

over the past year. Housing costs are up more than 6 percent. Clothing is up nearly 7 percent. Each category is the worst it has been since at least the early 1980s.

Remember, if and when the inflation rate begins to gradually slow, that does not mean all of these sky-high prices for goods and services will actually fall back down. In many cases, this painful and preventable inflation will be baked into prices going forward. These Democratic price hikes will likely be American families' new normal at the checkout counter, a permanent—permanent—direct result of their failed policies.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, now on a different matter, this week, our colleagues want a second run on some controversial nominees who stalled out last month.

Today, Senate Democrats will try again to confirm Professor Lisa Cook to the Federal Reserve Board. Professor Cook has no proven expertise in monetary economics at all, much less fighting inflation. One of her main supposed qualifications for this position is that she sits on the regional Fed Board in Chicago. The problem is, she was literally appointed to that position a few days before she was nominated for this one.

Professor Cook is a proven partisan who has promoted leftwing conspiracy theories and called for a fellow academic to be fired because that person did not support defunding the police. The American people deserve an independent, nonpartisan inflation fighter for this important post.

Likewise, the Federal Trade Commission is an important Agency that gets wide latitude to oversee our private sector. The American people need its Commissioners to be levelheaded experts who will put aside ideological ax-grinding.

The two current Commissioners who were appointed by a Republican President were so qualified and uncontroversial, the Senate approved each of them on a voice vote. But to serve as their newest colleague, President Biden has picked a radical partisan named Alvaro Bedoya.

Mr. Bedoya is such a poor fit that the first time Leader SCHUMER tried to shut down debate on his nomination, he lacked the votes and had to call it off. But Democrats want this hardcore partisan confirmed very badly, so here we are once again.

Mr. Bedoya has publicly attacked police and law enforcement and demanded that our country not enforce—not enforce—our immigration laws. He has called for States to essentially nullify Federal immigration law, saying:

Maryland police have no business working with ICE [and] I think it's high time that state legislators understand that they can do something about this.

He has volunteered statements that align with “defund the police,” de-

manding that none of the Democrats’ trillions in stimulus waste should go to provide for law enforcement.

Mr. Bedoya’s social media feeds have read like the rantings of a far-left activist with no aspiration to ever receive Senate confirmation.

He has embraced socialized medicine, critical race theory, and cracking down on citizens’ Second Amendment rights. He has launched political attacks on current Senators and called the National Republican Party Convention a—listen to this—“White supremacist rally”—a “White supremacist rally,” the Republican National Convention.

The rabid partisanship is not just an extracurricular activity. We know Mr. Bedoya would apply it specifically to the work of the FTC. He is already on the record calling for the elimination of longstanding bipartisan FTC policy statements. He supports excluding minority party Commissioners from investigations.

This nominee would not be fit to neutrally oversee major economic decisions, no matter what the makeup of the Senate was. But he is an essentially foolish choice—foolish—when the American people handed this administration a 50–50 Senate.

I would urge my colleagues on both sides to stop this awful nomination so the President can reconsider and send us somebody suitable.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Ann Claire Phillips, of Virginia, to be Administrator of the Maritime Administration.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UKRAINE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, for more than 70 days now, the Ukrainian people have endured—and more than endured, they fought back. They stood up to their invaders and have achieved amazing things against a superior force—superior, at least, on paper.

Many feared that Russia would crush Ukraine in days. Instead, Ukraine has not only withstood Russian aggression but has inflicted humiliating defeats on Russia. Twelve—twelve—Russian generals have reportedly been killed. Russia lost thousands of its troops, as well as hundreds of tanks and scores of aircraft. One estimate from British intelligence suggests that Russia may have lost more than a quarter of its ground combat strength.

Ukrainians successfully pushed Russia out of the Kyiv suburbs, have re-taken territory outside of Kharkiv, and still—still—maintain a defiant hold on the steel plant in Mariupol despite being encircled by Russian troops.

