—and I think he also had some posts in the Obama administration—anyway, he told us in January, he told us in April, he told us in August, and I saw it again on television just last week: Spending all this money is feeding the fires of inflation like gasoline on that fire, and we ought to learn not to go through what we did in the seventies and eighties with inflation out of control.

Listen to that, fellow Democrats, today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, Hoosiers have heard me talk about the size of the Democrats' reckless tax-and-spend bill—\$3.5 trillion, and possibly growing in the House of Representatives. They have heard me talk about how this reckless proposal will raise tax on the American people.

When I am talking about this legislation back home, I don't have to go much past the \$3.5-trillion figure. People are against it. All told, Democrats have proposed \$7 trillion in spending this year alone—\$7 trillion.

Let me try to put that in perspective. Seven trillion dollars is roughly the mathematical equivalent of putting \$1 million of credit card debt on every man, woman, and child in the State of Indiana.

Now, Hoosiers know this is something we simply cannot afford. Beyond the massive multitrillion-dollar pricetag, we should examine exactly what the Democrats are proposing, because this bill isn't just a number on one side of a ledger sheet. This spending package—the largest in American history—represents a massive leftward shift in the way our country operates. And Hoosiers and, I think, all Americans need to know what is in it.

Well, thankfully, I sit on the Senate Finance Committee, and in the Senate Finance Committee we are charged with overseeing matters related to taxation and entitlement programs. So if anyone has insight into the particulars of this legislation, it would be a member of the Senate Committee on Finance.

If any legislation this large and this consequential were to pass, it would surely go through the Senate Finance Committee. But the full Finance Committee hasn't held a policy hearing in months.

Tomorrow, we will hold our first full committee hearing since July. That

hearing will be on a topic only remotely connected to the Democrats' reckless tax-and-spend proposal. And to my knowledge, no Senate committee has held any hearing whatsoever on this bill at all.

You see, this reckless tax-and-spend bill has all been done, largely, in secret, behind closed doors. I read about it in the newspapers. I will hear rumors about it from my colleagues.

So it is worth asking: What is the other side trying to hide? What have Democrats put in this mother of all bills?

Well, let's start with what the Wall Street Journal recently called “Entitlements for the Affluent.” This is the Wall Street Journal's way of saying “handouts for the rich,” which is accurate because so few of the new and expanding government giveaways in this bill are targeted in ways that I might support to actually help Americans of modest needs.

Now, for reference, the U.S. median income for a family of four in this country is about \$90,000. But, under this bill, a family can make \$400,000 a year and get an \$8,000 child tax credit from Washington.

How about ObamaCare subsidies?

The original eligibility limit for ObamaCare subsidies is 400 percent of the Federal poverty level—or about \$106,000 for a household of four. Their bill completely removes the eligibility limit. This means much wealthier Americans would be eligible for taxpayer-subsidized health insurance.

If Speaker NANCY PELOSI gets her way, wealthy elites on the coast will get a massive tax write-off for their mansions in high tax cities, like San Francisco; or high tax States, like New York.

Now, what else is in the bill? How about \$80 billion more for the IRS?

Yes, Democrats want to add a mandate that banks turn over to the IRS personal, confidential bank information from rank and file Americans.

You see, if you make or spend more than \$600 in a year, they want your private information. They want to know what you are spending money on, how you earned your money. I have called on Leader SCHUMER to abandon this unprecedented proposal. If you thought the IRS was a political weapon before, you ain't seen nothing yet.

What else is in this bill? How about \$3 billion for tree equity—tree equity—whatever that means. You can't make this stuff up. Some of the provisions that are supposed to be about climate change are really handouts to Democratic constituencies.

The spending bill raises the electric vehicle tax credit by up to \$5,000, among other expansions, with the pricetag of \$42 billion. Did you know you only get part of this credit, this electric vehicle tax credit of up to \$5,000, if your electric vehicle comes from a unionized plant? I represent a lot of quality union members, great Americans. They are patriots. But

under this proposal, plants like the Toyota or Honda or Subaru factories in my State of Indiana are told to take a hike because they are located in largely red States with nonunion employees—by choice.

I haven't even talked about the tax increases supported by the other side that will raise taxes on lower and middle-income households. Some of these households make under \$30,000 a year. This is a clear violation of President Biden's tax pledge—a pledge that 49 out of 50 of my Democratic colleagues formally voted to uphold just 2 months ago when we considered the budget.

Ladies and gentlemen, this reckless tax-and-spending spree is full of giveaways to the wealthy and handouts to Democratic constituencies. I stand for the working men and women of this country. The Republican Party stands for the working men and women of this country. We will stand united against these giveaways to the rich. It is offensive. It is too much money, and it must be stopped.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The Senator yields back. Any other Senators seeking recognition?

