

which he spoke about the instability of the Persian Gulf and Soviet threats to the movement of oil through the Strait of Hormuz. That was back in the days when we depended almost entirely on imported oil into the United States. But Jimmy Carter said in 1980 that any attempt to gain control of the Strait of Hormuz and to block access to that essential energy source, he said, would be “an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America.” That would be a declaration of war.

I think the same argument applies to semiconductors today. In fact, some people have called semiconductors the new oil because it is so essential to our way of life, to our economy, and our security.

Just as the Soviets could have blocked the Strait of Hormuz and choked off the global oil supply back in 1980, the People’s Republic of China could seize Taiwan’s supply of chips and starve the rest of the world. Will they go into the ventilators and the other lifesaving medical equipment or provide homes with clean drinking water? These are important questions that many of us have been asking and looking to try to find ways to mitigate, if not to eliminate, our dependency on imported semiconductors.

So funding this program in this bill currently before the Senate will shore up domestic chip manufacturing to make sure that we meet the needs of our most critical industries. It would deliver economic benefits to our communities through new investments and jobs. It will strengthen our national security by providing chips that can make their way into markets around the world. It will ensure that we have a reliable supply of chips so we can outinnovate and outcompete any and every adversary, and that is a point worth stressing.

We know we are in competition with the People’s Republic of China, but the way we will beat them is to outcompete them. The only way we will do that is with access to the most advanced electronics, including semiconductors, that are made anywhere on the planet, and we need to make them here in America so there can be trusted supply chains and readily available.

So I appreciate all of our colleagues who supported this legislation for the long and winding journey that has brought us here today, and I hope this bill will pass the Senate and the House next week and finally make its way to the President’s desk.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

NOMINATION OF REUBEN E. BRIGETY II

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, you and I have had the blessing of traveling to South Africa together, so I know you know, as I do, that it is a critical nation, not just on its own terms as a country of 70 million people of a multilingual, multifaith, multiethnic democracy working to achieve the incredible promise enshrined in its Con-

stitution, working to achieve the vision of a liberation struggle, but it is also a country that is critical to regional security and for the path of the globe and to the security and stability of democracy in this century. This is why I stand to speak briefly on behalf of my friend, Reuben Brigety, the nominee to be our next Ambassador to South Africa, whose confirmation we will take up in just a few moments.

Reuben is someone I admire deeply. He attended the Naval Academy, served in the U.S. Navy, was Deputy Assistant Secretary of State both for African Affairs and for Population, Refugees, and Migration.

I met him as Ambassador to the African Union, knew him well as dean of the Elliott School at GW. He took on the challenge of service as the president of the University of the South, better known as Sewanee; and now our President has nominated him to represent us in South Africa.

As we have seen in recent votes and actions at the United Nations and in discussions and debates around the world, African countries—in this moment, during this war in Ukraine, in the face of Russia’s aggression—are turning away from us. They are not believing the reality that it is Russian aggression that is causing food scarcity and fertilizer prices to spike, and they are more than not taking Russia’s side on this.

We cannot take these relationships for granted. The United States, for decades, has been a close development and public health partner of South Africa. We have to send our best, and Ambassador Brigety is the right person at the right time to advance the critical relationship goals that we have between the United States and South Africa.

TRIBUTE TO ALEXANDRA DAVIS

Mr. President, one of the blessings of serving here in the Senate is getting to know natives of New Jersey, like yourself and like my foreign policy adviser, Allie Davis.

I will do my best to get through these next few minutes of remarks without being unduly emotional, but she deserves a catch in the throat and a tear in the eye because Allie is someone who from the moment she came to join my team 6 years ago has been a remarkable person—a person of great spirit and character, someone who also spent time in South Africa as a young person.

After graduating from the University of Delaware, a tour as a Fulbright in South Africa prepared her to join my team as a foreign policy fellow.

As she was just confessing to me in my office a few moments ago, she knew far less about governance and politics than I imagined. She carries herself with remarkable grace and confidence. She steadily has risen to be a legislative aide, a legislative assistant, and now my foreign policy adviser.

I don’t have the time—but I wish I did—to detail all the pieces of significant and important legislation she has

helped shepherd through to success. She has critically supported my leadership on the State and Foreign Operations Appropriations team. She has been critical as we have worked to address this moment of global hunger. She has helped get the Global Fragility Act from concept to enactment. She has helped make the Development Finance Corporation a powerful tool for development. She helped shape and craft the Nita M. Lowey Middle East Partnership for Peace Act, and she nearly single-handedly, at a time when I was confident this could not be done, got the Sudan Claims Resolution Act through this Congress and fundamentally changed the arc of the search for democracy in Sudan.

We had the chance to travel together on a Presidential mission to Ethiopia, during which she had truly memorable encounters with its head of state and an opportunity to see and participate and help drive diplomacy firsthand. We traveled together to so many other countries: from the UAE to France to Georgia to Italy and, perhaps most memorably, to Sudan, where I was honored to receive one of their leading national awards, which really was an award in recognition of her work on behalf of the Sudanese people.

She goes to serve the House Foreign Affairs Committee, whose chairman I accosted last night at an event, and said: You are causing great harm to me, and I resent deeply the fact that you are causing this most talented and skilled and trusted member to leave the Senate and go to the House.

But she joins as a member of their professional staff, a great team. And I know that we will continue to work hard and to work closely together in the years and decades ahead. A great friend, a great colleague, and someone to whom I wish great success in the many years ahead.

