

been urging repeatedly on our leadership—we need to complete work on the appropriations bills. They are complementary, to say the least, and they have to be done.

Under Chairman LEAHY's leadership, Democrats have put forth a responsible top-line number and subcommittee allocations that address our defense and nondefense funding needs alike. The defense funding levels in the appropriations bills are consistent with the bipartisan National Defense Authorization Act bill that we passed in the Armed Services Committee in July.

I would like to point out that the defense spending level in the Senate NDAA bill, which is pending floor action, was set by an amendment offered by my colleague, the ranking member, Jim Inhofe of Oklahoma, and supported by every Republican on the Armed Services Committee. I was pleased to work with Senator INHOFE and to co-sponsor the amendment, which provides an additional \$25 billion in funding for specific items, most of which are unfunded requirements submitted by the services and the combatant commands.

But Republicans put all this good work and all this good will we built up and established in the NDAA process in jeopardy if they force us into a year-long continuing resolution by refusing to negotiate on the 12 appropriations bills.

A yearlong CR would be shortsighted and damaging to our national defense.

First, defense spending will be about \$36 billion lower than the levels set out in the Senate's NDAA and appropriations bills.

I must also point out that, following our lead, the House Armed Services Committee passed a bill with the same top line—an additional \$25 billion. That was brought to the floor of the House. It passed. In fact, an amendment to reduce the funding was defeated.

So there is a strong bipartisan commitment to vigorously fund the Department of Defense, and if we do not do that, if we fall into the trap of a CR, as I have indicated, we will be taking money away from the Department of Defense.

Second, we will be tied, as Senator LEAHY pointed out, to funding priorities from a year ago even though circumstances have changed remarkably. As he pointed out, we have funding in last year's legislation that would provide support to Afghan forces who have been dissipated by the events of August. We would have a situation where there were significant amounts of money intended to assist Afghan security concerns that could not be effectively used and would detract from the current needs that we have.

Third, a CR would prevent DOD from effectively modernizing and reinvesting and reinvesting in its programs. Since new starts—new programs—aren't allowed under a CR, DOD could be forced into funding legacy systems that are outdated and in-

efficient, and that is simply congressionally mandated waste. Meanwhile, important new initiatives and acquisitions could be delayed. For example, we may not have the ability to fund the three additional ships and the seven more Joint Strike Fighters in the Navy's 2022 budget. As we shift our focus to the Pacific, as we deal with potential contingencies involving Taiwan and other areas, it becomes a shift in the Navy. They need these platforms. They need them as soon as we can get them, and they won't be able to get them if we are stuck with a CR.

CRs are also terribly disruptive just to the normal operation of the Department of Defense and also to their partners in the private sector and academia, since CRs inject uncertainty, instability, and cost to the R&D and acquisition processes.

The impact is not just felt on the defense side of the ledger, as Chairman LEAHY pointed out. Nondefense priorities have been neglected for over a decade. This year, we finally have a chance to make up for lost time.

For example, we have a chance to double the Federal commitment to public education under the title I program and make important investments in adult education and job training.

At a time when the American people are clamoring for more mental health service, particularly for children, we have funding to help train more pediatric mental health specialists.

We also have funding to help establish a national suicide prevention lifeline and a three-digit phone number that Congress approved last year. We are in the midst, sadly, of an epidemic of suicides throughout this country, and they particularly affect, as we pointed out, veterans who have served their country with great valor and sacrifice and yet are plagued by mental health problems.

As the chairman of the Legislative Branch Subcommittee, I will note that we have funding to help the Capitol Police, who have been stretched to their limits in the aftermath of the January 6 assault on this Capitol. In the Senate bill, we have funding for new officers, overtime and retention payments, as well as resources for officer wellness and mental health support. After what they have done for us, literally saving us, we owe it to the men and women of the Capitol Police to provide this assistance. It cannot be done under a continuing resolution.

Chairman LEAHY has bent over backwards to engage our Republican colleagues, and we have to engage. We have to move forward. He is willing to do that, but we have not seen a comparable response from the other side. It is time to get down to business, the business of the American people. It is time to provide our military with the resources and the priorities for today, not for last year. It is time to recognize the emerging problems in this country of this moment, not of the past.

