

hear from Senator SCHUMER and from Senator MANCHIN; that, in fact, we can give relief to American families on the life or death inflationary cost of prescription drugs.

Wouldn't that be a breakthrough? Wouldn't it be something if this 50-50 Senate could end up doing something on a bipartisan basis that American families actually feel and for which seniors in our country would be able to say, "There is a limitation on how much I am going to be asked to spend for prescription drugs, and beyond that, I won't have to pay"? That is amazing—a breakthrough. Would it have made a difference when it comes to the cost of living for families? Of course it would.

So you would think that the Senator from Kentucky, who comes to the floor every day to give a speech on inflation, would be the leading cheerleader in our effort to contain the cost of prescription drugs. Wouldn't you think so? No. No. He has announced that he would oppose the increased effort to lower the cost of prescription drugs because it might raise taxes on the wealthiest people in this country. Hard to imagine, isn't it? His sympathy for millionaires and billionaires gets in the way of his caring for working families.

I think he should set it aside and should ask his colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle to join us in a bipartisan effort to contain the cost of prescription drugs.

We recognize how these price increases are squeezing household budgets across America, and we take it seriously. We have plans to lower prescription drug prices, decrease the price of gas at the pump, help families with the cost of childcare, and increase the supply of housing, all of which will address inflation, but item No. 1, priority No. 1, is prescription drugs.

The Senator from Kentucky has said he will oppose that. I hope he changes his mind. I hope, as he tells the stories of working families who tell him of the burdens they face with inflation, that he will also ask them the questions: How about reduction? How about prescription drugs? Are those expensive for you? Does it create a hardship? You know they do.

It is time for us to do something, and we would certainly like to have the Republican leader on our team to deal with one of the serious problems of the cost of living in America today.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Madam President, on an unrelated topic, the majority leader comes to the floor and characterizes the Supreme Court as the best in history. He refers to decisions they have made and compares them to *Brown v. Board of Education*.

For those who have forgotten, in 1954, the Supreme Court, in *Brown v. Board of Education*, basically said that separate but equal does not work in America anymore; that we are going to provide real equality and real opportunity when it comes to education. It was a historic decision.

The Senator from Kentucky compares it to the *Dobbs* decision on a

woman's right to choose, but there is a critical difference. *Brown v. Board of Education* expanded the constitutional protections of Americans. It expanded the constitutional rights of Americans. Those are historic, and those are consistent with the most celebrated decisions in our Supreme Court's history. *Dobbs* did just the opposite. For the first time ever in recorded history, the U.S. Supreme Court removed a constitutional protection for its citizens. And what was that protection? The right of women to make their choices for their own reproductive health.

So it is very painful to hear a comparison between *Brown*, which extended the constitutional protection and rights of individuals, and *Dobbs*, which, in overturning *Roe v. Wade*, went in exactly the opposite direction.

It is interesting to me to hear the Court being described by the Senator from Kentucky as a Court that is originalist; that it just looked to the Constitution; that it just looked to history. Well, they also looked to something else. Every single nominee on the Supreme Court who had been installed under the Trump administration, with the facilitation of the Senator from Kentucky, had to check one important box: approved by the Federalist Society.

What is the Federalist Society?

You can search the Constitution, and you will see no reference to it whatsoever, but it is very real.

President Trump made no bones about it. He wouldn't consider a Federal court judge, particularly for the Supreme Court, who had not been approved by the Federalist Society. The Federalist Society is an extreme right-wing conservative group that approved judges during the Trump administration and the three judges who were approved for the Supreme Court.

So the loyalty of these Justices may be to the Constitution, but it is also to the Federalist Society's agenda, and that agenda applauds, of course, the *Dobbs* decision in overturning *Roe v. Wade*.

Madam President, I want to make a point about attacks on Supreme Court Justices: unacceptable, unforgivable, and we should do something about it.

Now, here is what the Senator from Kentucky failed to mention: The Senate Judiciary Committee, which I chair, has enacted a law and has sent it to the floor, which would extend the protection of Federal judges in the *Alderl* Act so that there are more resources put into their protection. It passed overwhelmingly, on a bipartisan basis, in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

You would think, with all of the speeches that we are hearing on the floor about the safety of judges and how we should take care that they are not in danger, that we would have passed that law on the floor of the Senate immediately, right? Wrong. That bill, which gives more resources to protect Federal judges, has been stopped by one Senator, and he has announced publicly that he has done it.

