

The bill being pushed by the Democrats and opposed by the Republicans would do several things.

It would say that Medicare can negotiate prices for drugs. That will help senior citizens and will save our Treasury money.

It also says that we are going to limit the amount of out-of-pocket expenditures that seniors will face under Medicare to \$2,000 a year. That is a real break for a lot of people who are struggling to make ends meet among our senior citizens.

We also say that if the pharmaceutical companies dramatically increase the price of drugs, they will be subject to a penalty. There are conditions for that, but we are trying to say to them that you can make a profit, but don't try to capitalize on that profit every single year by raising the cost of drugs.

What we are talking about are actual family concerns for the affordability of lifesaving drugs. The Democrats are for it; the Republicans oppose it. They have said it is socialism; it is trying to make a buck—or whatever they want to characterize it, I don't know. They ought to sit down and talk to some of these families. In fact, they ought to talk amongst themselves when a Republican Senator took the floor yesterday and agreed with our position on pharmaceuticals.

I would say to the Senator from South Dakota, he can continue his campaign for the Republican dream of making tax cuts for the wealthiest people permanent. I want to be part of the Democratic aspiration to make life more affordable, particularly for seniors and those in need of affordable drugs.

SEMICONDUCTORS

Mr. President, today, the Senate is going to take up the CHIPS Act of 2022. It is critical to our economy and national security. It will provide billions of dollars to boost our domestic semiconductor manufacturing industry.

In 1990, the United States produced 37 percent of the world's semiconductors—1990. Today, it is 12 percent.

Semiconductors are used in everything from vacuum cleaners to refrigerators, cell phones, cars, and fighter jets. The ongoing global shortage of microchips has led us to supply chain constraints on goods, higher prices, layoffs, and a great dependency on foreign suppliers.

For generations, my home State of Illinois has been a leader in auto manufacturing. This includes companies like Stellantis, which has a plant in Belvidere, IL. Unfortunately, this plant has had forced shutdowns and layoffs in recent years—not because they lack customers; they lack chips. The global shortage of semiconductors has forced Stellantis to slash its workforce by more than 70 percent over the past 3 years. A similar story unfolded at Ford's Chicago Assembly Plant—repeatedly forced to stop production and lay off workers because of a shortage of chips.

This isn't just an Illinois problem. U.S. automakers are building an estimated 3 million fewer vehicles than projected this year because of the semiconductor shortage. The global chip shortage and resultant slowdown in auto manufacturing has driven up the cost of cars and trucks. A new car costs 17 percent more today than a year ago. Talk about dealing with inflation—when it comes to the cost of vehicles, you are dealing with a shortage in semiconductor chips.

Across America, layoffs, closed production lines, long waits, and high prices for cars, appliances, and other basics are evidence of the urgent need to invest in our domestic manufacturing industry and domestic production of semiconductors. If we fail to make these investments, American workers and consumers will pay the price.

This isn't only about our Nation's economy; it is also about our Nation's security. Many U.S. defense systems and platforms rely on foreign-made chips for their performance, and semiconductors are particularly critical for the next generation of defense technology.

Most of the chips that power U.S. defense systems today are made in Asia. Think about that for a minute. We are dependent on Asia for the chips that we need to keep America safe.

We have seen what a pandemic can do to supply chains. Think about how military conflict could end up with supply chains, global supply chains, in danger. Imagine if China, for instance, decided to deliberately withhold microchips from a nation to weaken their national defense. Rebuilding America's microchip production is about defending our Nation and our allies in a dangerous world.

I understand some have concern about the subsidies in the bill, framing them as corporate giveaways. It is true that many of the chipmakers who would benefit from this bill are profitable or they moved production overseas despite receiving previous Federal funding. But in this bill are incentives to bring microchip production back to the United States, and they are absolutely necessary for us to compete with other nations that are trying to lure chipmakers away from the United States.

The bill also includes guardrails to protect and promote production in the United States, such as prohibiting the manufacture of certain chips in countries of concern, like China.

Ultimately, this bill makes strategic investment to boost our domestic supply chain, counter the threat posed by other countries, like China and Russia, and help American consumers. I urge my colleagues to pass the CHIPS Act without delay.