At the same time we recognize Ukraine’s successes and the fierce determination that has made them possible, it is also important to remember the devastation this war has inflicted. Thousands of Ukrainian civilians have been killed. Somewhere around 12 million Ukrainians have fled their homes. And the list of Russian atrocities gets longer every day—schools and hospitals intentionally bombed, executions and mass graves, torture, rape, the deliberate targeting of civilians, apparent war crimes.

In a few short weeks, Russia has brought unimaginable devastation. The port city of Mariupol—once home to more than 400,000 people—has been reduced to rubble. The city essentially no longer exists. Across Ukraine, an untold number of homes and buildings have been destroyed. It will take years to rebuild or remove the imprint of Russian aggression from the landscape, and some things cannot be entirely recovered. Just last night, Russia intentionally struck civilian centers in Odessa, bombing a shopping mall and a consumer warehouse without regard for innocent human life.

The Ukrainian people have displayed an incredible gallantry and resolve. They have embraced this fight and the cause of their country’s freedom. They have not spent any time waiting around for anyone else to come and save them. In fact, a recent news story highlighted the fact that Ukrainians not only continue to oppose the Russians, they have actually started rebuilding in places even as the war continues to rage.

But it is also important to remember that the Ukrainian people cannot sustain this war without military support from the United States and other free countries. The weapons and military resources we have supplied are playing a crucial role in enabling Ukraine to continue standing up to Russian aggression, and it is essential that we continue that support for as long as the Ukrainian people need it.

At the end of April, the President sent Congress a request for \$33 billion in emergency supplemental funding for critical security and economic assistance to Ukraine. Negotiations are ongoing about how we iron out a few matters. The top-line numbers may

change, but I hope Congress can act quickly to get Ukraine the military equipment it needs, as well as humanitarian support to help the millions of Ukrainians who have been displaced. We also need to make sure that our European partners are making similar contributions to help put President Zelenskyy in the strongest possible position to bring this war to an end. It would be a tragedy for Ukraine to have bought all this time with our help only to lose the initiative now.

So I hope that we can get this funding out the door as quickly as possible and that Democrats will not slow things down by attaching extraneous funding requests for unrelated policy riders. Thirty-three billion dollars is a substantial sum of money, but, as the news reports showing Ukrainian highways dotted with bombed-out Russian tanks attest, Ukraine is putting our military aid to good use.

The cost of inaction on our part—of allowing Vladimir Putin to destroy Ukraine and threaten NATO—would be much greater. We should not be so naive as to think that Putin's campaign of Soviet expansion will end with Ukraine. There are rightfully concerns that he will seek to escalate into former Soviet countries in Eastern Europe or even further. He has already hinted at a willingness to use nuclear weapons, and he proved in Syria that he is certainly OK with the use of chemical weapons.

I hope defenders of the Iran nuclear deal are making note of what nuclear power looks like in the hands of a nation with a malign agenda.

We cannot allow Putin to think that he can pursue his expansionist dreams unopposed.

The United States and all NATO members must remain committed to our shared defense and to supporting Ukraine in its fight for freedom. NATO countries should also preserve our open-door policy to nations that are seeking to contribute to the collective security of the alliance. There can never be too many allies in the quest to preserve peace and maintain a strong defense against tyranny, and we should welcome any nation that seeks to help further those goals.

Currently, Russia's main areas of control span from east of Kharkiv to previously contested parts of the Donbas and now along the coast of the Sea of Azov and past Crimea in an attempt to fully block Ukraine's access to the Black Sea. Russia has failed to capture Kyiv or break the resolve of the Ukrainian people, so now Putin wants to close Ukraine off from the world, which will harm not only Ukrainians but also Ukraine's trading partners that rely on Ukraine's substantial agricultural capacity.

Ukraine is a major exporter of wheat, corn, and sunflower oil. If Ukraine's ability to produce and export these products is compromised, which is already happening, we are likely to see not only price hikes but very serious food shortages as a result.

The World Food Programme reports that an additional 47 million people around the world could be facing acute hunger if the war in Ukraine continues. In a world in which hunger persists and famine looms, Putin's war of aggression in Ukraine threatens to cause casualties far beyond Ukraine's borders, which brings us back once again to the importance of supporting the Ukrainian people and their fight.