We need our colleagues on the Republican side to come to the table, not with preconditions and redlines but a willingness to negotiate on behalf of all the American people. Otherwise, we will risk a continuing resolution that will harm everyone, all the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I thank the distinguished chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee for his comments.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

BUILD BACK BETTER AGENDA

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, Democrats are closer than we have ever been to finalizing and passing legislation to achieve President Biden's Build Back Better agenda. We have made great progress since the President announced his framework last week, including by coming to an agreement that will, for the first time ever, empower Medicare to directly negotiate prices in Part B and Part D and lower prices for millions of seniors and American families.

We will also cap out-of-pocket expenses at \$2,000 a year, and our agreement will make it so Americans with diabetes don't pay more than \$35 per month on insulin. One of the great confounding mysteries over the last several years is, how did insulin—a drug that has been on the market for years and years and years; there is no patent—end up costing \$600 a dose for people who can barely afford it? Diabetes affects so many people, and yet they have to pay all of this money.

So, as the House prepares to move forward, the Senate continues to achieve progress in our goal of passing Build Back Better before Thanksgiving. That is our goal. We are moving forward because the challenges American families and workers are facing are enormous, and President Biden's agenda has many things that will lower costs and help families pay the bills—lower costs and help families pay the bills.

Take childcare, for instance. Families sometimes pay more than \$10,000 a year for a child just to take care of him—a truly backbreaking expense. Secretary Yellen warned that the slack

in the labor force is connected to childcare. Well, the President's framework provides the largest investments ever to help families afford childcare services.

I believe, of the 37 OECD nations, developed and semideveloped countries, we are the 36th in childcare. Once Build Back Better passes, that awful statistic will be gone.

Take pre-K. The President's framework will, for the first time ever, provide universal pre-K for 3- and 4-year-olds. Millions of kids will be able to get on the right track early in life because of this investment—long overdue.

We will also extend the child tax credit. This will help millions of parents better afford things like groceries and diapers and utilities and other daily essentials.

Of course, there are bold steps we are taking to fight climate change. Our country has had too many homes destroyed by hurricanes and flooding. Entire cities in the West are breathing toxic air caused by extreme wildfires. Heat waves and droughts endanger millions of Americans who make their living working outdoors or who don't have air-conditioning.

These disasters cost us tens of billions each year, so Build Back Better's investments will help us reach our climate goals and represent bold steps in the right direction. All the while, the President's plan will be fully paid for and help our country reduce inflationary pressures, as no less than 17 Nobel Prize-winning economists have affirmed.

We are going to keep pushing to get these great policies over the finish line. As we have said repeatedly, nobody is getting everything they hoped for in the final deal, but Build Back Better will have things that everyone wanted.

Passing transformative legislation isn't easy—it is hard, very hard—but the long hours we are putting in and the discussions we have had, some of them quite pointed, will be worth it when we produce a very good result for the American people. So we are going to keep working and keep working until we get this done.

VOTING RIGHTS

Now, Madam President, on voting, yesterday was a sad day because, for the fourth time this year, the Senate had an opportunity yesterday to begin debating on the right to vote, but, yet again, virtually every Senate Republican denied the Senate a chance to act as the world's greatest deliberative body. They filibustered the mere opportunity to debate an issue that has had a long bipartisan history in the Senate.

There was one bright note—one brave, courageous exception—and I want to thank my colleague, the Senator from Alaska, Ms. MURKOWSKI, for voting in favor of beginning debate on the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. I thank my Democratic colleagues—there are so many—particularly Senators LEAHY and DUR-

BIN, for spending weeks working with her to find a compromise.

Senate Democrats want to find a bipartisan way forward on the issue of voting rights. That is why we worked with Senator MURKOWSKI. But, ultimately, it is up to Republicans to come to the table and join us. We have been trying to convince them for months—for months. This has not been a rush. We have offered four reasonable proposals in an attempt to merely begin debate—in June, in August, in October, and now here in November.

At no point did we call on Republicans to support our policies only but just agree to deliberate, to say what you think, and maybe we could have come to an agreement on something so important, as the Senate has always done in the past on this issue—bipartisan.