Mr. President, I would like to make one last statement on the record.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA). Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF NANCY L. MALDONADO

Mr. DURBIN. It is not every day we get to say this, but this week, we have a chance to make history in the "Land of Lincoln." Soon, the Senate will vote to confirm Nancy Maldonado as U.S. district court judge for the Northern District of Illinois. If confirmed, this eminently qualified nominee will be the first Hispanic woman to serve as an article III judge in Illinois. It marks yet another proud accomplishment in our efforts to build a judiciary that really reflects America.

Born in Skokie, Ms. Maldonado has practiced law for more than two decades. She earned her A.B. cum laude from Harvard and her J.D. from Columbia Law School. After graduating, she clerked for 2 years with Judge Ruben Castillo, who served on the court to which she has now been nominated.

In the years since her clerkship, Ms. Maldonado has dedicated herself to defending the rights of working people as a plaintiff-side employment law litigator. Throughout her career, she has continually answered the call to serve our State.

In the early 2010s, she worked as special assistant state's attorney to Cook County to investigate fraud. In 2018, our State's attorney general appointed her to serve as consent decree monitor in two employment discrimination cases. Again last year, she was appointed to serve as a special assistant attorney general to investigate consumer fraud. She was also confirmed by the Illinois State Senate to join the State Police Merit Board, a role in which she has worked to ensure that members of law enforcement who protect and serve our communities are treated fairly.

With such impressive credentials, it is no wonder that Senator TAMMY DUCKWORTH and I enthusiastically support Ms. Maldonado and that the American Bar Association rated her "well qualified."

Given her extensive experience and long record of service, she will be an asset to the Northern District of Illinois. I hope all of my colleagues will join me in voting for her confirmation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

SEMICONDUCTORS

Mr. WARNOCK. Mr. President, as it turns out, I rise to echo the sentiments of my colleague, the distinguished Senator from the State of Illinois.

The Senate is prepared to finally begin debating a targeted version of the jobs and competition bill that many of us have been working on for more than a year, and I rise today to urge my colleagues not to waste any more time in getting this important bill across the finish line. We should not allow politics to get in the way of the people's work.

As a voice in the Senate for my home State of Georgia, I cannot stress enough how critical it is for us to get this bill done for our national security

and to keep our economy competitive against global actors like the Chinese Communist Party and to lower rising costs for hard-working families all across Georgia and all across our country.

Now, I know that there might be disappointment from some of my colleagues that we are not able to pass the more robust package right now that we have been working on and negotiating since last April. And, honestly, I share that disappointment.

As both a member of the Commerce Committee and a member of the committee that has been negotiating the final competition bill, I have been working hard to secure several priorities for Georgia in that package, and I am not about to stop fighting for those priorities.

I am going to keep fighting to get investments and policies like funding for regional tech hubs, for STEM education—an education program that invests in all of our children, in all of our young people—and workforce development passed into law.

But let me be clear: Passing a bill that will strengthen domestic production of one of our country's most valuable resources, semiconductors or chips, is a crucial opportunity to invest in the economy, invest in our security, and our future. And we cannot wait another minute.

I want to shine a spotlight on this because I have heard from Georgians about the importance of this legislation and, specifically, investing and making more chips here in the United States. We know that chips are essential components in the products that support thousands of good-paying jobs in Georgia, not to mention things like cars, cell phones, computers, vacuum cleaners, ATMs. Chips are all around us, a host of products we rely on every single day.

And we know that our chips supply chains are under significant strain, both from production limits and geopolitical threats. But what you may not know is how these issues directly affect workers and companies on the ground all across the State of Georgia—companies like Kia, which has a thriving facility out in West Point, GA, about halfway between Atlanta and Montgomery, AL, on I-85. Semiconductors are essential to the manufacturing of the roughly 340,000 vehicles Kia produces in Georgia every year. At least twice in the past year, this facility, which I have visited on more than one occasion, has had to stop work at the plant because they didn't have enough chips.

They had to stop working, not because they didn't have enough customers, but because they didn't have enough chips. I visited that West Point facility, and I met with some of those workers. And I can tell you that the last thing that those workers need is to miss days off work and money out of their paychecks because we don't manufacture enough of the materials that they work with every single day.

