

Massive tax increases aren't the only provisions that seem to have survived negotiations, the best we can tell from the reporting. Handouts to wealthy Americans to buy electric vehicles appears to be safe. Talk about socialism for rich people. These aren't cars that average working families can afford to buy. They are, roughly, double or more expensive than regular cars operating on an internal combustion engine. Nevertheless, this bill, apparently, will provide for \$12,500 in tax credits for electric vehicle purchases—again, for some of the most expensive cars in the marketplace.

So, for those people working for a living, who cannot afford to buy these expensive electric vehicles even with this very generous tax credit, they are going to be asked to subsidize the purchase of these vehicles by wealthy Americans who don't need the tax credit or the subsidy coming from hard-working American families.

This subsidy isn't only set up to reward buyers purchasing American-made vehicles; you can still receive a taxpayer handout even if the vehicle is completely or substantially made overseas, in countries like China.

On top of that, a bigger tax credit is available to electric cars built in union shops. Well, maybe union-built vehicles are somehow more green than other electric vehicles. I doubt that. Or maybe it is a favor doled out to a favored interest group by our friends across the aisle. That seems like the more likely conclusion.

While electric vehicles don't use gasoline, they still require a lot of energy to run. Our colleagues don't, apparently, know where electricity needed to run these vehicles comes from. Well, I will tell them. It comes from coal; it comes from natural gas; it comes from renewables; it comes from hydropower and nuclear power or some mixture of all of those. Yet these are the very energy sources they say they are seeking to avoid by incentivizing more use of electric vehicles.

Well, if Democrats raise taxes on companies that produce natural gas, which accounts for 40 percent of our electricity production, what is the plan to power the fleet of taxpayer-subsidized electric vehicles?

Renewables don't generate enough energy to power our country today, let alone the amount we need to charge millions of new electric vehicles. Still, the Democrats are eager to push America toward renewables and punish those who don't jump on board.

One of the most controversial parts of the Democrats' energy push appears to be in peril, if you can believe the reporting. Again, none of us have seen this. We just know what we read. That program is known as the Clean Electricity Performance Program, or the CEPP. This program would reward utility companies that already use renewable electricity sources and punish those that do not.

So, if you are wondering how that switch would go, just look at some of

the energy policies out West, in California. That State made an aggressive push to transition to push 100-percent renewables by 2030, but as I said, renewable energy is not always reliable energy, and it certainly isn't affordable energy. In recent years, California has implemented rolling blackouts to ration limited energy supplies during the hot summer months; and, on average, Californians pay twice as much as Texans for electricity. That is where those higher prices go—they get passed on to the consumer. Twice as much is the cost of electricity in California as compared to Texas.

So imagine what would happen if every utility company across the country were forced to use only renewable sources.

Last month, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's Commissioner testified before the Senate, and he said this proposal would be an "H bomb" for electricity markets. It would blow it up.

Our colleague, Senator MANCHIN, from West Virginia, has said he won't support this proposal; and good for him, but other Democrats have not given up yet.

President Biden recently insisted "nothing has been formally agreed to."

Again, this whole process is opaque to Republicans because we haven't been invited to the table or welcomed to the table to try to come up with a bipartisan policy. Our Democratic colleagues have insisted they want to do this all on their own because they know only then will they be able to come up, presumably, with something that will appease the most radical elements of their political base, and if they negotiated with the Republicans, they wouldn't be able to do that because we would have to negotiate toward the center rather than on the fringes of political ideology.

Despite the fact that these policies that I have mentioned would radically transform the energy landscape and drive up costs to consumers and hurt our energy security, our colleagues are rushing—rushing—to reach a deal before the President is wheels up to Europe. Forget sound public policy; President Biden wants a new talking point at the United Nations climate summit in Glasgow, Scotland.

This rush job comes at a time when energy prices are already skyrocketing. Talk about inflation. Gasoline is up more than 55 percent from a year ago. With winter fast approaching, heating bills, including heating oil that many Northern States use, are expected to rise as much as 54 percent from last year. This is really an invisible tax on people, where the value of your dollar that you earn is diminished by the increase in cost—54 percent over last year for heating bills in the northern part of our country. Well, it is all across the country, but it is, obviously, needed more there than in my part of the country.

Of course, these aren't the only high prices that families are facing. Infla-

tion continues to pummel the American people, putting a tight squeeze on family budgets. For seniors, for veterans, and others who operate on fixed incomes, those price hikes are a threat to their livelihoods. There could not be a more dangerous or costly time to wage war on American energy. No family should have to choose between buying groceries and turning on the heat in the wintertime.

President Biden is eager to put a show on in Glasgow and impress world leaders with dubious commitments that he can't keep, but these measures have the potential to inflict real and lasting harm on the American people.