Can you guess where that Senator is from? He is from the same State as the minority leader—Kentucky.

Senator RAND PAUL has held up this bill for additional resources to protect Federal judges for weeks on end. Why? Why don't we want to protect them? He objects to the way we have done it, and he has held up the bill. He won't even let us vote on it.

So I would say to the minority leader from Kentucky: If you really care about the security of judges in the Federal system, pick up the phone and call your colleague from the State of Kentucky and ask him to withdraw his hold on this bill.

We should pass that bill this week. If something terrible happens to a Federal judge, God forbid, how in the world can we explain that one Senator from Kentucky has held up the bill that might have created the resources to protect that Federal judge? That is the reality.

So when you talk about judicial safety, start at home. Start with the State of Kentucky—one Senator for it; the other Senator blocking it. If both of them would be for it, we would do it this afternoon.

FREEDOM TO TRAVEL FOR HEALTH CARE ACT OF 2022

Madam President, I would also like to address one of the aspects of the *Dobbs* decision in overturning *Roe v. Wade* which will be addressed by our colleagues a little later this morning.

Our Nation is in the midst of a healthcare crisis because of this *Dobbs* decision. In the weeks since the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*—erasing a longstanding constitutional right to abortion—pregnant women across America have been thrust into chaos. From the moment this decision came down, abortion was declared illegal in nearly 12 States. Some of these States' abortion bans make no exception even in cases of rape and incest. Even when exceptions are made to save the life of a mother, they are confusing and leave medical professionals uncertain of their legal status.

The sad reality is that these laws will most certainly result in there being pregnant women in danger, especially women of color who are more likely to experience severe and even deadly complications as a result of pregnancy.

Earlier this week, the Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing to examine the damage that has been created by overturning *Roe*.

During that hearing, we heard testimony from Dr. Colleen McNicholas. She is an OB-GYN doctor and abortion provider who practices in both my home State of Illinois and the neighboring State of Missouri.

Dr. McNicholas told the committee:

When the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, they effectively created two nations: one where those reproductive freedoms belong to themselves, and those whose reproductive freedom belongs to a small group of

politicians who effectively appointed themselves as the decision-makers over the bodies, lives, and futures [of women].

Dr. McNicholas informed us that the demand for care at her facility in Illinois has tripled since the *Roe v. Wade* decision was overturned by the Supreme Court. She said:

The Supreme Court's decision has already pushed people—the people each one of you represent—into extreme, and sometimes dangerous, circumstances in order to access one of the safest and most common healthcare procedures.

The radical, far-right majority on the Alito Supreme Court has put lives at risk by revoking a constitutional right, which was on the books for almost 50 years. Now, Members of this Senate must act to protect another constitutional right related to this debate: the right to travel across State lines to access healthcare, in this case, reproductive care.

That is why I am joining my colleagues Senators CORTEZ MASTO, PATTY MURRAY, SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, and KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND in cosponsoring the Freedom To Travel Healthcare Act of 2022.

Women and their health providers are counting on us to pass this bill. They find it hard to imagine that State legislators, and even some Federal officials, would try to restrict the right to cross a State boundary for medical care because the anti-choice legislators who have already outlawed abortion in their State are not content with what they have done already. In fact, right now, they are proposing legislation that would turn many State borders into Checkpoint Charlie in America. These lawmakers are hell-bent on denying women fundamental freedoms, no matter how many constitutional rights they infringe upon.

The question is, How far are we willing to let them go? Will we allow them to penalize and prosecute healthcare professionals who provide essential care to their patients in States where abortion remains legal? Are we going to allow these lawmakers to hold American citizens hostage in their own States, forcing them to give birth? Does that sound like the America that we know? No, it doesn't. And we need to draw the line here and now by passing the Freedom To Travel for Healthcare Act of 2022.

2022 NATO SUMMIT

Madam President, during the first part of the July recess, I traveled with several of my Senate colleagues to the historic NATO summit in Madrid, Spain.

On Tuesday, several members of our bipartisan group—Senators SHAHEEN, TILLIS, COONS, ERNST, and BLUNT—spoke on the floor about the trip. Senator FISCHER was also with us at that summit meeting.

I think Senator TILLIS of North Carolina said it best, that despite policy differences within our group of Senators, there was no daylight between us on two profoundly important matters: We

agree, Finland and Sweden should be welcomed into NATO. And we also agree that the illegal, barbaric war on Ukraine by Russian dictator Vladimir Putin must not succeed.

