

to drop another \$130 billion for public education. So \$5 billion has been spent out of the \$68 billion we have already appropriated, and our Democratic colleagues now want to spend another \$130 billion.

Since most of the existing funds remain to be spent, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that the bulk of spending of this new proposed funding would occur after this year, after 2021; that is, the majority of the funding in this new so-called COVID relief bill wouldn't even be touched until, God willing, the pandemic is already in the rearview mirror.

I have advocated for funding to help our schools prepare for a safe return to the classroom, and the experts tell us that there is more than sufficient funding already out there to make that happen. So I am left to conclude, as I think most—really, any reasonable person would, that it is irresponsible to have taxpayers foot the bill for another \$130 billion when there is no need for the funding.

And this isn't like we are spending money that we have. We are actually borrowing money from future generations, exacerbating an already huge Federal debt.

That brings me to the second concern I have with this bill: It completely ignores the trajectory of our economic recovery.

At the start of the pandemic, we all know the economic hammer came down hard and fast. As States imposed lockdown measures, businesses closed their doors, people lost their jobs, and consumer spending plummeted.

But as the pandemic has gone on, even the more moderate predictions about an economic depression have proven wrong. By any measure, our economy has recovered faster than any of us expected. That should be a positive thing. We should be happy about that.

The unemployment rate has steadily declined, going from 14.8 percent in April to 6.3 percent last month. State tax revenues have largely rebounded. As a matter of fact, California has fared so well that it is adding money to their rainy day fund. In other words, they don't need any more money. Their revenues have exceeded their revenues from years before the pandemic even hit.

The Congressional Budget Office projects that the U.S. economy will return to its prepandemic size by the middle of this year, even if Congress doesn't approve another penny of money. Let me say that again. The Congressional Budget Office projects the U.S. economy will return to its prepandemic size in the middle of this year—just a few months away—even if Congress does not approve any more Federal money to aid the recovery.

Well, it is tough to reconcile that fact with the claim from our friends across the aisle that we need to spend another \$1.9 trillion, money that we don't have.

Despite all the data that shows our economy is recovering, rebounding in a robust way, this bill sends another \$350 billion to State and local governments that are not facing the dire budget shortfalls that we worried about last March. And it is not without negative consequences.

Larry Summers, who served as the Treasury Secretary during the Clinton administration and who was an economic adviser to President Obama, offered a good observation on the situation in a recent opinion piece. He wrote:

[W]hereas the Obama stimulus was about half as large as the output shortfall, the proposed Biden stimulus is three times as large as the projected shortfall. Relative to the size of the gap being addressed, it is six times as large.

For this administration to make public comments about following the science—certainly, following the facts, listening to the experts—it is hard to reconcile that with this bill that is so divorced from reality. I don't think you can do it, which brings me to my third big concern with this bill: This is not a COVID-19 relief bill in its entirety. It includes a range of completely unrelated, liberal priorities that should not be included in this emergency spending, let alone one that is rushed through in a partisan manner through the budget process.

One case in point is the proposed increase in the minimum wage to \$15. Regardless of the cost of living, businesses in small towns and major cities alike would be required to pay their employees \$15 an hour by 2025. Now, for big companies in big cities, that may be doable. That may be the going rate to get the kind of quality workforce you want. As we know, companies like Amazon have already implemented their own \$15 an hour minimum wage back in 2018, and they can afford it. But for small businesses that are the backbone of our economy and are key to our economic recovery following this pandemic, this could lead to massive layoffs or permanent closures.

The Congressional Budget Office that I referred to earlier estimates that this provision alone could put 1.4 million Americans out of work. Do we really want to pass a provision that would put 1.4 million Americans out of work? That is 50 percent more than it could potentially lift out of poverty.

As a reminder, our colleagues are trying to rush this massive change through Congress as part of a pandemic relief bill because they know that it is the only shot at passing a bill that would have this sort of dramatic negative effect on jobs—all under the guise of economic relief and stimulus. There is simply no way to justify a one-size-fits-all mandate that treats Silicon Valley the same as it does mom-and-pop businesses in rural America.