I am not opposed to renewable energy, electric vehicles, or efforts to preserve our greatest natural resources for future generations. I support efforts to capture carbon and sequester it. All of these policies need to strike a delicate balance based on prudence, based on science, and based on logic, not based on some ideology about the way that you wish the world was; it is how the world is.

Democrats want to force the American people to pay more for less reliable energy and endanger our own energy security to meet these arbitrary net zero deadlines. As I said, they are rushing to meet a deadline so that President Biden can have a good applause line in Glasgow.

This is just the latest example of how the reckless tax-and-spending spree is not helping the American people at all but, rather, it is about forcing Democrats' vision on every city, State, and family in the country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The Senator from Connecticut.

#### GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, C.J. Brown was 7 years old. He was a second grader at Clarksdale Collegiate academy in Mississippi. Clarksdale, MS, is a relatively small town of 15,000 people. Everybody knows each other in Clarksdale. C.J. was described as a really bright young student. His principal and director at his school said that he was a great student. He was always cheerful and friendly to his classmates and teachers.

Clarksdale is reeling right now because just a few weeks ago, on October 12, little C.J. Brown was sitting in a car outside of a laundromat, and he was shot to death. The owner of a nearby corner store, the Tiger Mart, said that C.J. and his mom and his little sister used to come in all the time, friendly as can be, chatting up a storm. The owner of that little convenience store said that he considered C.J. and his mom and his little sister to be family.

You can say that C.J. was in the wrong place at the wrong time—a 7-year-old kid in a car outside of a laundromat shot to death—but he wasn't. He was in the right place at the right time. He was in what should have been a safe place his hometown, just sitting in a car.

That day, there were three shootings over 5 hours in this small town of Clarksdale. C.J. wasn't the only victim, but his death made news because he was 7 years old, and now he is gone.

The problem is, this story isn't the exception; it is the rule, increasingly so, across this country. For the last 8 years, I have come down to the floor with a chart that looks very much like this. In fact, I think this is the chart that I have displayed for about 5 years straight. I come down here every few weeks—sometimes, in busier times, every month or so—and I tell the story of men and women and children, often like C.J., to try to rattle the conscience of this body to do something about the epidemic of gun violence in this country.

These numbers in and of themselves are stunning. This is my old chart showing 36,000 people a year are killed by gunshot wounds—3,000 a month, 100 people day. There is no other nation in the high-income world that has anything approaching these numbers when it comes to gun violence. But these numbers are irrelevant now because what has happened over the last year and a half is a story unto itself.

Gun violence rates have spiked during the pandemic. In fact, the increase in 2020 was the biggest in 60 years from year to year. So I now have to bring a new chart to the floor. This one that I have used for 5 years now is irrelevant because no longer are 36,000 people dying a year from gunshot wounds. No longer are we losing 3,000 a month or 100 a day. We are now losing 40,000 a year, 3,300 a month, 110 people a day.

You can say: Well, that is a small increase. A hundred people used to die from gunshot wounds a day; now only 110 people a day.

That is 10 more families every single day, like the family of C.J. Brown, who have lost a loved one, often in the prime of their life, to a preventable crime that happens nowhere else at this frequency amongst our high-income peers.

What is interesting about 2020, though, is that overall crime rates didn't spike like gun homicides did. In fact, over all, major crimes in 2020 in this country went down, but gun homicides went up. There were 5,000 more gun homicides in 2020 than in 2019.

What is going on if major crimes are going down but gun homicides are going up? The story is likely complicated, but at the heart of it is this: More guns equals more crime. Forget the mythology that tells you that if you buy a gun, you are going to use that gun to protect yourself, that you are going to use it against an intruder or somebody who is trying to do harm to you. No. The data is the data. You can't get around it. It shows that for every community that has a 1-percent increase in gun ownership, what comes with it is a 1-percent increase in gun homicides. The more guns you have, the more likely that you are to have days like October 12, 2021, in Clarksdale, MS.

But there is more data to prove this point. What is interesting is that over the last 10 years, more and more homicides in this country are gun homicides. Ten years ago, about two-thirds of all homicides in this country involved a gun. But we have had more and more and more guns being purchased over the last 10 years. It used to be that maybe only 32 percent of households had a gun. Today, that number is 39 percent. So we have a lot more households with guns.

We had record numbers of guns bought in 2020. In March of 2020, for the first time, the background check system registered 1 million checks. Never before has this country had more guns bought and sold than in 2020. Not coincidentally, today, the number of homicides that involve a gun isn't two-thirds any longer; it is three-quarters. It went from 67 percent in a decade to 77 percent. More guns equals more homicides. More guns equals a greater number of violent crimes being perpetuated with guns. The data is the data. You can't get around it.