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, that concludes the Finance Committee Members' discussion today.

I just want to thank Senator GRASSLEY and Senator YOUNG for joining me to help to continue to make the American people aware of what is going on here in Washington with this reckless tax-and-spending spree and this massive dragnet of IRS access into people's individual bank accounts and other financial accounts.

I hope Americans across the country will speak out loudly in opposition to these terrible ideas that are now being crammed down in both the House and the Senate.

I yield back our time.

I believe Senator GRASSLEY is here to speak on other matters.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I hear about rising costs of prescription drugs at nearly every one of my town-hall meetings.

Three years ago, I began a bipartisan effort to lower prescription drug costs. Following our Finance Committee hearings at that time, we had a mark-up, and we had bipartisan negotiations. Senator WYDEN, now chairman of the Finance Committee, and I introduced, at that time, the Prescription Drug Pricing Reduction Act.

The bill caps yearly out-of-pocket drug costs for seniors at \$3,100. It prevents drug costs from growing faster than the consumer price index on a yearly basis. It ends uncapped taxpayer-funded subsidies to Big Pharma. It creates more sunshine, more competition, and it even has oversight into the world of drug pricing. It brings meaningful reform while driving down costs. It has \$72 billion in savings for

seniors—that is out-of-pocket costs to them—and \$95 billion savings of taxpayers' money through Medicare.

An important goal that we accomplish in our bill is lowering drug costs without hurting innovation. We did this by keeping government out of the business of setting prices and indirectly keep the government out of your medicine cabinet.

Democrats have proposed the irresponsible idea of government dictating drug prices. They would do this by getting rid of the noninterference clause in the Part D part of Medicare. It is better known as so-called drug price negotiations, but it is not negotiation; it is dictating prices.

Eighteen years ago, I was the principle architect of the Medicare Part D Program. Adding a prescription drug benefit for seniors was the right thing to do then, and it is still the right thing to do, but it needed to be done in the right way, and that right way is for the patients.

In creating Part D, we enacted a very key policy: keeping the government out of the business of dictating drug prices. Governments don't negotiate; they dictate. Competition is the only thing that drives innovation, curbs costs, expands coverage, and improves outcomes.

The Congressional Budget Office has consistently stated that government negotiations of drug prices would not achieve greater savings than the current market-based system, unless you restrict the formulary or dictate the price through reference pricing based upon what socialist healthcare systems pay in other countries. That is the outcome. The government gets between you and your doctors prescribing.

Democrats propose so-called drug price negotiations in their reckless tax-and-spending spree to save hundreds of billions of dollars. Who is hurt by this policy? Of course, patients are.

The Democrats would have government dictate drug pricing based upon an international reference pricing index. Study after study has shown so-called drug pricing negotiations will reduce the number of new drugs produced. What your doctor wants to prescribe for you might not be on that formulary.

This policy would be devastating if one of those drugs was the cure for Alzheimer's or diabetes or cancer. I don't believe that is what Americans want.

While Democrats attempt to advance their partisan drug pricing scheme, I hope common sense will prevail, and we pass a bipartisan prescription drug bill. I have engaged with colleagues on both sides of the aisle and in a bicameral way. I did this so common sense would prevail, if we ever get to the point of Democrats realizing that the government dictating prices on an international basis of what the prices are in other countries will never get 60 votes here in the U.S. Senate.

All of the Republicans and Democrats I have contacted have expressed

eagerness to find a solution to meaningfully lower prescription drug costs. Holding Big Pharma accountable has historically been a bipartisan effort.

Delivering new reforms to fight price hikes should be no different. Democrats should stop pursuing their reckless tax-and-spending spree that will hurt innovation and produce less cures. Instead, we should act by passing my bipartisan prescription drug bill.

I think maybe there is an inkling of good news coming from the Speaker of the House—and I have had a chance to visit with her at least three times in the last 2 years on this very subject about my bill—when she said that she didn't think—I don't know whether she referred to the number H.R. 3, but that is the bill that has their main effort on reducing prescription drugs—when she said that she didn't think that that would have the votes to get passed.

I hope there is some awakening to the fact that we need to do something and that this bipartisan approach is the answer.

TRUMP INVESTIGATION

Mr. President, today I would like to discuss the media's complete misrepresentation of the Republican report on Senator DURBIN's Trump investigation, in which my staff participated according to Committee rules.

I gave an October 7 speech on this subject, and you wouldn't know that anybody read my speech based upon what has been reported on TV. But as I noted in that October 7 speech, Senator DURBIN publicly released a Democratic staff report on his investigation. We Republicans did the same thing that very same day.