And the range of unrelated provisions doesn't stop there. This legislation includes \$30 billion for public transit agencies, a blank check to bail out

mismanaged union pension funds without any reforms, and funding for a bridge to connect the majority leader's home State of New York to Canada. So we are going to build the majority leader a bridge to Canada as part of an emergency COVID-19 relief bill. It is outrageous. Everyone remembers the infamous earmark now known as the bridge to nowhere. At least in this case we know where the bridge will end up. But a pandemic relief bill should not serve as a Trojan horse in order to pursue such parochial and local desires or any other part of an unrelated liberal wish list.

So the Biden bill of \$1.9 trillion actually creates more problems than it solves or it tries to solve nonexistent problems. It drives up our national debt by spending money that experts say is not needed. It ignores the data—the facts about our economic recovery—and it creates even more problems, all in the name of securing a win for the administration and our Democratic colleagues. It is as though this bill were drafted in a vacuum with no attention paid to what has already been done, how things are going, or what we anticipate the need will be in the future.

If the evidence and the experts tell us that more funding is needed to bolster our response to the virus, I will be one of the first people to advocate for additional targeted relief. But this race to spend money for the sake of spending money and ignore what the experts are saying is absolutely disgraceful.

The two parties have done much better than this. As I said, last year, we passed five COVID relief bills on a bipartisan basis because we all were trying to come together and meet a common enemy—the COVID-19 virus and the consequences of the pandemic. But it seems like this \$1.9 trillion wish list is divorced, really, from the COVID-19 relief that we did in the past and is designed purely for partisan political purposes, and I think it is an unfortunate development in an area where we have so successfully worked together in a bipartisan way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). The Senator from Minnesota.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. SMITH. Mr. 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.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES RULES OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REED. Mr. President, pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 2, of the

Standing Rules of the Senate, on behalf of myself and Senator INHOFE, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the committee rules governing the procedure of the Committee on Armed Services be printed in the RECORD. These Rules were adopted by committee by voice vote on February 11, 2021.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES RULES OF PROCEDURE, 117TH CONGRESS

1. Regular Meeting Day—The Committee shall meet at least once a month when Congress is in session. The regular meeting days of the Committee shall be Tuesday and Thursday, unless the Chairman, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, directs otherwise.

2. Additional Meetings—The Chairman, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, may call such additional meetings as he deems necessary.

3. Special Meetings—Special meetings of the Committee may be called by a majority of the members of the Committee in accordance with paragraph 3 of Rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

4. Open Meetings—Each meeting of the Committee, or any subcommittee thereof, including meetings to conduct hearings, shall be open to the public, except that a meeting or series of meetings by the Committee or a subcommittee thereof on the same subject for a period of no more than fourteen (14) calendar days may be closed to the public on a motion made and seconded to go into closed session to discuss only whether the matters enumerated below in clauses (a) through (f) would require the meeting to be closed, followed immediately by a record vote in open session by a majority of the members of the Committee or subcommittee when it is determined that the matters to be discussed or the testimony to be taken at such meeting or meetings

(a) will disclose matters necessary to be kept secret in the interests of national defense or the confidential conduct of the foreign relations of the United States;

(b) will relate solely to matters of Committee staff personnel or internal staff management or procedure;

(c) will tend to charge an individual with a crime or misconduct, to disgrace or injure the professional standing of an individual, or otherwise to expose an individual to public contempt or obloquy or will represent a clearly unwarranted invasion of the privacy of an individual;

(d) will disclose the identity of any informer or law enforcement agent or will disclose any information relating to the investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense that is required to be kept secret in the interests of effective law enforcement;

(e) will disclose information relating to the trade secrets or financial or commercial information pertaining specifically to a given person if—

(1) an Act of Congress requires the information to be kept confidential by Government officers and employees; or

(2) the information has been obtained by the Government on a confidential basis, other than through an application by such person for a specific Government financial or other benefit, and is required to be kept secret in order to prevent undue injury to the competitive position of such person; or

(f) may divulge matters required to be kept confidential under other provisions of law or Government regulations.

