

talks could succeed; although, of course, there was no guarantee.

I was happy to agree because I knew that even if there was a chance to get something positive and tangible done on gun safety, it was worth the effort. So I told Senator MURPHY I would give him the space he needed. That quickly became the consensus of our caucus and the consensus of many of our gun safety advocates who pressed us to secure real progress. Senator MURPHY and I called them the day after Uvalde, and they agreed, get something done, even if it wouldn't be everything we would all want.

We were all on the same page. Instead of voting on a bill that would fail, we would try and get something real passed in the Senate. In the end, it was the right decision because before long we had a bipartisan guns framework. A week later, we had legislative text. A few days ago, that bill came before the Senate with strong bipartisan votes. And today—today—we can take final steps to passing the first major gun safety bill in nearly 30 years.

As I said, this is not a cure-all for all the ways gun violence affects our Nation, but it is a long overdue step in the right direction. It is significant; it is going to save lives; and it is my intention to get it done as soon as we can.

I want to thank all of my Democratic and Republican colleagues for working together to reach this point, and I want to thank the leaders of the effort: Senators MURPHY and SINEMA, Senators CORNYN and TILLIS, as well as all of our colleagues on the bipartisan working group, all of our chairs and Members who contributed their expertise and their leadership in shaping the bill. I also want to thank every single survivor of gun violence, every family who has spoken up, every advocate who has organized, and every voter and concerned citizen who has pushed this body to take action for so many years. Even with the holes in their heart, the lost loved ones through needless, cruel gun violence, so many advocates persisted and persisted and persisted. And without them keeping that candle burning, even in the darkest of moments, we wouldn't have gotten this done. I salute them. I thank them. America thanks them. And I say to all of them, all the advocates who worked so hard and so long on this, very soon your efforts will bear real fruit.

We are going to keep going until we finish the job. So I urge my colleagues to reach an agreement with us to do precisely that.

#### REMEMBERING LEONA I. FAUST

Now, Madam President, on a different and sadder subject, I wish to offer a few words this morning in honor of Leona Faust, the Senate Librarian, who passed away after decades of working to serve in this body.

In Psalm 19, it is written:

Day after day they pour forth speech;  
Night after night they reveal knowledge.

This Chamber is well accustomed to long speeches from many Members day

after day, but for a century and a half, it has been the responsibility of one person, the Senate Librarian, to help reveal, preserve, and safeguard the knowledge and work of this body. For 44 years, that was the work Leona dedicated herself to with intelligence and grace.

Leona's first day on the job was very different from what library employees might encounter today. When she was first hired in 1978, her responsibilities were primarily to manage hundreds of calls that came every day inquiring about the status of this or that piece of legislation.

In time, Leona, who became the Librarian in 2010, worked dramatically to improve the efficiency of the Library. She modernized it, digitized it, and made it far more accessible for Members and their staffs. Her accomplishments forever changed the way information flows across the Senate and democracy—democracy itself—is better off for her work.

But most of all today, we pay tribute to Leona not for what she did but for what she was—a beloved member of the Senate community, a friend to so many, and someone whom we will miss very, very dearly.

Today, all of us keep her memory permanently in our hearts and her family in our prayers.

#### TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM WALSH

Madam President, I want to congratulate our Journal Clerk Billy Walsh on his retirement from the Senate.

The Senate could not function without the hard-working staff here in the Chamber. Billy began his career as assistant bill clerk, and he has been with us for 19 years. A native of Cumberland, MD, he is retiring as the 21st Journal Clerk of the U.S. Senate.

We all wish him a happy and healthy retirement. And as Billy has said, "Those umbrella drinks by the ocean aren't going to drink themselves."

Enjoy your libations and your retirement—to the wonderful, wonderful, wonderful and always smiling Billy Walsh.

I yield the floor.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

#### BIPARTISAN SAFER COMMUNITIES ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, the American people do not have to choose between safer schools and the Constitution, and neither does the U.S. Senate.

The American people want their constitutional rights protected and their kids to be safe in school. They want both of those things at once, and that is just what the bill before the Senate will help accomplish.