Off the floor, we held public hearings, numerous group discussions, and countless one-on-one meetings with the other side, including talks led by no fewer than seven Democrats—MANCHIN, KAINE, TESTER, KING, DURBIN, KLOBUCHAR, LEAHY—and there were more, I am sure. At virtually every turn, we have met with resistance.

What has happened to the party of Lincoln? What has happened to that noble, noble view that voting rights are important on both sides of the aisle?

The Senate is capable of far more than what we have seen from our Republican colleagues on voting rights. Throughout our history, our predecessors used regular order to debate and compromise and to pass transformative legislation—Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, the Civil Rights Act, and, of course, the Voting Rights Act—but anyone who has served in this Chamber over recent years knows that the gears of the Senate have become stiff and slow to turn.

Who thinks that the original Social Security Act would have passed in this partisan Chamber today—or any New Deal legislation? If we were trying to create Medicare from scratch in 2021, who thinks that it would have survived a filibuster? The same Chamber responsible for those great, noble accomplishments in the past must be restored so it can take action in the modern era.

As I said a few weeks ago, I believe the Senate needs to be restored to its rightful status as the world's greatest deliberative body. Debate is central to this Chamber's character, but so is governing and so is taking action when required after debate has run its due course. The fight is far from over. Democrats will explore alternative paths to restore the Senate so it does what its Framers intended—debate, deliberate, compromise, and vote.

Just because Republicans will not join us to defend our democracy doesn't mean Democrats will stop fighting. It is too important. Even if it means going at it alone, we will continue to fight for voting rights and find an alternative path forward to get the Senate working again to protect our fundamental liberties as citizens.

NOMINATIONS

Now, Madam President, on nominations, today, the Senate is going to confirm Mr. Robert Santos to serve as the Director of the Census Bureau.

A native of San Antonio, who grew up in a Mexican-American family, Mr. Santos, in his 40-year career, has become one of the top statisticians in the country. If confirmed, Santos would be the first Hispanic and, in fact, the first person of color to become a permanent Director of the Census Bureau. He is exactly the kind of person our country needs overseeing our census—impartial, highly experienced, someone from outside politics. We must and need to protect our census from the pressures of partisan politics, and Santos is the perfect fit.

President Trump—true to form—spent years trying to politicize and weaponize our country's census, going as far as maliciously trying to include citizenship questions and have counts of undocumented immigrants. Mr. Santos will restore trust and integrity to one of the most important Agencies in government.

On Mr. Syed—of course, there are too many other qualified and uncontroversial nominees who are still awaiting their confirmations because of shameful Republican delay. Mr. Dilawar Syed is a particularly egregious example. Syed has been nominated to serve as second in command at the SBA. He is the definition—the definition—of a qualified, uncontroversial nominee. His nomination has been praised by no less than the U.S. Chamber of Commerce—hardly a liberal crowd—and he would be the highest ranking Muslim in our government.

But our Republican colleagues on the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee have not just blocked his vote, they have even refused to give him a markup. Their justification keeps changing from one explanation to another, which is another way of saying there seems to be zero legitimate grounds for opposing him. Today, he has been scheduled to have a markup, but because of Republicans, it has been pushed back again on account of their ridiculous concerns.

The political right seems to relish in trying to score political points by connecting far too many of President Biden's nominees—many of whom happen to be individuals of color—to hot button, partisan issues whether or not they have any relevance.

It is shameful, unacceptable, and ridiculous for Republicans to keep stalling on Syed's nomination. He is eminently qualified to serve in the SBA. Why are Senate Republicans opposing Mr. Syed's nomination? Let me ask the question again. Why are Senate Republicans opposing Mr. Syed's nomination?

I urge my colleagues to drop their resistance and allow this excellent, straightforward nominee to receive confirmation.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

CRIME

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, this week, voters delivered a clear message to the Democratic Party: You were not elected to radically change America. You were not elected to radically change America—period.

The message was clear on inflation and economics. The message was clear on keeping woke propaganda out of public schools. The message was clear when even the citizens of blue New York—blue New York—voted down leftwing changes that would weaken elections, similar to what has been proposed here multiple times, and the message was clear when citizens pushed back on anti-policing and on anti-law enforcement attitudes.

Even in the most liberal cities in the most liberal States, Americans told Democrats to leave their extreme campaign to “defund the police” behind.