5. Presiding Officer—The Chairman shall preside at all meetings and hearings of the

Committee except that in his absence the Ranking Majority Member present at the meeting or hearing shall preside unless by majority vote the Committee provides otherwise.

6. Quorum—(a) A majority of the members of the Committee are required to be actually present to report a matter or measure from the Committee. (See Standing Rules of the Senate XXVI.7(a)(1)).

(b) Except as provided in subsections (a) and (c), and other than for the conduct of hearings, nine members of the Committee, including one member of the minority party; or a majority of the members of the Committee, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of such business as may be considered by the Committee.

(c) Three members of the Committee, one of whom shall be a member of the minority party, shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking sworn testimony, unless otherwise ordered by a majority of the full Committee.

(d) No measure or matter or recommendation shall be reported by the Committee in the absence of the concurrence of a majority of the members of the Committee who are present. The Chairman of the Committee shall transmit notice of a tie vote to the Secretary of the Senate in accordance with Section 3 of S. Res. 27, February 3, 2021.

(e) Proxy votes may not be considered for the purpose of establishing a quorum.

7. Proxy Voting—Proxy voting shall be allowed on all measures and matters before the Committee. The vote by proxy of any member of the Committee may be counted for the purpose of reporting any measure or matter to the Senate if the absent member casting such vote has been informed of the matter on which the member is being recorded and has affirmatively requested that he or she be so recorded. Proxy must be given in writing.

8. Announcement of Votes—The results of all roll call votes taken in any meeting of the Committee on any measure, or amendment thereto, shall be announced in the Committee report, unless previously announced by the Committee. The announcement shall include a tabulation of the votes cast in favor and votes cast in opposition to each such measure and amendment by each member of the Committee who was present at such meeting. The Chairman, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, may hold open a roll call vote on any measure or matter which is before the Committee until no later than midnight of the day on which the Committee votes on such measure or matter.

9. Subpoenas—Subpoenas for attendance of witnesses and for the production of memoranda, documents, records, and the like may be issued, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, by the Chairman or any other member designated by the Chairman, but only when authorized by a majority of the members of the Committee. The subpoena shall briefly state the matter to which the witness is expected to testify or the documents to be produced.

10. Hearings—(a) Public notice shall be given of the date, place and subject matter of any hearing to be held by the Committee, or any subcommittee thereof, at least 1 week in advance of such hearing, unless the Committee or subcommittee determines that good cause exists for beginning such hearings at an earlier time.

(b) Hearings may be initiated only by the specified authorization of the Committee or subcommittee.

(c) Hearings shall be held only in the District of Columbia unless specifically authorized to be held elsewhere by a majority vote of the Committee or subcommittee conducting such hearings.

(d) The Chairman of the Committee or subcommittee shall consult with the Ranking Minority Member thereof before naming witnesses for a hearing.

(e) Witnesses appearing before the Committee shall file with the clerk of the Committee a written statement of their proposed testimony prior to the hearing at which they are to appear unless the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member determine that there is good cause not to file such a statement. Witnesses testifying on behalf of the Administration shall furnish an additional 50 copies of their statement to the Committee. All statements must be received by the Committee at least 48 hours (not including weekends or holidays) before the hearing.

(f) Confidential testimony taken or confidential material presented in a closed hearing of the Committee or subcommittee or any report of the proceedings of such hearing shall not be made public in whole or in part or by way of summary unless authorized by a majority vote of the Committee or subcommittee.

(g) Any witness summoned to give testimony or evidence at a public or closed hearing of the Committee or subcommittee may be accompanied by counsel of his own choosing who shall be permitted at all times during such hearing to advise such witness of his legal rights.