Thanks to the leadership and dedication of Senator CORNYN, Senator TILLIS, and several of their counterparts across the aisle, we are considering a bipartisan bill that will make

our country safer without making it any less free. This is the sweet spot: making America safer, especially for kids in school, without making our country one bit less free.

The legislation before us would make our communities and schools safer without laying one finger on the Second Amendment for law-abiding citizens. Its key provisions are hugely popular with the American people. This bill supplies significant new funding to law enforcement and police, to school security, and to mental health treatment both in school and in the wider community.

Under this bill, if a teenager has been convicted of a crime or adjudicated to be mentally ill, even before their 18th birthday, that important information will show up in a firearms background check until they are 21. This strengthens the existing background check system without expanding it.

States will receive new money for crisis intervention programs of their own choosing, and if they choose to use the money for so-called red flag laws, those laws will have to meet a new, higher standard for due process.

This is a commonsense package. Its provisions are very, very popular. It contains zero—zero—new restrictions, zero new waiting periods, zero mandates, and zero bans of any kind for law-abiding gun owners.

Police and law enforcement support the bill strongly. The police chiefs' association and the Fraternal Order of Police say: "This bipartisan measure is . . . one that will save lives," according to the FOP and the police chiefs' association.

The National Sheriffs' Association calls it:

A bill that can actually save lives . . . that allows the States to craft their own unique answers to the questions raised by gun violence.

After years—literally years—of liberal demands that would make war on citizens' constitutional rights, our Democratic colleagues have finally accepted that we can make schools and communities safer without impeding on the Second Amendment.

We can do more to protect innocent Americans, schoolkids especially, without—without—eroding the Bill of Rights 1 inch, and that is just what the Senate will do when we pass this bill.

#### U.S. SUPREME COURT

Madam President, speaking of public safety, as the Supreme Court prepares to issue its final opinions of the term, far-left activists are openly calling for riots and violence in the streets.

For months, many of the country's most prominent Democrats have indulged in reckless talk and irresponsible rhetoric, fanning the flames of fear and rage among their supporters. This poisonous climate has illegal mobs assembling outside Justices' private family homes and has prompted one unhinged person to travel across the country for the purpose of committing an assassination.

The far left is promising that all of this will only be the prelude—the prelude—to the main event if they don't like the rulings coming down the pike. One activist group is promising that our cities will be submerged in—listen to this—“a night of rage.”

Well, yesterday, the Senate unanimously passed some supplemental funding for law enforcement to protect the rule of law and to keep the Court, its staff, and the Justices safe from all this. This noncontroversial funding passed here unanimously last night—zero objections. The House of Representatives needs to pass this urgent bill without delay.

#### BORDER SECURITY

Madam President, on another matter, in 2021, on President Biden's watch, each monthly total for illegal migrant apprehensions was higher than the same month's number the previous year. The same thing is happening in 2022. Every month has topped the total from 12 months prior. In fact, this past May didn't just eclipse May of 2021; it set a new alltime record. Border Patrol officers conducted nearly 240,000 apprehensions in May, and 25 percent of them—an “unusually high” rate—involved migrants they had apprehended before in just the past year.

These jaw-dropping numbers are a clear and direct symptom of failed leadership. The Biden administration is making a conscious decision—a conscious decision—to fumble the ball.

Last spring, right after apprehensions hit a 20-year high, President Biden claimed:

It's way down . . . We've now gotten control.

Look, no reasonable person could have looked at the facts and concluded that things were under control, but that is exactly what President Biden and his team insisted. Apparently, a functionally open border is how they define success. A functionally open border is how, apparently, they define success.

Senate Democrats rubberstamped the Biden nominees who are presiding over this failure. The Biden DHS swiftly issued internal guidance encouraging ICE and CBP personnel to use more politically correct terminology when referring to the border crisis. They were quicker to police employees' language than to actually police the border.

Vice President HARRIS spent her time as the administration's supposed border czar, staying as far away as possible from the border itself.

Just this spring President Biden submitted a budget request that would cut funding for Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention. He also promised to cut out the emergency authorities that border officials were relying on—in the absence of a coherent strategy from his administration—to turn away thousands of illegal migrants every single day.

Their response to a functional open border is just to hit the gas pedal.