And it is not just car manufacturers in Georgia. The chip shortage is hurting our State's economy in myriad ways, big and small. For instance, Stephen Milner is the CEO of Planters Telephone Cooperative, a member-owned telecommunications provider in Screven County that does broadband expansion, as well as broadband maintenance.

Stephen's company needs equipment to do that work that requires semiconductors, and as he explained recently in the Atlanta Journal Constitution, it has become harder to expand telephone and internet services to new businesses and homes in the rural communities he services because his company can't guarantee that it will get the parts needed to complete the job.

So think about that. The chip shortage isn't just hurting jobs and bottom lines; it is hobbling our ability to expand rural broadband. And farmers all across Georgia will tell you that you can't even farm efficiently without a good broadband connection.

And so this is devastating, especially for rural Georgians. And if we don't act soon, it will get worse. We have got to ensure that all of our citizens can take full advantage of every opportunity in our changing economy. And this is a problem we can solve. We can solve it.

The only thing that gets in the way of this right now is politics. And so we have got to pass this bill. If we produced more chips here at home, it would boost domestic manufacturing, ease supply chain issues, and help begin to lower rising costs for goods that families are experiencing in Georgia and around the country. Why wouldn't we want to take steps to drive down costs for hard-working families right now? We work for them.

Lastly, this bill contains provisions I fought for that will expand these tax incentives to companies down the semiconductor supply chain, supporting economic engines like the high-tech semiconductor plant being built in Covington, GA, that will create 400 new jobs.

There are real economic consequences for people in my State if we do not pass this chips bill and make these investments. These are the human faces of the public policy that we would pass. But that is not the only reason we need to get this bill done as urgently as possible.

It also bears repeating that passing this legislation is critical to our national security and strengthening our competitiveness against global actors like the Chinese Communist Party. Chips are used in technology critical to our national security.

According to a 2020 report from the Semiconductor Industry Association, in 1990—listen—in 1990, the United States represented a 37 percent share of the world's chip manufacturing capacity. Today, that number is 12 percent—from 37 percent to 12 percent.

I submit that that is unacceptable, and it is a threat to our national secu-

rity. As we have heard from Defense Secretary Austin, Commerce Secretary Raimondo, and other administration officials, we are at a tipping point—a tipping point—where international companies are making significant decisions about where they are investing their capital and putting down roots.

In fact, we have already seen several of these entities hesitate to invest in American manufacturing due to inaction and political gamesmanship right here in Washington.

So our ability to rise to this occasion will demonstrate whether the United States is willing to cede the innovation and economic higher ground to the Chinese Communist Party or whether we will stand up to the People's Republic of China and reinvest in the manufacturing and innovation prowess that has made America a lone superpower for decades.

I submit that if we fail to pass this bill immediately, we will set back America's competitiveness for a generation or more. This critical moment requires all of us to put the country above politics. Imagine that: Put the country above politics. Put hard-working American families who are doing the best they can right now above politics and strengthen our Nation's competitiveness.

And so I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the strong chips legislation, and let's ensure that the next century, like the 20th century, is the American century.

I yield the floor.

NOMINATION OF NINA NIN-YUEN WANG

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this week, the Senate continues its work confirming experienced, diverse nominees to the Federal judiciary.

Today, the Senate will vote to confirm Judge Nina Wang, nominated to the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado. Judge Wang currently serves as a magistrate judge in the District of Colorado. Prior to joining the bench, she worked in private practice, primarily representing plaintiffs and defendants in a broad range of complex intellectual property matters. Judge Wang also served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Colorado, a role in which she litigated civil cases on employment, environmental, and civil rights matters.

A graduate of Washington University in St. Louis and Harvard Law School, she clerked for Judge Peter J. Messitte on the District of Maryland a few years after earning her J.D. The American Bar Association has unanimously rated Judge Wang "well qualified", and she enjoys the strong support of her home State Senators, Mr. BENNET and Mr. HICKENLOOPER.

I will support Judge Wang, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

VOTE ON THE WANG NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. I ask that the scheduled vote occur immediately.