As President Zelenskyy said the other day in reference to the United States and Ukraine, we defend common values, democracy, and freedom. We do, indeed, Mr. President. We do, indeed.

The Ukrainian people are currently giving their all to secure a future of democracy and freedom in Ukraine. Let's continue to make it clear that they are not alone in that fight, and let's make sure they have the tools they need to win this war and secure Ukraine's freedom permanently.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

ROE V. WADE

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, my older daughter, Abigail—named for Abigail Adams, who urged her husband to “remember the ladies”—is 7. She is generous, silly, and so, so smart. She calls herself a maker-kid and dreams of being an engineer or an army nurse but definitely not a helicopter pilot.

My younger daughter, Maile, just turned 4. Her laugh is contagious, and early on during the pandemic when I was mostly working from home, she proved that she was truly her mother's daughter by starting to pull pranks, including grabbing my phone and, oopsies, hanging up on whoever was on the other line when I was trying to conduct a Zoom meeting or review some legislation instead of playing with her. But Abigail and Maile might not be here today if it weren't for the basic reproductive rights Americans have relied on for nearly 50 years.

When Roe was decided in 1973, it changed the lives of so many women.

It saved the lives of 14-year-olds who were the victims of rape or incest, who otherwise would have had to turn to back alleys and back rooms.

It changed the lives of women who desperately wanted to be moms but who found out their pregnancies weren't viable. They would have to go through the pain and suffering and trauma of a full term, only to stillborn at the end of 9 months.

Personally, for me, it gave me my chance to be a mom, for I never would have had my creative, silly, drive-me-crazy-yet-love-them-infinitely two daughters if Roe hadn't paved the way for women to make their own healthcare decisions, as I was only able to get pregnant through IVF, a fertility process that Roe lays the foundation for.

Because of IVF, I got to experience all the joys of motherhood. Because of reproductive rights, my husband and I

aren't just “Tammy and Bryan,” we are “Mommy and Daddy.”

Because of Roe and the rights and laws it protects, we are a family. Yet, last week, we learned that the Supreme Court could be just weeks away from overturning Roe v. Wade and Planned Parenthood v. Casey, a decision that, if made final, would strip away reproductive rights for millions of women, forcing them to potentially live through the horrors and indignities that their grandmothers bore if they needed reproductive care, and this would just be the start.

For while the anti-choice movement has been working for years—decades—to get to this moment, overturning Roe is not their end goal. They want a national ban on abortion, something the Republican Senate Leader said was a possibility just last week.

They want to undermine access to contraception. In some States, legislation has already been introduced that would make IVF a crime. In Oklahoma, one woman was even convicted of manslaughter for having a miscarriage—a miscarriage. Criminalized for having a miscarriage. I have had a miscarriage, and there are no words to describe what mothers feel in that moment. For me, I was overcome with the rawest, most painful emotion I had ever experienced.

In that moment, losing my baby felt more searing than anything I had ever felt in my entire life. Yet if the GOP has its way, women may now have to live in fear that that worst moment of their lives may also send them to prison. And if extremists get what they are seeking, doctors who perform procedures, such as dilation and curettage, to help grieving families who have lost a pregnancy might be at risk of going to jail too. Doctors like the one who after my own miscarriage conducted the D&C to clear out my uterus that allowed me to immediately continue my dream of having a baby via IVF, my desperately wished for second child, my beautiful rainbow baby, Maile.

So let's be honest, what is happening is not about protecting life. If the anti-choice movement truly wanted to protect life, they would stop trying to strip away Americans' healthcare. They would be putting all of their efforts into addressing the growing maternal mortality crisis that has taken a tragic number of Black mothers' lives.

They would be pushing for desperately needed policies that support parents, like affordable childcare and paid parental leave. If Republicans actually cared about being pro-life, they would do something, anything, to stand up to the National Rifle Association.

So, no, this isn't about saving lives. This isn't about looking out for families. It is about getting a slap on the back from their base and exerting even more control over women's bodies. It is about deepening divides between the haves and the have-nots. It is about