You think you are making yourself safer by bringing a gun into your house, but more often than not, that gun is going to be used to harm you or a loved one than it is against someone who is trying to do harm to you.

Many of these guns end up very quickly becoming illegal guns because they may at first be sold through a licensed gun dealer, but pretty soon, they get into the black market. Pretty soon, those guns get into the black internet market, the gun show market, where anybody can buy a gun regardless of their criminal record in many States without being caught, and those guns get trafficked to all sorts of people who should never own them.

The data is the data.

But here is what we also know about 2020: In States that have tougher gun laws, the rise in violent crime in 2020 was much lower than in States that don't have universal background checks. Now, we make the case here that gun laws matter, that if you take some commonsense steps to keep guns out of the hands of the wrong people—violent criminals, people with serious mental illness—you are going to have less gun crime. Well, that is what 2020 tells us. In States that have universal background checks, the violent crime rate just ticked up from 2019 to 2020—just ticked up—but in States without expanded background checks, the violent crime rate skyrocketed. There was a much bigger increase in States without universal background checks than in States with universal background checks. Common sense tells you why. Those States just do a little bit better job of making sure that only responsible gun owners can get their hands on a gun.

So we have these two stories from 2020 to tell. The first is a tragic one—a dramatic increase in the number of homicides; new highs in terms of the number of people who die at the hands

of a gun every single day. But this second story about how States that have gotten serious about commonsense measures supported by 90 percent of Americans to make sure that only law-abiding citizens have guns—they were able to control these increases much better than the States that didn't implement universal background checks and commonsense gun laws.

So I tell the story of C.J. today to try to shake this body into action and to try to make folks understand that we have all the data we need to have to tell us what works. None of it is that controversial. No matter what State you come from—blue or red, Republican, Democratic—your constituents support universal background checks. The data tells us that while 2020 was an awful year for gun crime, it was a lot more awful in the States that didn't invest in that policy. So why not just implement it on a national basis? It is politically popular and impactful when it comes to saving lives.

Lastly, even if you don't agree with me that we should make these commonsense changes to try to do something about this rising epidemic of gun violence in this country; even if you don't want to change the gun laws in this Nation, I have another offer for you.

I heard Senator CORNYN come down to the floor and talk about all the radical policies that are in the Build Back Better agenda. I have seen the polling on the Build Back Better agenda. None of it looks too radical because the American people seem to really love all the parts of the Build Back Better agenda, from the investments in green energy, to the help for families who are trying to afford childcare, to the improvements in the Medicare system. But here is another commonsense investment in the Build Back Better agenda: community gun violence initiatives. Inside the Build Back Better agenda is \$5 billion to invest in community programs that wrap services around at-risk youth to try to stop this cycle of violence that plays out.

Now, what is interesting in the 2020 data is that gun crime is becoming much more geographically spread out in this Nation. Ten, twenty, thirty years ago, there was a case to be made for the concentration of gun violence in a handful of cities. That is actually not the case any longer. Today, gun violence happens everywhere. It happens in small towns. It happens in small cities. It happens in the big cities. But it is still true that there are these very, very poor, very, very economically challenged neighborhoods in which there are higher rates of gun violence.

What we know is that these community violence programs work. In Connecticut, we had one—before it was defunded—in New Haven, Hartford, and Bridgeport. It identified youth at risk of falling into this cycle of violence. It supports them with programs that give them an alternative to that lifestyle. Between 2011 and 2016, combined gun

homicides in these three cities were cut in half.

A similar program in New York saw homicides in a South Bronx neighborhood where a program was being implemented decline by 37 percent compared to a very similarly matched neighborhood nearby that was used as a control site.

I can give you more and more evidence of how these investments in neighborhoods lift people up economically and help stop the cycle of violence.

So I can shower you with data to show you why commonsense changes in our gun laws would do something about this stunning increase in the rate of gun deaths in this country from 2019 to 2020, but we can also just come together around an investment in these communities and these kids and these families that doesn't necessarily have the same high degree of political temperature as the debate around guns does, and it still will have a significant impact.

So I will continue to come down to the floor and make this case. I will continue to come down to the floor and try to tell the story of these victims of gun violence—kids like CJ Brown.

I hope that this will be the last chart. I hope that the next chart, in fact, will show that these numbers are coming down. But I doubt that I will have that opportunity because until we get serious about making changes in our gun laws, to update them to match with the preferences of 90 percent of Americans, and until we get serious about investments in these neighborhoods—part of the Build Back Better agenda—I fear that these numbers will continue to rise higher and higher.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

#### AFGHANISTAN

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I speak today to recognize the 3 million men and women, Americans, who have served our Nation in the two decades since September 11, 2001, in what has become known as the Global War on Terrorism.