(h) Witnesses providing unsworn testimony to the Committee may be given a transcript of such testimony for the purpose of making minor grammatical corrections. Such witnesses will not, however, be permitted to alter the substance of their testimony. Any question involving such corrections shall be decided by the Chairman.

11. Nominations—Unless otherwise ordered by the Committee, nominations referred to the Committee shall be held for at least seven (7) days before being voted on by the Committee. Each member of the Committee shall be furnished a copy of all nominations referred to the Committee.

12. Real Property Transactions—Each member of the Committee shall be furnished with a copy of the proposals of the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, submitted pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2662 and with a copy of the proposals of the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, submitted pursuant to 50 U.S.C. App. 2285, regarding the proposed acquisition or disposition of property of an estimated price or rental of more than \$50,000. Any member of the Committee objecting to or requesting information on a proposed acquisition or disposal shall communicate his objection or request to the Chairman of the Committee within thirty (30) days from the date of submission.

13. Legislative Calendar—(a) The clerk of the Committee shall keep a printed calendar for the information of each Committee member showing the bills introduced and referred to the Committee and the status of such bills. Such calendar shall be revised from time to time to show pertinent changes in such bills, the current status thereof, and new bills introduced and referred to the Committee. A copy of each new revision shall be furnished to each member of the Committee.

(b) Unless otherwise ordered, measures referred to the Committee shall be referred by the clerk of the Committee to the appropriate department or agency of the Government for reports thereon.

14. Except as otherwise specified herein, the Standing Rules of the Senate shall govern the actions of the Committee. Each subcommittee of the Committee is part of the Committee, and is therefore subject to the Committee's rules so far as applicable.

15. Powers and Duties of Subcommittees—Each subcommittee is authorized to meet,

hold hearings, receive evidence, and report to the full Committee on all matters referred to it. Subcommittee chairmen, after consultation with Ranking Minority Members of the subcommittees, shall set dates for hearings and meetings of their respective subcommittees after consultation with the Chairman and other subcommittee chairmen with a view toward avoiding simultaneous scheduling of full Committee and subcommittee meetings or hearings whenever possible.

NOMINATION OF JENNIFER GRANHOLM

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of Governor Jennifer Granholm's nomination to be Secretary of the Department of Energy.

I can think of no one better than Governor Granholm to lead the Department of Energy during this critical and transformative period for our country.

Governor Granholm has the experience to lead and oversee the 13,500 employees at the Energy Department. She served as the Governor of Michigan from 2003 to 2011 and as Michigan's attorney general from 1998 to 2002.

During her tenure as Governor, she led Michigan through the tumultuous years of the 2008 financial crisis and the resulting bailout of the auto industry. She shepherded over a billion dollars in Federal funding to her State to manufacture electric vehicles and batteries. She diversified Michigan's energy portfolio and signed into law the State's first renewable energy standard.

I won't hold against the Governor the fact that she is a graduate of UC Berkeley—I am sure a Stanford Cardinal and a Golden Bear can still find some common ground and I am sure it will help that she will bring the innovative spirit of California along with her to her new role as Secretary.

Following her tenure as Governor, Jennifer became a faculty member at the UC Berkeley Goldman School of Public Policy. She has spent her career, both inside and outside of public office, as a steadfast advocate for clean energy. I have no doubt she will bring the same passion if confirmed as Secretary.

With this appointment, Governor Granholm has gained the opportunity to understand our unique national lab system, which is a critical aspect of the Department of Energy. She was a project scientist at Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, and I look forward to her getting to know our 16 other National Labs. From basic science to nuclear safety, these are gems of the Energy Department.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not mention the trailblazing nature of the Governor's career. She was Michigan's first female attorney general; Michigan's first female Governor; and, if confirmed, will be only the second woman to lead the Energy Department since its formation in 1977. She has been and will continue to be a role model for young women across this country.