I came to the floor that same day to describe the Republican report. In so doing, I laid out what the available facts and evidence showed within the scope of the inquiry. That scope was from December 14, 2020, to January 3, 2021. But TV seemed to think we were talking about what happened on Capitol Hill on January 6.

The Durbin investigation ended on January 3—or events leading up to January 3. I say that date range yet again because many reporters have wrongly conflated this investigation with the January 6, 2021, events here on Capitol Hill. We know all the damage that was done to the Capitol that day.

So I want to repeat: The scope of the investigation stopped on January 3, not January 6, but you wouldn't know it from the TV reports.

I am not going to rehash my entire speech. I have incorporated it here by reference. However, I will note, yet again for the media, several key facts. This is not analysis, as I think TV was trying to do, just the facts.

Fact 1. Records indicate that President Trump's focus was on "legitimate complaints and reports of crimes." And those words come from the transcript.

Fact 2. Witnesses testified that President Trump's main focus was making the Justice Department aware of the potential criminal allegations and to

ensure the Department did its job. Trump's focus then wasn't to direct or order specific investigative steps. And to that point, witnesses said that Trump's focus was on the American people—not himself or his campaign—being harmed by what he believed to be widespread election fraud.

Fact 3, these witnesses testified under 18 U.S.C. 1001, which makes it a crime to give false statements, that it was not unreasonable for President Trump to question what the Justice Department was doing to investigate election fraud and crime allegations.

In fact, one witness testified under 1001 that Trump had “no impact”—those two words—on the Department's actions to investigate election allegations.

I would be remiss if I didn't also note that one witness testified under 1001 that the Justice Department was “dragging their feet and maybe more to keep these investigations from going forward.”

Fact 4, my staff read former U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Georgia, BJ Pak, a press release from the Biden administration where Biden set policy for the Justice Department by prohibiting it from using subpoenas for records of reporters in criminal leak investigations.

My staff then asked if any President has similar authority to set the Department's policy with respect to investigating and reviewing voter fraud and election crime allegations. This witness stated, “I would agree that the President has that duty.”

And the last fact, 5, President Trump twice rejected firing Acting Attorney General Rosen, and twice rejected the notion of sending what is called the “draft Clark letter.”

Now, after giving you those facts, accordingly, on the basis of this foundational evidence, with respect to the scope of this investigation from December 14, 2020, to January 3, 2021, President Trump sought and followed the advice and also the recommendations of his senior advisers. I note with specific emphasis the fact that he followed their advice and recommendations. This is a crucial fact.

The report is entitled “In Their Own Words.” It is based on actual witness evidence, not CNN-style partisan analysis. I encourage everyone to read the report and the transcripts and draw your own conclusions. That is how I always approached my investigations in the years that I have been in the U.S. Senate.

Now let's go to how my speech was reported on TV. Some on CNN have said that I showed “fealty” to Trump by stating the facts. They called these facts that I just recited “delusional.” I have never had a problem following the facts wherever they lead, no matter who is in power.

So I am going to refer to an investigation I did in the Trump administration, and it involved some people in the Trump—and close to President Trump.

I ran a transcribed interview on Donald Trump, Jr., during the Trump administration. That was done as part of my Trump-Russia investigation when I was chairman of the Judiciary Committee, which focused on the June 9, 2016, Trump Tower meeting.

I also subpoenaed Paul Manafort to appear at a hearing and provide testimony. Instead of publicly testifying, Manafort voluntarily agreed to an interview with my and then-Ranking Member FEINSTEIN's staff. But as the ranking member's staff then refused to interview him and objected to my staff doing so without them there, that didn't move forward.

Notably, the committee never received any—when I was chairman during this investigation I am talking about, the committee never received any emails from the Democratic National Committee or the Clinton campaign, even though we repeatedly asked for them. Of course, the Democrats wouldn't support subpoenaing them, and you didn't hear a lot about that from the media—the double standard media. The Trump campaign produced records.

Just like there is a coverage vacuum, particularly by CNN, of Hunter Biden and James Biden and their connection with the communist Chinese Government, my and Senator JOHNSON's September 20 report on those financial connections and their potential criminality was attacked as Russian disinformation. Later on, Hunter Biden publicly admitted that he was under criminal investigation for financial matters. I don't hear much about that on CNN.

In my and JOHNSON's report, we made clear that based upon deep financial connections between the Biden family and foreign governments, Hunter Biden is a counterintelligence and extortion concern.

On that note, recently released emails have opened up the possibility that Joe Biden mixed bank accounts and funds with Hunter Biden. Other emails show that Joe Biden shared office space with individuals connected to the communist Chinese regime.

