

has a role to play. We in Congress have a role we can play, too, in sending a very clear message to Vladimir Putin that we will not stand idly by while he attacks a neighbor, a democracy, and a potential future member of NATO.

To that end, I have introduced bipartisan legislation called the Ukraine Democracy Defense Lend-Lease Act to ensure Ukrainian forces have the weapons that they need to deter that aggression and defend, if necessary, against a Russian invasion.

Of course, students of history remember the importance of lend-lease back in World War II, back when America was officially neutral in the conflict initiated by Nazi Germany in Europe and during a time when the American people were of an isolationist frame of mind.

Recognizing the importance of throwing a lifeline to Great Britain and our other allies, Congress passed on a bipartisan basis the Lend-Lease Act, which ultimately resulted in \$30 billion worth of materiel being delivered to Britain and our other allies to help them defeat Nazi Germany.

So, in a similar vein, this legislation authorizes the President to enter into lend-lease agreements with Ukraine and provide the military equipment necessary to protect the Ukrainian people from Russian aggression. No one is suggesting that American troops should be on the ground, but we are saying clearly that it is our responsibility to provide the Ukrainians everything they need in order to defend themselves.

This legislation would once again, in the immortal words of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, allow us to serve as the arsenal of democracy, just as we did in World War II, and provide Ukraine with the lethal weapons they need to protect themselves against the Russian threat.

Make no mistake, America stands with Ukraine, and we will do everything we can, again, on a bipartisan basis—the executive branch, the legislative branch—to support our friends and to defeat a Russian invasion and allow them to protect their democracy.

Vladimir Putin's stated concerns about Ukraine are completely a false narrative, particularly with regard to his stated concerns about Ukraine becoming a part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which, as we all know, is purely defensive in nature.

Vladimir Putin has called the fall of the Soviet Union one of the greatest geopolitical tragedies of the 20th century, and clearly he is of a mind to regain that lost territory as a result of the fall of the Soviet Union and, if necessary, do it by force. That is what Putin is up to, and we should not be confused about that.

I am proud to have worked with Senators CARDIN and WICKER and Senators SHAHEEN, GRAHAM, and BLUMENTHAL on this legislation, and I hope more of our colleagues—again, on a bipartisan basis—will join us in advancing this

bill and making sure that our Ukrainian friends have everything they need to deter, if possible, Russian aggression and, if that is not possible, to make sure that Vladimir Putin pays a heavy price for attacking Ukraine.

#### BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. President, on another matter, it was 1 year ago today when we were all on the Capitol steps on a cold January 20, 2020, following the election of Joe Biden as President of the United States and KAMALA HARRIS as Vice President. Exactly 365 days ago, we were out there on the Capitol steps and heard what I believed to be an important and welcomed speech by the President, where the President said he would serve to be a unifying force in Washington.

He said:

[W]ithout unity there is no peace, only bitterness and fury. No progress, only exhausting outrage. No nation, only a state of chaos.

Wonderful, inspirational words.

But now we find ourselves, a year into the Biden administration, with a lot of bitterness, fury, and outrage over the many failures and missteps of this administration. One of the pillars of the President's campaign was the promise of a strong Federal response to the pandemic.

Mr. Biden said:

I am never going to raise the white flag and surrender. We're going to beat this virus. We're going to get it under control, I promise you.

That is a quote.

One year later, we are nowhere close to having this virus under control. New daily cases are breaking records, threatening the capacity of intensive care units and hospitals across the country. Healthcare workers are once again exhausted after having been pushed to their limits—mentally and physically. And, perhaps most embarrassingly, affordable, reliable tests are increasingly hard to come by.

We know testing is one of the most valuable resources we have when it comes to this virus. I remember calling my Governor, and I said: What do you need, Governor?

This is at the beginning of the pandemic.

He said: I need two things.

He said: I need testing, and I need PPE—personal protective equipment.

Well, that is another story about our vulnerable supply chains and the fact that we have outsourced the manufacturing of personal protective equipment to China, which is the main reason we had a lack of access to what we needed.

But as to testing, the sooner positive cases are identified, the better equipped we are as individuals to quarantine ourselves, seek medical attention—if necessary—or, if all else fails, to just ride out the virus without infecting other people.

Even before taking the oath of office, President Biden promised to make free testing widely available. But months and months went by without the President taking any significant action to prevent the current testing shortage.

Last month, the White House Press Secretary even mocked a reporter who asked if the United States should provide free at-home tests, just as other countries have done around the world. It looks like it took swift criticism of her remark to finally prompt some action. Just a couple of days ago, the White House launched a website for people who wanted to request free at-home tests. But I am afraid it is a case of too little, too late.

Many experts have said that Omicron has already peaked in parts of the country. By the time these tests ship, which the website says could take 7 to 12 days, we will be even closer to the beginning of the end of this current wave of Omicron.

Instead, the White House could have purchased and distributed massive quantities of tests at any point over the last year, but it did not do so. Increased access to testing could have lessened the impact of the Omicron variant over the summer as well as the contagious variant that we are confronting today. So it shouldn't take bad press to force the administration to action, especially when they made a commitment to free testing early on but, obviously, were unprepared for Omicron and the wave of new cases.