At the summit, we met with leaders from a number of our allies, including, for the first time, leaders from the Indo-Pacific region who joined the NATO summit.

Japanese Prime Minister Kishida was clear when he told us:

The security of Europe and the Indo-Pacific are inseparable.

And German Chancellor Scholz expressed an unwavering commitment to take as long as needed to make sure Ukraine retains its sovereignty against Russia's barbaric aggression.

But perhaps what was most notable was the overwhelming sense of unity and defense of common values found among our NATO allies in the face of Russian aggression. For that, I want to give President Biden credit. He spent an hour or more with our bipartisan delegation at the summit meeting. He and his able team, Secretary of State Blinken, Secretary of Defense Austin, and others, met with us and discussed in detail what was being debated at the summit.

I have been traveling to Eastern Europe and meeting with allies for many years. I can tell you, I have never felt such a shared sense of purpose and determination to stop the Russian threat.

As Senator TILLIS noted on Tuesday, our safety at home is inextricably linked to the security of Europe. Our bipartisan delegation understood this. The world leaders at the NATO summit understood it, and President Biden certainly understands it. Vladimir Putin would serve his people well by understanding it as well.

In the Senate, we can help Putin understand the unbreakable unity and resolve of the world's democracies by being one of the first NATO members of nations to approve Finland and Sweden's membership. We should do that without delay.

SWEDEN

Madam President, before arriving at the NATO summit in Spain, I joined my colleagues in visiting one of the prospective new NATO aspirants: Sweden.

Sweden has long been a security ally. For nearly 200 years, it has tried to maintain the semblance of nonalignment. That changed swiftly with Vladimir Putin's aggression. It triggered an overwhelming Swedish support to join NATO, and Sweden began shipping weapons to Ukraine to help in the war effort, something it hadn't done since helping Finland resist Nazi aggression in 1939.

Swedish leaders recognize Russia's aggression today as the same kind of behavior seen in Europe in World War II. They know that the collective NATO security arrangement is critical to stopping Russia. I agree completely and look forward to their NATO membership.

Putin thought he could fracture NATO by invading Ukraine. Look what he did. He stoked petty grievances against NATO, and in the end, we are picking up two valuable, important allies.

And, incidentally, Vladimir Putin, you are now going to have 800 miles of new NATO territory on your border.

LITHUANIA AND BELARUS

Madam President, I was unable to join my colleagues who visited Finland as their first stop, as I was in Lithuania, a Baltic State with long memories of Russian tyranny.

In no place is the value of the collective NATO defense more stark than in the Baltic States, which Putin, no doubt, would like to forcibly return to Soviet dystopia.

Lithuanian leaders, including President Nausėda, the Speaker of Parliament Cėmylytė-Nielsen, are keenly aware of the Russian threat. But Lithuania is undeterred in helping its neighbors in Ukraine and Belarus stand up to Russian aggression, and they are unafraid to stand up to the Chinese bullies as well.

I was glad again to spend time with Valdas Adamkus, a highly successful Lithuanian immigrant to Chicago who returned back to his homeland of Lithuania and successfully ran for President. He was there shortly after Lithuania gained its independence from the Soviet Union.

President Adamkus' historic leadership and foresight helped bring Lithuania not only into the European Union, but equally important, into NATO. And for that, the Lithuanian Parliament recently honored his achievements. Quite simply, Lithuania is safer today because of his vision.

The awe and esteem Lithuanians feel for this historic leader was clear from the reverence shown by the Lithuanian people.

I also want to mention the tireless work of Belarusian opposition leader Svetlana Tsikhanouskaya, who lives in Lithuania after fleeing from Belarus from the henchmen of the strongman leader Alexander Lukashenko. You see, 2 years ago, her husband, Sergei, ran for President against Lukashenko. We know from history that anybody who was courageous enough to run against Lukashenko is going to end up in prison after the sham elections which he stages with regularity.

Lukashenko, worried that he couldn't win a fair election, jailed Sergei, her husband. Rather than back down in fear, Svetlana, the wife, ran in his place. She probably won the rigged election but had to flee with her family, leaving Sergei to face an outrageous 18-year prison sentence.

This is a picture of Sergei Tsikhanouskaya facing an 18-year sentence in Belarusian prison because he had the temerity to challenge Lukashenko. Now his wife, a courageous woman if I ever met one, is trying to plead his cause and is safely with her children in Lithuania.