Of course, my and Senator JOHNSON's report was the first to prove that Hunter Biden, James Biden, and other family members had extensive financial and business relationships with individuals not just connected to the communist Chinese regime, but its intelligence and military services.

About that Grassley and Johnson report, POLITICO ran the off-base headline: “GOP Senators' anti-Biden report repackages old claims.”

In contrast, one of their own reporters just very recently confirmed the authenticity of some of Hunter Biden's emails for a book that he was writing.

One Washington Post columnist said: “Even after accepting disinformation from Russian agents, Johnson and Grassley couldn't come up with anything new or interesting on Hunter Biden.”

And NPR said about the New York Post Hunter Biden stories: “We don't want to waste our time on stories that are not really stories, and we don't want to waste the listeners' and readers' time on stories that are just pure distractions.”

Now, compare what I have said—how different Democrats and Republicans are treated; how investigations are done differently by Republicans and by Democrats—and then look at the state of journalism today. What I just said is so much for investigative journalism. Investigative journalism died without so much as a whimper.

The media's attack against the Republican Trump report is essentially an attack on witness testimony received by the committee. Time and again, many in the media have failed to meet the facts head-on in order to fit their own biased story line.

So I say to everybody, including journalists that don't want to do hard work: Read the testimony of those people that were taken on what went on between December 14 and January 3. Read what I say about it. Read what Senator DURBIN says about it. But at least read the testimony if you are going to make comments distorting what I said on October 7. In other words, stop screwing up.

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

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

VOTE ON MOTION TO DISCHARGE

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all remaining time be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to discharge.

The yeas and nays have been previously ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT).

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 417 Ex.]

YEAS—50

Baldwin	Hassan	Murray
Bennet	Heinrich	Ossoff
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Padilla
Booker	Hirono	Peters
Brown	Kaine	Reed
Cantwell	Kelly	Rosen
Cardin	King	Sanders
Carper	Klobuchar	Schatz
Casey	Leahy	Schumer
Coons	Lujan	Shaheen
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Sinema
Duckworth	Markey	Smith
Durbin	Menendez	Stabenow
Feinstein	Merkley	Tester
Gillibrand	Murphy	

Van Hollen	Warnock	Whitehouse
Warner	Warren	Wyden

NAYS—49

Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blackburn	Hagerty	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Collins	Kennedy	Shelby
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cramer	Lummis	Tillis
Crapo	Marshall	Toomey
Cruz	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Young
Fischer	Paul	
Graham	Portman	

NOT VOTING—1

Blunt

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PETERS). Pursuant to S. Res. 27, and the motion to discharge having been agreed to, the nomination will be placed on the executive calendar.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I will be speaking in a moment. I had planned to deliver my remarks prior to making a unanimous consent request, but in deference to my friend and colleague from Washington, I will be making the consent request first, and then proceed to my prepared remarks.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2847

Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration of S. 2847, and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. Further, I ask unanimous consent that the bill 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 Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, first, before I object, I would like to thank the Senator for his consideration. I really do appreciate that.

Mr. President, reserving the right to object, here we go again. Even after 700,000 deaths and rising, Republicans are coming up with new ideas to undermine our vaccination efforts and make it harder for us to safely reopen our country; and in this case, even make it harder for us to respond to future pandemics.

Requiring basic precautions to keep people safe when traveling is nothing new in this country, nor are immunization requirements, for that matter.

And let's be clear and remember, the vaccine requirements President Biden has enacted so far include tailored exemptions for legitimate religious and medical conditions that have long been standard, and the emergency temporary standard he has envisioned would allow testing as an alternative.

Therefore, I would call on my Republican colleagues to remember this is a pandemic; it is not a political football. We need to treat it as a public health crisis.

And, therefore, I do object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I have come here to the Senate floor six times now to oppose President Biden's unconstitutional actions, using the Federal Government and using the Oval Office, in particular, in order to force Americans to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

Now, as I have said before, as I have said each and every time I have spoken on this issue, I am not opposed to the COVID-19 vaccine. I have been fully vaccinated, as has every member of my family, with my encouragement. I encouraged my family, I have encouraged friends, everyone I know, to get vaccinated.

I think the vaccine is a blessing, and it is one that has helped a lot of people. And I think it is one for which society, as a whole, has benefited.

I have had and recovered from COVID-19 before I got vaccinated, and I can tell you that contracting COVID is not an experience that I would like to repeat, and it is not an experience that I want others to have. That is why I have had the vaccine and why I have encouraged others to do the same.