Let’s take Minneapolis, for example. Last summer, one local Congresswoman called the police department “rotten to the root” and insisted that “no one is saying that the community is not going to be kept safe.”

Well, what happened?

Homicides are on a pace for the highest annual count in decades. So this week, Minnesota voters rejected a ballot measure that would have removed the police department—listen to this—from the city’s charter.

Or take New York City, where violent crimes, like robbery and auto theft, have seen 10- to 15-percent jumps just in the last year. This week, voters chose for their mayor a former police captain whose platform declared: “If we are for safety, we need the NYPD.” That is the new mayor of New York.

Upstate, in Buffalo, a socialist challenger had won a primary against the incumbent mayor, promising in part to defund the police. But even though prominent New York Democrats endorsed the radical who won the primary, the incumbent won the race on a write-in—on a write-in.

Our people have just lived through the biggest nationwide jump in homicides in more than a century. In my hometown of Louisville, murders in 2021 have already more than doubled the annual total from just 2 years ago.

So, look, Americans do not want less public safety. They actually want more. No wonder that, over the summer, one survey found that a majority of Americans, including majorities of Black and Hispanic respondents, called violent crime a “major crisis,” ahead of any other issue.

But it remains to be seen whether Democrats here in Washington are getting the message. After all, just a few days ago, the Attorney General still seemed more focused on intimidating America’s parents out of their First Amendment rights.

For the sake of public safety across our country, let’s hope that Tuesday’s election results compel our friends across the aisle to come back—back into the mainstream.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Madam President, on another matter, President Biden spent much of the past week participating in a U.N. summit on the so-called Paris climate accords.

The event was billed as a serious meeting of world leaders committed to taking action on climate policy. More than 1,000 VIPs arrived in a parade of no fewer than 400 private jets—400 private jets; a mode of transportation that some climate activists say is up to 14 times more polluting than commercial aviation.

Hypocrisy was on full display at that meeting.

The topic of discussion was a bad deal that, after 6 years, has failed to hold any of the major signatories to their commitments on reducing emissions. But, of course, that hadn’t stopped President Biden from rejoining it. The President went as far as apologizing—apologizing—that the previous administration had let the U.S. reduce its emissions from outside the deal. He pledged that, now, the United States “will do our part.”

Now, exactly what that means is not clear. The United States exceeded in cutting its emissions more from outside the Paris deal than any other major country managed from inside the deal.

So President Biden apologized for outperforming the deal, and his counterparts welcomed America’s new commitment to reduce U.S. emissions 50 percent by 2030, without a single specific on how to achieve it.

Now, while America’s emissions have fallen, the world’s leading carbon emitter apparently has a free pass to keep on increasing its emissions until 2030.

According to China’s own representatives, their massive and thriving economy is still in a “special development stage.” “Special development stage.”

We are talking about a country that built more than three times as much new coal power capacity as the rest of the world combined in 2020.

Meanwhile, one outside analysis indicates that getting America even close to net zero emissions by 2050 would mean cutting our own GDP by nearly 12 percent annually. That is trillions of dollars shipped out of this country every year. Competitors, like China, are licking their chops.

And what would this self-flagellation get us 39 years from now?

According to that same outside analysis, based on the U.N.’s own model, this economic hemorrhage would pur-

chase us a reduction of three-tenths—three-tenths—of 1 degree in global temperatures.

Meanwhile, the same Washington Democrats who think that this nightmare sounds like a good deal are pushing a reckless taxing-and-spending spree that would hammer American families and the affordable energy they need to power and to heat their homes and to drive their cars.

After less than a year with Democrats in power, America has already more than doubled imports of Russian oil from December 2020 levels—double the dependency on Russia in less than 12 months—America’s energy future, as imagined by our colleagues on the left.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded and that I be allowed to speak for up to 15 minutes and that Senator CARPER be allowed to speak for up to 2 minutes at the conclusion of my remarks prior to the vote.

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

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, just in the last day or so, the ever-evolving reckless tax-and-spending spree bill proposed by the Democrats—it continues to change because they can’t seem to figure out how to put together something that might pass in the House and the Senate, and finding it increasingly difficult, I think, to try and contain the cost of all the things they want to do, which is why they continue to build in gimmicks and phony math to try to accommodate all the crazy spending in this bill, and then also the massive run-up in the taxes.