Stable prices, public safety, and secure borders are three of the most fun-

damental duties of any government. Sadly, for our country, the Biden administration has swung and missed three times.

#### TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM WALSH

Madam President, today, I have the honor of acknowledging a longtime Senate staff member who is proceeding to a well-earned retirement at the end of this month.

Billy Walsh has been with the Secretary of the Senate's office for 19 years. He spent several years as an assistant bill clerk before moving to the Journal Clerk's office and working his way up to that top post.

As the Senate's Journal Clerk for the last 4 years, Billy has brought both good humor and professional dedication to his work in serving the Senate.

So, Billy, congratulations on your retirement, and thank you for your service.

#### REMEMBERING LEONA I. FAUST

Madam President, yesterday was a sad day for the Senate. We learned that we had lost a distinguished, long-serving staff leader in our institution.

Leona Faust had served her country as Senate Librarian for the past 12 years, and that key position was the capstone of a long and storied Senate career that had just entered its 45th year.

Everyone who knew Leona had sterling praise for her work. I have heard our Librarian described by her friends and colleagues as being devoted to the institution—as a true Senate all-star, as the first to volunteer whenever a task needed tackling.

Leona was a beloved colleague. She was also an expert whose professionalism and institutional knowledge filled an essential niche in the Senate's day-to-day functioning.

As leader of a talented team, Leona was constantly looking for new ways to expand the resources the Library offers to Senators and to our staff. She was instrumental in expanding the references and databases of the Senate's information system, especially as the pandemic left big chunks of the institution to working and researching remotely for a while. Year after year, she demonstrated her devotion, often without much fanfare.

The Senate Library staff pull long hours attending to pressing questions here on the floor. Leona led by example. She made herself available at all hours. So the Senate hasn't just lost a talented Librarian who helped people find resources they needed, we lost a true steward of the institution who had become a resource herself in her own right.

Our prayers today are with Leona's family and with her colleagues at the Senate Library and with everyone across the Senate who spent decades admiring Leona's commitment and her expertise and who are now joined together in mourning her loss.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

#### E-CIGARETTES AND VAPING PRODUCTS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, if you look at the marketing plan of Big Tobacco in America over the last half-century, it is very obvious: Tobacco companies sell an addictive product. There is a chemical included in the tobacco—nicotine—which is highly addictive. To be successful, they have to convince people to take up smoking, even though it is dangerous to their health and is a product that is difficult to quit. How do they achieve that goal? They prey on children, and they always have. Kids start smoking at an early age, and if the tobacco companies have their way, it leads to an addiction for a lifetime—a compromise on a person's health and even their death.

Over the years, I have done battle with Big Tobacco. The first, I guess, exchange was over banning smoking on airplanes. It seems so long ago, but we were successful, and we really changed the national conversation on tobacco. More and more people became sensitive to the fact that tobacco companies were, in fact, exploiting our children, addicting them to their product, and steps were taken at every level—local, State, and Federal—to stop that from happening, and it worked. The number of children in America who are addicted to tobacco-related products began to decline precipitously.

Big Tobacco was in a panic. They were losing their market share. Kids weren't taking up tobacco smoking the way they had in the past, and so they devised and invented new products. The most obvious one, I want to address this morning: e-cigarettes, vaping.

The nicotine inside these vaping devices is the same nicotine as in the tobacco cigarette, and it is just as addictive. Where have these companies directed their marketing? To children. Once again, to children.

We believe that 2 million or more children in America are currently using vaping products and e-cigarettes. Many of them believe that they are harmless, that they cause no damage to you from a health viewpoint. These children are wrong.

The Agency that is responsible for regulating this product—vaping products, e-cigarettes—is the Food and Drug Administration. They have written a sad and sorry record when it comes to regulation of this deadly product.

Over the years, we have begged them, pleaded with them, argued with them over why they didn't show more leadership in banning this product from the shelves across America because so many children were becoming addicted. It reached the point where a Federal court—after years of delay by the Food and Drug Administration, the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland ordered the Food and Drug Administration to finally begin regulating these addictive, kid-friendly vaping products, giving a deadline of September 9, 2021, to finalize review of e-cigarette applications.