I, nonetheless, raise my hand in this very Chamber each time I have been sworn into the office. Pursuant to the Constitution, I stood right there on those steps and I swore an oath to uphold and protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.

That inspired document limits the powers of government. It does so because government power is sacred. Government power is dangerous. Government power always involves the actual or threatened use of coercive force. It is what government is—the ability and the authority to use coercive force and to do so on an official basis through law. It is for that reason that the Constitution carefully contains the power of government and does so in a way that reflects its immense capacity for harm.

There are lots of other things that are useful that we have to be careful when handling. You know, fire, electricity, oxygen, water, these are all things that are necessary, that we depend upon, that we need; and things that, if left uncontrolled, can inflict all sorts of harm, can hurt people, can kill people, can destroy life and property.

So that is why the Constitution goes to great lengths to draw boundaries and assign authority not only to different branches of government, but also different levels of government. In fact, every single provision of the U.S. Constitution is itself a form of limitation on government power.

These protections were designed to prevent government from excessively burdening the American people, because we have seen over time the tendency of governments to abuse that power and, in particular, the tendency of governments to become abusive when there is a dangerous accumulation of power at the hands of a few.

Tragically, and under the direction of Senates and Houses of Representatives and White Houses of every conceivable partisan combination, we have strayed far from the design of our government—the design put in place by the Constitution, the very same Constitution to which we have all sworn an oath.

And as a result of that, Americans are now forced to work many months out of every year just to pay their Federal tax obligations only to be told after the fact, by the way, that is not nearly enough because we are now nearly \$30 trillion in debt in closing.

The monetary printing presses are pumping out tsunamis of fiat currency that eats away at Americans' savings and earnings. Government regulations cost trillions of dollars a year as a hidden back door, invisible, and highly regressive tax on American productivity and on American development.

And this is a tax that is borne disproportionately by poor and middle-class Americans who find that everything they buy—goods and services alike—become more expensive. And we find that they also pay for it with diminished wages, unemployment, and underemployment.

Almost every aspect of American life is now inappropriately restricted, directed, or taxed by the Federal Government. President Biden's recent mandate adds yet another roadblock to millions of Americans just trying to get by, forcing them to choose between getting vaccinated on the one hand and having a job on the other hand.

What it is doing is it is saying: Look, you don't agree with the government position on this? Fine. You are going to lose your job. You are going to pay. You are going to lose your job. You are going to be rendered unemployed and effectively unemployable. Not only that, but we are going to do it in a way that many instances will render it basically impossible for you to recover unemployment benefits.

One of the things that is particularly devious about this one is that the mandate itself hasn't been issued, and yet it has been now a month and a half or so since President Biden gave the speech announcing his intention to create it.

Had he created it, we would at least know what we were dealing with. We would know the precise source of authority in the law that he was claiming. We would know the contours of how it would be enforced. We would know the contours of any exceptions to the mandate.

And because we would have an order, there would be something that people could challenge in court, where necessary. But as of right now, we have none of those things. We have only this Damoclean sword hanging over the American people, who are forced to guess.

And in the meantime, we have corporate America—we have employers with more than 99 workers, understandably, scrambling in an effort to get ahead of this thing because they know that the penalties for noncompliance with this are likely to be significant. So many of them are trying to get ahead of it so they are not caught flat-footed and unable to comply.

As a result, many of these have just tried to guess at what the mandate will say and adopted those policies, sometimes knowing that their policies might be more aggressive than what the Federal Government will require.

But in the meantime, this leaves no one accountable. The corporations have the Federal Government to blame. And the Federal Government responds by saying there is no policy yet; there is nothing to sue on yet; there is nothing for the Federal courts to enjoin as unlawful, as unconstitutional, as an improper exercise of Federal power generally—keeping in mind that the Federal Government is one of few and defined powers, as James Madison described them in *Federalist No. 45*. The powers reserved for the States are numerous and indefinite. We flipped that on its head here. There is nothing that gives the Federal Government this power.

My friend and colleague from Washington moments ago made the argument that vaccines are nothing new and that vaccine requirements are nothing new. Well, you know, they are new when it comes to a general mandate issued by the Federal Government to do this. Yes, there have been mandates in the past, but insofar as they deal with the general population as opposed to military personnel or certain government workers. These are not Federal law issues. These have been State law issues. The Federal Government has no general police powers.

Even if there were power within the Federal Government to do this, which I assure you there is not, we know for certain that one person acting alone—even if that person is the President of the United States—has not the power to do this.

This is, I believe, perhaps the most egregious example of Presidential overreach, the most shameless executive branch power grab since President Harry Truman seized all steel mills in the United States in the 1950s in order to support the Korean war effort.