This bill is the largest spending increase we have seen in history, largest tax increase in history, and we are finding out now it is also going to add significantly to the Federal debt because there is a recent study by Penn Wharton which suggests that the overall cost of the bill, when fully implemented, would be \$3.9 trillion and that the revenues that are proposed to be raised to pay for it only generate about \$1.5 trillion. So that leaves you with a \$2.4 trillion delta that, obviously, would be added to the deficit and put on the debt.

So not only does this spend enormous amounts of money, unprecedented amounts of money, it raises an unprecedented amount of revenue. But even at that level, the revenue is totally inadequate and insufficient to cover that spending; therefore, it will add massively to the Federal debt—that is according to an economic analysis done by Penn Wharton here just in the last couple days.

But this is the most recent addition to that bill in the House of Representatives. They would raise the SALT cap—

the state and local tax deduction cap—from \$10,000 to \$72,500. And it would also extend that higher cap through 2031, beyond its scheduled expiration after 2025.

So they are still trying to come up with a way—if you can believe this. The massive amount of spending, massive amount of taxing, is now added to that a tax cut—a huge tax cut for rich people.

According to the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, if you look at how this distributes proportionately across income ranges, those making less than \$100,000 would receive 2.5 percent of that tax cut—a tax cut that would cost \$300 billion just through 2025. So if it is fully implemented for the full 10-year window, you are talking about hundreds of billions of dollars more in tax cuts to rich people.

So just think about that. From the side that always says that our side is looking out for rich people, trying to cut taxes for the rich, they are proposing and have included now in the House version of the reckless tax-and-spending spree bill a provision that would provide tax cuts to rich people. In fact, 80 percent of that tax cut—80 percent—would go to people who are making more than \$200,000 a year; 2.5 percent would go to people making less than \$100,000 a year.

So much for looking out for the little guy in this bill.

This is a huge part of the bill. In fact, this is the most expensive provision in the bill, and that is up against all the other spending that the Democrats want to do on new government programs and expanding government—the biggest expansion in government in decades.

But included now in the bill not only is that massive expansion spending on lots of crazy new ideas and trillions of dollars in new taxes that will be imposed upon the economy, but now there is a provision in there that will cut taxes with 80 percent of that benefit going to people making more than \$200,000 a year, and cutting taxes on a scale that makes this the largest, most expensive provision in the entire reckless tax-and-spending spree bill. That is what we are talking about with this particular provision.

So I just want to point that out because this is an evolving bill. We are seeing new language every day, new ideas every day. And, again, some really horrible ideas have come out in the last few weeks, some of which have gone away simply because there aren't even any Democrats who will vote for them; but this one, obviously, that is going to benefit rich people across this country on a level unlike anything else in the bill, as is suggested by the overall cost of the provision and the way it distributes among income categories.

Let me repeat: 80 percent of the benefit of this tax cut in the tax-and-spending spree is going to go to people making more than \$200,000 a year, and 2.5 percent of this tax cut will go to people making less than \$100,000 a year.

CHILDCARE BENEFIT

Mr. President, I think a lot of times when people think about the government paying for healthcare, childcare, college, or the like, they tend just to assume that they are going to be able to continue on with or get their preferred healthcare or childcare and the only difference would be the fact that the government is now picking up the tab.

If you listen to the Democrats talk about it, that is certainly what you would think. But the reality is a lot different, because with government money comes government control. Government money rarely comes without strings attached, and no more is that more obvious than with the childcare provisions of the so-called Build Back Better tax-and-spending spree Democrats are contemplating.

To hear Democrats talk about it, you might think that the childcare provisions amounted to nothing more than government cutting you a check to help with your daycare costs. The reality is a lot different.

Mr. President, a 2020 Bipartisan Policy Center survey found that 53 percent of working families who used center-based childcare used a faith-based childcare center—53 percent. Parents select faith-based childcare for a variety of reasons. Some choose it because they share the faith of the provider, but many choose it for other reasons, as the Bipartisan Policy Center study made clear.

Some opt for the faith-based center because they like the quality of the facilities and the quality of the instruction; others because they feel that the faith-based facility will provide a safe setting, and though they just don't share the belief system of the providers, they do like the values that the belief system represents.