With that, I urge my colleagues to vote in support of the nomination of Reuben Brigety to be Ambassador, and I offer my greatest thanks to Allie Davis for her talented and skillful service on behalf of the people of Delaware.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Reuben E. Brigety II, of Florida, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of South Africa.

VOTE ON BRIGETY NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Brigety nomination?

Mr. COONS. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY).

The result was announced—yeas 55, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 266 Ex.]

YEAS—55

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Romney
Bennet	Hirono	Rosen
Blumenthal	Kaine	Sanders
Booker	Kelly	Schatz
Brown	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Lujan	Shelby
Carper	Manchin	Sinema
Casey	Markey	Stabenow
Collins	Menendez	Tester
Coons	Merkley	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Murkowski	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Feinstein	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Padilla	Wyden
Graham	Peters	Young
Hassan	Portman	
Heinrich	Reed	

NAYS—40

Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blackburn	Hagerty	Rounds
Boozman	Hawley	Rubio
Braun	Hoeben	Sasse
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Johnson	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Crapo	Lummis	Toomey
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	
Fischer	Paul	

NOT VOTING—5

Blunt	Kennedy	Smith
Cramer	Leahy	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

The senior Senator from Connecticut.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 4550

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am honored to appear with a group of my colleagues on behalf of the Expanding Access to Family Planning Act.

We are here to talk about this essential measure in the post-Roe world. That is a phrase I never thought I would ever utter anywhere, not to mention on the floor of the U.S. Sen-

ate. But we are living in the post-Roe world where reproductive rights are under assault as never before and critical reproductive healthcare services are more necessary and also are more at risk than ever before. That is why a consistent, strong source of funding for title X Family Planning Programs are absolutely critical and urgent. That is the purpose of the Expanding Access to Family Planning Act.

What it means for the State of Connecticut is, in the past, \$2.5 million in title X funding, allowing patients, mostly women—45,000 of them—critical access to comprehensive family planning and preventive healthcare services. What we are talking about here is not only family planning but also testing and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, lifesaving cancer screening, and other essential health services. And they are all now at risk.

What they need is the strong and consistent source of funding that this measure would provide, doubling—literally, almost doubling the number of dollars but also guaranteeing over a 10-year period that clinics will receive this funding.

In the State of Connecticut, most of this funding in the past has gone to Planned Parenthood of Southern New England. The Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center has received some. They have done absolutely extraordinary work in delivering health services, particularly to women who are uninsured, women who are of lower incomes, and women who are younger—under 30. And that is the primary patient pool that needs these services.

Let me be very blunt. If my Republican colleagues truly care about supporting families, they can show it by supporting this measure and funding title X. In the past, since its inception 50 years ago, it has been bipartisan because people agree that families ought to be a priority, that decisions about when and whether to have children are the most important that we make, that caring for families and particularly prenatal care, screening for sexually transmitted diseases, cancer screening—these health services are vital to all of us, whether we are the patient or not, and that they stay funded in the long run. Preventive healthcare is pound-wise, and it will save money.

We know that the Supreme Court's decision in Dobbs strips women of a vitally important freedom and puts it in the hands of government bureaucrats: the decision about when and whether to have children. The least we can do now is to fund the reproductive healthcare services that will save lives and save futures.

Dobbs has put women at risk. It has put reproductive healthcare in grave jeopardy. This measure is necessary to mitigate the effects of Dobbs—more necessary now than ever before. We will never stop fighting for a woman's right to choose when and whether to have children. We will never stop fighting to protect a woman's right to ac-

cess healthcare that is vital to her own and her children's health.

In the face of mounting attacks on women's health, now is the time to strengthen title X, and that is why we need this legislation. Passing the Expanding Access to Family Planning Act will strengthen our entire healthcare system.

It is simply critical for this \$500 million—providing birth control, cancer screening, other kinds of testing and treatment—to be passed. And if my Republican colleagues are serious about supporting families, they ought to be eager to join us. And I am proud to be supporting this measure, and I am eager to see it signed into law.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the Expanding Access to Family Planning Act, which will help ensure millions of Americans can continue receiving family planning services through the title X program.

For more than 40 years, title X has helped ensure hundreds of thousands of women—regardless of income, background, insurance status, or hometown—have access to basic reproductive healthcare, including wellness exams, cancer screenings, birth control, and testing and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases.

While this program, which was created with bipartisan support, has been around for decades, we have seen what happens when MAGA Republicans are in control. President Trump slashed funding for title X and imposed a dangerous domestic gag rule that banned doctors from telling people how they could access abortion services. The gag rule wreaked havoc across the country. It forced providers to decide whether they wanted to receive title X funding—knowing that healthcare providers wouldn't be able to provide women with accurate and comprehensive information—or say no to this critical family planning funding that supports women across the country through clinics like Planned Parenthood and other nonprofits.

In my home State of Hawaii, the entire network of title X clinics said no to this dangerous rule and rejected the funding, forcing our State to foot the bill. On the other hand, the State of Hawaii, the clinics in Hawaii, because they rejected this funding, could provide the full range of care for their clients, but ultimately the gag rule resulted in a loss of services to thousands of women.

Across the country, Trump's rule slashed title X's patient capacity in half, jeopardizing family planning and contraceptive care for 1.6 million patients nationwide. While President Biden reversed this rule, we can't take anything for granted.

As the rightwing Supreme Court and MAGA Republicans work to eliminate reproductive freedom, it is critical we protect and strengthen title X. That is