Now, President Truman did not get away with that. The Supreme Court appropriately struck that down as well outside Presidential powers. You see, nothing in the Constitution and nothing in Federal statute gave President Truman the power to seize steel mills simply because he deemed them an important part of the war effort.

Here, that hasn't happened. Here, that can't happen—at least not yet because we don't have an order. The President, after making this announcement about 6 weeks ago, hasn't had the decency to even tell us what the source of his authority is.

And I will let you in on a secret: He has none. He has not a single scintilla, not a shred of authority—not statutorily, not constitutionally—to do this. He does haven't the power to do it.

Now, lest you be deceived into thinking that this is an academic infringement of some esoteric liberty, it is not. Let's be honest about what we are doing here. We are telling hard-working American moms and dads: If you do not succumb, if you do not heel, if you don't obey the Presidential dictate at issue here, you are going to lose your job.

We are making them decide between getting a vaccine to which they may have a medical or a religious or some other legitimate exemption on the one hand and on the other hand becoming unemployed and unemployable. And in many instances, they are unable to even attain unemployment benefits because you know what a lot of these companies are doing—again, in order to get ahead of the mandate—they are adopting their own draconian and aggressive policies. They are already firing people. In some cases, they are not firing them. They are putting them on unpaid administrative leave, making it impossible for them to get unemployment. Is that really what we want to do?

Look, I understand the COVID-19 vaccine is a good thing. I consider it a medical miracle of sorts. What do you say to somebody whose religious beliefs make this an unacceptable choice for them? What do you say to someone with a genuinely serious medical condition, someone who has been told by his or her board-certified medical doctor, "Don't get this vaccine. You, in your case, you shouldn't get it because of medical condition X, Y, or Z"? What do you say to that person? Do you really want to tell that person that them being brought to heel with the Federal directive issued by one person, in the absence of any statutory or constitutional authority to do that, that is more important; that is so compelling, that they have to be rendered unemployed, unemployable and ineligible, in many instances, even to collect unemployment? Is that really what we have sunk to? I hope not. I don't believe we have.

The American people know better. They know that is not how we resolve disputes in this country. It is certainly not how we treat religious minorities or people with medical conditions that make them have a different set of concerns than other people. That is not how we act.

By the way, it is also a good reason why we don't make law in this country through one person because, of course, Mr. President, a law like that would never pass. It would never pass here in the Senate or in the House of Representatives. It couldn't withstand that kind of scrutiny, not the way it has been laid out—not a chance.

Deep down, the President of the United States perhaps knows this. I

can only assume—of course, I can't read another human being's subjective mindset—but I can only assume that he would have brought it to Congress and given us the opportunity to consider it and adopt it. He cut out the people's elected representatives, the people's elected lawmakers whose constitutional obligation and authority it is to make the law so we can only make assumptions from them.

But it is not as though he didn't have time to do it. Six weeks have elapsed since he made the announcement. Meanwhile, I am hearing from countless people across America, including 300 or so people from the State of Utah who are themselves being put in impossible positions.

Now, look, mind you, for most people, this isn't a big deal. Most people in America have chosen to get the vaccine, and I am glad they have, but there are a lot of people whose stories are heart-wrenching.

Just this week, I heard from a flight attendant who works with a major U.S. airline. She has religious beliefs that make her opposed to getting this vaccine or any vaccine. She is a hard-working employee. She has been a faithful flight attendant, and it is a job that she has loved and she has enjoyed throughout her entire adult professional career. It is a job that has benefited her and her family, allowed her to make a living, put food on the table. She is now being faced with this awful choice between, on the one hand, betraying her religious beliefs—which she is unwilling to do—and, on the other hand, losing a job which is her only means of earning a living, of feeding her family. How is this fair? How is this just? How is this constitutional? It is not.

Troublingly, there are now signs that the White House isn't satisfied with just making Americans who haven't received the vaccine unemployed and unemployable. The administration is reportedly also considering a medical mandate for interstate travel. Such a move would be deeply constitutionally concerning, but it would also revoke yet another freedom and make yet another group of American citizens solidly second class.

The privileges and immunities clause of the 14th Amendment, of course, protects the right to interstate travel. There is no precedent in our Nation's history of a requirement of this nature for interstate travel.

Even if those considerations were somehow untrue—they are not, but even if they were—Congress has certainly not granted such authority to the President of the United States to act unilaterally, nor would we ever.

A mandate requiring people to get the COVID-19 vaccine in order to have the privilege, the benefit, which is actually just a right, one that the American people ought to be able to rely on to travel interstate within the United States, is truly unthinkable.