Well, for many of those families, their days of choosing faith-based childcare may be numbered because Democrats' new childcare provisions are deliberately set up to put faith-based childcare providers at a disadvantage.

For starters, the language of the legislation would likely exclude many faith-based childcare providers from participating in the program. That means that even if you as a parent prefer to choose your local faith-based childcare center, you may not be able to do so.

On top of that, the bill provides funding to assist with renovation or remodeling at daycare facilities, but it specifically prevents these funds from going to childcare centers that share space with facilities for worship or religious instruction.

That means that the childcare program at your local Catholic church or local Lutheran church or your local mosque will most likely not be allowed to take advantage of the government assistance for renovations, although the secular provider down the street will.

These policies are likely to have profound consequences. Obviously, many parents are likely to find themselves prevented from choosing their preferred faith-based childcare provider.

But beyond that, this legislation can start crowding faith-based childcare providers out of the childcare market entirely. Childcare providers unable to participate in the government childcare program may find themselves struggling to stay in business or being forced to raise their fees to the point that only the most well-off families can afford faith-based care.

The result: a shrinking number of faith-based providers, which, I am afraid, is probably some Democrats' goal.

It is hard to imagine why else they would restrict parents' ability to choose a faith-based provider for their children or exclude religious childcare providers from receiving government renovation assistance.

The Democrats' legislation is representative of a growing tendency in the Democratic Party to treat religious people as second-class citizens—something that is completely out of step with the robust idea of religious freedom we traditionally have in this country.

The First Amendment is not intended to keep religion out of the public square, as many Democrats seem to think, nor was it intended to favor secular belief systems over religious ones, no. Its purpose was to prevent the government from establishing a national religion or infringing on the rights of religious individuals to live out their faith.

Today, however, it has become apparent that many Democrats think at least some forms of government discrimination against religious people are perfectly acceptable, and there is no question that their childcare program would place faith-based childcare providers at a disadvantage.

Steering parents away from faith-based childcare is not the only choice Democrats are going to be making for parents under this new childcare benefit. Democrats' childcare program will not only make it more difficult for parents to choose faith-based care, it will make it more difficult for parents to choose any private childcare provider.

Under the Democrats' legislation, only public—in other words, government-run—childcare providers will be guaranteed sufficient reimbursement to cover their operating costs. This is a deliberate choice that will make it much more difficult for private providers to stay in business, serving the Democrats' goal of pushing children into government-run childcare programs.

That is not the end of the childcare decisions Democrats will be making. The Democrats' legislation also gives the Federal Government full control over approving childcare curricula and performance standards. Providers will be measured not by how well parents

are satisfied with the childcare they are providing, but by whatever Washington bureaucrats determine to be appropriate measures of performance.

I am not sure why Washington bureaucrats are better suited than parents to identify quality childcare providers, but as the Democrat candidate for the Governor of Virginia recently made clear, Democrats do not seem to think that parents are best suited to make decisions for their children.

Mr. President, I can go on. I can talk about the confusing government bureaucracy parents will have to navigate under the Democrats' new childcare program, or I can talk about the fact that this new childcare benefit could drive up childcare costs for middle-class families over the next 3 years by a staggering \$13,000 a year, according to one estimate. Yeah, \$13,000 a year.

But, today, what I really want to emphasize is something Democrats conveniently omit from discussions of their new government programs, and that is, as I said, that with government money comes government control. Democrats are setting the stage for a government takeover of childcare, where you can choose your provider only as long as Democrats agree with your choice.

ABORTION

Mr. President, before I close, I want to mention one other aspect of the Democratic bill, and that is the bill's commitment to taxpayer funding of abortion.

While the Democratic Party has long supported an abortion agenda, there has at least been bipartisan agreement when it comes to appropriations bills that we are not going to use taxpayer dollars to fund abortion.

For decades—decades, going back to the 1980s—the Hyde amendment and other riders have helped prevent taxpayer dollars from paying for abortions. No longer, if Democrats have their way.

In the Democrats' tax-and-spending spree, taxpayer funding of abortions is the order of the day. Restrictions on the use of taxpayer dollars for abortion funding are omitted, and in at least one case, Democrats actively require funding of abortion and would override State laws on insurance coverage of abortion.