The Governor does not have an easy task ahead of her, but I have full confidence that she is up to the challenge. As chair of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water, I look forward to working with her closely over the coming years to fund clean energy programs, confront climate change, and fulfill the energy and water infrastructure needs of California and our country.

NOMINATION OF JENNIFER GRANHOLM

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, now is the time to take substantive action to transition to renewable resources, combat climate change, and build a brighter future for Americans. To help manage that transition, President Biden has nominated Jennifer Granholm to be the Secretary of Energy.

As the first female Governor and first female attorney general in Michigan history, Granholm oversaw the State's response to the great recession and worked closely with the Obama administration to save the Nation's auto industry and 1 million jobs. Granholm embraced innovative ideas to electrify the auto industry, stimulate State-wide job growth, and build the State's clean energy sector. She founded the American Jobs Project to promote technological advancements and clean energy policies to spark job creation and continues to push for clean energy policy nationwide.

Additionally, Granholm backed tax credits and incentives for wind and solar and signed legislation requiring Michigan to get 10 percent of its energy from renewable sources. She is eminently qualified to spearhead research and development and set policies to reach President Biden's stated goal of getting to a 100-percent carbon pollution-free power sector by 2035.

Granholm received bipartisan support from the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and we should follow their lead. She knows that clean energy is the key to creating millions of good jobs and mitigating climate change and is dedicated to advancing our Nation's nuclear security. For these reasons, I support Jennifer Granholm's nomination for Secretary of Energy.

DARFUR

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise today to express my concern about increasing insecurity in the Darfur region of Sudan and to call for immediate action to prevent further violence and protect civilians.

As many of my colleagues will recall, in 2003 the regime of toppled Sudanese dictator Omar al-Bashir began a vicious and deadly campaign against his own citizens in the Darfur region. Millions were driven from their homes, and hundreds of thousands killed and sometimes raped by militia armed and

supported by the government. In 2004 Congress and the State Department stood united in determining that what was taking place in Darfur was, in fact, genocide. Three years after that determination, the United Nations-African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur, UNAMID, was established.

UNAMID has not been perfect. However, despite numerous obstacles the Government of Sudan put in place under al-Bashir to obstruct the mission's ability to carry out its mandate to protect civilians, UNAMID has provided critical support for the people of Darfur. UNAMID policewomen have served as trusted confidants for Darfuri women to report sexual and domestic violence, and UNAMID soldiers have provided a protective presence, deterring violence against civilians in areas where they have been deployed. Overall, the presence of international forces has reinforced some sense of security and stability for the hundreds of thousands of people in Darfur who remain displaced, so that that they can continue to live full and dignified lives. These efforts have come at significant cost both in blood and treasure: 64 UNAMID peacekeepers have been killed, and billions of dollars spent, in support of the mission.

With the fall of Bashir, many had hoped that the situation in Darfur would improve. However, those hopes have yet to be fully realized. Violence in West Darfur in late December of 2019 killed dozens and displaced an estimated 40,000 people. In January 2020, two separate violent incidents in North Darfur were additional indicators that all was not well in the region, as were deadly attacks on internally displaced camps in July. In January of this year, communal clashes in West and South Darfur resulted in the death of over 250 people and the displacement of over 100,000. These episodes raise the specter of a return to the catastrophic and genocidal violence that engulfed the region in 2003. But instead of redoubling its commitment to Darfur's long-suffering people at this critical time, the international community risks abandoning them.

This past December, the United Nations Security Council made the decision to dissolve UNAMID. Although it will retain a presence in the region until it completes its full drawdown at the end of June 2021, UNAMID's core civilian protection functions have now ceased. UNAMID is to be replaced by the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, or UNITAMS. UNITAMS is a Sudan-wide political mission that is aimed at assisting with the transition. I agree that such a mission is needed to ensure that Sudan's transition to democracy is successful. However, supporting the transition and protecting vulnerable civilians are not mutually exclusive, and the mandate for UNITAMS could have included both. Unfortunately, Sudan's transitional government refused to accept this course of action, and