But many of the Federal Government's actions over the last year have

shown Americans the real threat it poses to freedom and simply to common sense. Remember, this is the administration that has forced our 2-year-olds to wear masks for hours at a time on airplanes, buses, trains, and in bus depots, train stations, and airports—2-year-olds. For any parent out there or for anyone who has ever actually interacted with a 2-year-old human, you can certainly understand how absurd this is, especially when our peer nations have recognized there is no need to mask a 2-year-old.

But back to the mandate for a minute. If we think through this disturbing possibility of forced medical treatment as a condition precedent for visiting family in another State or traveling for business reasons or traveling for any reason at all from one State to another, the impacts are clear, and they are devastating. Businesses already hard-hit by the pandemic—the travel and hospitality sectors—would, of course, be further strained; collateral damage, I suppose, on the part of those who would push such an oppressive move.

Individuals could be marooned in States or they couldn't work, couldn't go to restaurants, and couldn't leave. And the social capital built from face-to-face interactions would be further set back.

I believe vaccines are generally safe, and they help protect people from the harms of contracting COVID-19. I have in the past and I still now continue to encourage people to get the vaccine, but we must ask what ends this administration is willing to go to to cudgel Americans to this state-sponsored health edict.

I am personally uncomfortable with such sweeping mandates, but, more importantly, I am required by my oath to protect the Constitution of the United States to oppose this action. That is why I brought forward my latest iteration of my efforts against this unlawful, unconstitutional, and still inchoate mandate. My Let Me Travel America Act would clarify the law and prohibit the Federal Government from mandating that Americans receive shots against COVID-19 as a prerequisite for interstate travel.

I am grateful that my colleagues, Senators TUBERVILLE, BRAUN, and SULLIVAN, have joined me as cosponsors of this bill.

This is a commonsense, practical, reasonable bill, one that would simply provide assurance and protection to millions of Americans whose rights are under attack.

Moments ago, I came here, and I asked unanimous consent that we pass this bill today with the understanding that I am going to continue to come back day after day, as long as it takes, to address what the President is doing.

The Senate had a chance to protect the American people from yet another unconstitutional overreach. It is disappointing to me, really, that my friend and colleague, the Senator from

Washington, chose to object to its adoption.

This shouldn't be controversial. It is really not controversial among the American people. I guarantee you, you take a poll asking people should the Federal Government ever be able to tell you that you can't travel interstate unless you receive a particular medical treatment, there is no way the American people would think that is a good idea because it is not, because it is absurd, and because it violates everything that we believe in.

Now, my friend and colleague, the distinguished Senator from Washington, made the point that such measures can't be enacted because, according to her, they supposedly undermine vaccine efforts. Do you know what undermines the vaccine effort? What undermines the vaccine effort is when you try to use the overpowering cudgel of coercive force, a type and a level of coercive force that no other entity on planet Earth can wield more strongly than the Federal Government—you use that cudgel to tell people who haven't gotten it yet: You must get this.

Look, a lot of people have been getting the vaccine. Yes, there are some holdouts, and they have their reasons for being holdouts. There are a lot of ways that you can convince someone to do something that they don't currently want to do. One of the things that is going to make it far less likely that they get the vaccine is for them to be told that they are being threatened with their jobs. It is not how you win. Even if it were that we could somehow chalk this up as a win here, that is not who we are; that is not how we play.

And this is unprecedented. Make no mistake, the Federal Government has never undertaken anything like this. States and political subdivisions of States—meaning cities, towns, counties, so forth—States and their subdivisions have general police powers, meaning broad power to protect health, safety, and welfare; to protect life, liberty, and property in whatever manner they deem appropriate, subject, of course, to such limitations as may be placed on them either by their State Constitution or by the U.S. Constitution.

But States and their subdivisions have the ability to enact legislation like this—health, safety, welfare legislation—in a way that the Federal Government doesn't. We have to act pursuant to one of the enumerated powers in the Constitution.

I challenge anyone to identify what source of authority can fairly be said to give the Federal Government this kind of power. It doesn't exist. We have never exercised this power with respect to the U.S. population at large. It is a different thing entirely to point to vaccine requirements that we have had for certain Federal personnel, including our military servicemembers. We have never done anything like this. If we were to ever consider something like this at a Federal level, I would have

grave concerns with it because I don't think it is the prerogative of the Federal Government.