Let's be very clear. This bill is a slap in the face to every American who believes in the sanctity of human life and doesn't want his or her tax dollars going to pay for killing unborn human beings.

You would think that if we can't agree that the human rights of unborn children should be protected, we could at least agree that taxpayers shouldn't be forced to pay for killing unborn children.

Well, apparently, even that is too much to ask for Democrats, even though nearly 60 percent of Americans oppose having their tax dollars go to abortion. That's right, almost 60 per-

cent of Americans do not want their tax dollars going to pay for abortions.

But that doesn't seem to matter to the Democratic Party, which is squarely in the pocket of the radical abortion lobby. The Democrats' legislation contains a radical commitment to government funding of abortions against the wishes of the majority of the American people.

It is just one more reason why the Build Back Better plan is a bad deal for the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA). The Senator Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, how much time do I have?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 2 minutes.

Mr. CARPER. Thanks very much.

Mr. President, I don't have enough time to respond to everything that my colleague from South Dakota has said. If I did, it would take a long while.

I would say this: A couple of years ago, when we passed with only Republican votes in the House and Senate, signed by President Trump, a tax-cut bill that was supposed to pay for itself, it didn't. It increased our deficit by hundreds of billions of dollars.

I think most of us know, with respect to abortion, the law of the land for many years—over 30 years—has been *Roe v. Wade*; and, essentially, after a certain point, when you have viability in the womb, abortions cannot be performed except in very limited cases, including rape, incest, and the life of the mother.

The legislation that we passed and considered in the House does not provide for changing those limitations, and that needs to be made clear.

The other thing I would say, with respect to the reconciliation bill, the Build Back Better legislation that the House is considering today in the Rules Committee, it is paid for. It is actually paid for, and it is paid for largely by making sure that everybody is paying their fair share.

Folks don't mind in my State—and other States don't mind—you know, seeing their taxes raised, but they want to make sure that everybody else is paying their fair share. As it turns out, there are a lot of wealthy people in this country and a lot of wealthy corporations who don't pay their fair share—in some cases nothing—and that is just wrong.

And the legislation actually cuts taxes for most Americans.

VOTE ON CONNOR NOMINATION

Mr. President, now to the issue at hand. We are about to vote today on the nomination of Michael Connor to serve as Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works.

As we all know, this is a critical leadership position for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps of Engineers Civil Works program is the nation's primary provider of water resources infrastructure, and with the increasing impacts of climate change,

having someone of Mr. Connor's caliber at the Corps is critical.

He has the experience and character to be successful in this role. During the Obama administration, he served as Deputy Secretary of the Interior, and he proved himself to be a capable leader. He will bring that experience to the Corps.

If confirmed, Mr. Connor will lead efforts that dramatically impact every corner of this country, from coastal to inland to small, disadvantaged, rural, and Tribal communities.

It is critically important that we get Mr. Connor confirmed now, today. I urge my colleagues to support his nomination.

I think my time has expired.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the Connor nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Michael Lee Connor, of Colorado, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Army.

VOTE ON CONNOR NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Connor nomination?

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas and nays have been called for.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

(Mr. PETERS assumed the Chair.)

(Mr. SCHATZ assumed the Chair.)

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The result was announced—yeas 92, nays 5, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 463 Ex.]

YEAS—92

Baldwin	Crapo	Lankford
Barrasso	Daines	Leahy
Bennet	Duckworth	Lee
Blackburn	Durbin	Lujan
Blumenthal	Ernst	Lummis
Blunt	Feinstein	Manchin
Booker	Fischer	Markey
Boozman	Gillibrand	McConnell
Braun	Graham	Menendez
Brown	Grassley	Merkley
Burr	Hagerty	Moran
Cantwell	Hassan	Murkowski
Capito	Heinrich	Murphy
Cardin	Hickenlooper	Murray
Carper	Hirono	Ossoff
Casey	Hoehn	Padilla
Cassidy	Hyde-Smith	Peters
Collins	Inhofe	Portman
Coons	Kaine	Reed
Cornyn	Kelly	Risch
Cortez Masto	Kennedy	Romney
Cotton	King	Rosen
Cramer	Klobuchar	Rubio