The days during—in just the last month—during this botched and chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan, were a terrible time of reckoning for our Nation. I am angry, discouraged, and concerned about the way and the manner by which the United States of America departed.

President Biden's announcement in April to completely withdraw American troops by September 11 without taking appropriate security precautions, including preparation for a return of the Taliban to Kabul, was irresponsible and will damage America's interest for years to come and endanger the lives of thousands of women and children in Afghanistan.

Additionally, the lack of urgency to do right by the thousands of Afghans who worked alongside Americans will forever be a source of shame for this

administration. But as I said many times before, the withdrawal from Afghanistan was not the fault of the men and women in uniform.

In the days following September 11, 2001, the call to service was answered by thousands—thousands—of Americans who sought to defend the United States. These men and women left behind their families and careers to serve a greater good. I cannot think of anything more honorable than stepping up to defend our homeland from a threat that was, at the time, relatively unknown.

For most of our men and women in uniform, the Global War on Terrorism has been the primary mission of their entire careers. I run into people regularly who tell me about their service, and they saw what happened on 9/11 in New York City at Ground Zero. They saw what happened in the fields of Pennsylvania and what happened at the Pentagon. They decided it was their moment to step forward and defend and protect their Nation, to make sure that freedom and liberty remained the hallmark of who we are. And all of the sacrifices they and their families have made were in support of that effort and it was an effort they believed in and I certainly hope they still do.

Those who stepped forward to serve, eradicated vast networks of terrorists who wished to do America harm, making it absolutely clear that no one can harm Americans without our swift and certain retribution. They also brought Osama bin Laden to justice, destroyed the ISIS caliphate, and eliminated its founder.

In Afghanistan, our men and women serving in the military brought hope to a brutalized, war-torn country for the first time in decades. Incredibly, an entire generation in Afghanistan came to age knowing what it feels like to see freedom and to feel freedom.

Tragically, we saw Afghanistan quickly fall to the Taliban. It happened because of a haphazard and unorganized withdrawal process that has made our country and our world a less secure place. We all saw the images of terror and desperation as Afghans tried to flee their fate, many at the cost of their lives. We saw the footage of the chaos, the tear gas, and the explosion. We lost 13 lives of our honorable brave men and women in uniform to an attack outside the airport gates as they tried to rescue innocent families from their Afghan brothers and sisters in arms.

These scenes captured our Nation's attention, rightfully so. But unfortunately, in the days that followed, mainstream media's interest in Afghanistan began to wane. Take a look to see what is happening in Afghanistan now. See the desolation, the death, the destruction, the hunger, and the fear. This failure to have attention on what is going on in Afghanistan must not and should not be the case. We must continue to honor those who served and who will serve our country in the future.

We should consider S. 535, the Global War on Terrorism Memorial Location Act. This bill was introduced by the Senator from Iowa, Senator JONI ERNST, herself a veteran. It will authorize the location of a memorial on the National Mall to truly honor those who served to eradicate terrorism. It will honor the 3 million men and women who served and especially the thousands of servicemembers who gave that ultimate sacrifice—their lives. This memorial will also honor, heal, empower, and unite soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coasties who made those sacrifices.

I would guess many of us in the U.S. Senate have seen—we witnessed some of the healing that personally occurs in times that have met with the Honor—as I have met with the folks who have been here on the Honor Flights, those visitors who gather at our war memorials to remember, to be together, and, yes, to heal.

Last week, I was at a number of our memorials here in our Nation's Capital with a group of over about 160 Vietnam veterans from Kansas. I have been visiting with those veterans in almost all of the visits of Kansans who come here, and in those visits, I met the World War II veterans, the Korean war veterans, and the Vietnam war veterans who have a place of honor on the Mall where they can go to meet other veterans, to lay flowers, to pause and reflect, and remember the brothers and sisters that they have lost.

Just this weekend, back in Valley Center, KS, the Moving Wall—a tribute to those who lost their lives in Vietnam; the thousands, the 627 Kansans who lost their lives in Vietnam—was a place in which people gathered to do exactly that.

I hope someday I will be able to attend an Honor Flight to the Global War on Terrorism Memorial and meet with the generation of veterans who fought to bring peace to the Middle East and who fought to bring the United States into a safer and more secure place. It will be my honor and privilege to do so.

I am here on the Senate floor to pay tribute, to honor and respect, and to tell those who served in the Global War on Terrorism that we respect them; we thank them for their service; and we love them.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes.

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

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, first, I commend my colleague from Kansas for his remarkable commitment to this Nation and to those who serve this Nation. And he is always there at the Honor Flights for World War II, the Honor Flights of those who served in Korea, of those who served in Vietnam, and those who served in the Global War