But I can tell you one thing, I am darn certain we would never give one person the authority to impose such a mandate. No, that is not how our constitutional system works. There are a lot of reasons why we no longer fly the Union Jack. A lot of them had to do with what happens when you have a dangerous accumulation of power in the hands of a few. That is one of the reasons why we put in place a rigid set of requirements saying that before you change the legal status quo, before you pass a law, you have to run it through Congress. Any Federal law, assuming it is acting in an area within the Federal Government's power and authority and jurisdiction, it can't become law, Federal law, until you run it through the House, run the same language through the Senate. Then you present it to the President for an opportunity for veto, signature, or acquiescence. Without going through that process, you have not made a Federal law.

Look, Harry Truman's effort to seize the entire steel industry in the United States was unlawful. It was unconstitutional. And, mercifully, the courts were able to dispense of that in a relatively short period of time.

We don't even have the luxury of going to court in this instance because the President hasn't had the decency to show us his work, to tell us what he is actually doing.

Meanwhile, he is bullying corporate America to do his dirty work for him. Corporate America is dutifully complying in some cases, perhaps out of allegiance or a desire to appear compliant with the President's wishes; in other instances, just for more practical reasons. They don't want to be stuck with the heavy fines that may be levied against them if they are caught flat-footed and unprepared for what may be coming. So they are doing the President's dirty work for him. They are doing the firing, rendering people unemployed, unemployable, and in some cases ineligible even to receive unemployment.

Shame on him and shame on us if we don't call this out for what it is, which is an aggressive, unconstitutional, baseless power grab.

My friend and distinguished colleague, the Senator from Washington, also pointed to what she referred to as tailored exemptions to the vaccine mandate.

What exemptions?

There is no mandate. There are no exemptions. Yeah, he has spoken in aspirational terms about certain exemptions that would be available, but corporate America doesn't know what they are. And so corporate America, acting on the advice of counsel, is understandably being very aggressive, erring on the side of firing more people and rendering more people unemployed and unemployable, and in many cases rendering them incapable of receiving unemployment.

So, no. No. Don't tell me these are tailored exemptions, when there aren't even exemptions. In order for it to be an exemption, you have got to have a mandate. There is no mandate. There is just the threatened use of the mandate that is making corporate America decide that it is in its best interest to do the President's dirty work for him, and in a way that protects him from being questioned on legal, meritorious grounds in court.

And if we can't muster the legislative will to defend that power which is rightfully ours—not ours in the sense that we personally own it, but it has been given to the people, the power to make sure that laws are passed only by their elected Representatives and Senators—we can't stand up for this, shame on us.

And if we can't stand up for even a further encroachment on that power and on the corresponding right that the American people have long come to depend upon, to be able to travel interstate without undue hindrance or interference from their government, it is a sad outcome, one that I can't countenance. That is why I am going to be back day after day, as long as it takes. The American people expect more. The American people deserve better.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HASSAN). The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. 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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 254.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Tana Lin, of Washington, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Washington.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, 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 Executive Calendar No. 254, Tana Lin, of Washington, to be United States Dis-

trict Judge for the Western District of Washington.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Christopher Murphy, Amy Klobuchar, Debbie Stabenow, Martin Heinrich, Edward J. Markey, Patty Murray, Tina Smith, Tammy Baldwin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Brian Schatz, Tim Kaine, Alex Padilla, Tammy Duckworth, Richard Blumenthal, Jacky Rosen.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. 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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 187.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Douglas L. Parker, of West Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, 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 Executive Calendar No. 187, Douglas L. Parker, of West Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor.

Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Sheldon Whitehouse, Ben Ray Lujan, Martin Heinrich, Cory A. Booker, Jack Reed, Joe Manchin III, Richard J. Durbin, Mazie K. Hirono, Christopher A. Coons, Richard Blumenthal, Jacky Rosen, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Gary C. Peters, Chris Van Hollen, Robert P. Casey, Jr.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. 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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 338.

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

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Myrna Perez, of New York, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I proudly 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 Executive Calendar No. 338, Myrna Perez, of New York, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.

Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Sheldon Whitehouse, Ben Ray Lujan, Martin Heinrich, Cory A. Booker, Jack Reed, Richard J. Durbin, Mazie K. Hirono, Christopher A. Coons, Richard Blumenthal, Jacky Rosen, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Gary C. Peters, Chris Van Hollen, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Michael F. Bennet.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, finally, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions filed today, October 19, be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in 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.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, this week, the Senate will consider Christine O'Hearn's nomination for the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey.

Ms. O'Hearn is eminently qualified to be a district court judge.

She has nearly 30 years of experience as a litigator in private practice. During that time, she has tried numerous cases to verdict and has completed more than 150 trial days as lead counsel.

Ms. O'Hearn has worked on both the plaintiff and defense sides of complex civil litigation matters, with her core focus being employment law.

In addition to representing individual clients, Ms. O'Hearn has represented both private and public entities, including a number of county and municipal governments.