Unfortunately, the President has broken another big promise about his plan to address the pandemic. He vowed that public health decisions would be made by public health professionals, not politicians.

Once again, things have played out quite a bit differently. Here is one example. Last February, the Centers for Disease Control released a report that said that schools are not a breeding ground for COVID-19 and that as long as precautions are taken, schools could open safely.

Well, Congress did not skimp when it came to providing financial resources to the States and school districts to take those appropriate precautions to help preserve the safety of our children. But the science was at odds with the demands of a key political constituency—teachers unions, which wanted schools to remain closed even if the teachers were vaccinated and appropriate safety measures could be taken to protect the schoolchildren. We all know which side the administration chose. It ignored the science and stood with their political constituency, the teachers' unions.

When the President's big promise of a strong pandemic response failed to meet the need, he shifted the responsibility to the States. He said: I am going to do it. The Federal Government is going to do it. But then, amazingly, pivoted and said: Well, this is not my responsibility. This is not the Federal Government's responsibility. This is the State's responsibility.

Just a few weeks ago, he actually said these words. He said: There is no Federal solution. This gets solved at the State level.

I am sure the American people were flabbergasted at the answer and his obvious flip-flop. President Biden pledged to lead a strong pandemic response when it helped his chances of getting elected, but now that he is actually in office and has the power and authority to follow through, he is folding his hand and pointing the finger at others.

The Biden administration has fumbled the ball time after time. It has chipped away at our energy security. When you saw prices rise at the pump because of inflation or because demand of refined petroleum products exceeded supply, he actually went so far as to encourage Russia and OPEC to produce more oil and gas. At the same time, he was all about canceling the permit for the Keystone XL Pipeline. Nord Stream 2—the Russian pipeline—providing gas to Germany, he is all for it. When it comes to domestic pipelines providing oil and gas to refineries so they can produce gasoline so that people can drive their cars at an affordable price, he is not for it.

Additionally, this administration has failed to address the humanitarian crisis at the border, in an astonishingly blasé sort of way. It doesn't even seem to get a rise out of this administration anymore—the numbers are so high. There are 2 million-plus people apprehended at the border, with no real impediment or deterrent or discouraging words to keep them from entering the country illegally.

And then there is the fumbling of diplomatic relations, insulting some of our oldest allies and emboldening our biggest adversaries. The biggest example of that was ceding the war in Afghanistan to the Taliban in the most humiliating way possible.

So the list of missteps and failures during this last 365 days has been a long one, indeed. But perhaps the biggest disappointment was in not delivering what President Biden promised the American people 1 year ago today, and that is to be a unifying force for our country.

He promised, as we all heard, to bring people of different backgrounds and ideologies and beliefs together and to find common ground. It actually made sense to make a virtue out of something that a 50-50 Senate would ordinarily dictate, and that is: When you can't have your own way because you don't have the votes, then make a virtue out of working together and actually pass bipartisan legislation.

He actually went so far as to point to his record in the Senate as evidence of his ability to work across the aisle and broker bipartisan deals, but it didn't take long for the American people to find out that these were, by and large, empty words.

Less than 2 months into his Presidency, our colleagues across the aisle took a hammer to Congress's perfect record of bipartisan pandemic response. That was during the previous administration. Almost everything we did was bipartisan, virtually unanimous, when it came to responding to the pandemic.

First, our colleagues spent nearly \$2 trillion on a bill that even though it was framed as COVID-19 response, committed less than 10 percent of that funding to COVID-19 and only 1 percent to vaccines. But that blowout, \$2 trillion, wasn't enough.

The President tried and failed, along with his political allies, to advance the so-called Build Back Better agenda. While trying to sell this radical plan to the American people, President Biden continued to make big promises, most of which were not credible. He said, for example, that this multitrillion-dollar bill cost zero dollars. Nobody—nobody—believed that. But here it was, the President of the United States, embarrassingly, for himself and others, was saying that \$5 trillion is really zero dollars. He said it wouldn't increase the deficit. And he said anyone making less than \$400,000 a year would not pay a single penny more in income tax.

All of these claims turned out to be false. And in the end, Democrats couldn't muster enough support to get the bill to the President's desk—again, not particularly surprising to those who have been observers of the Senate for a while. A 50-50 Senate should tell you that the only way you are going to get things done is through bipartisan consensus building, not trying to do things all on your own with 50 votes in the Senate, plus a tie-breaking vote from the Vice President.

But that didn't stop our colleagues from turning to yet another partisan bill—this time, one to launch a Federal takeover of State-run elections. Yesterday, our Democratic colleagues brought this bill up for a vote in the Senate and, of course, as we now know, it failed to garner sufficient votes to pass. But no one should be surprised, especially because this bill was drafted by one party in a 50-50 Senate.

And then when the bill failed, as we all knew it would, our Democratic colleagues took their penchant for partisanship to an entirely new level.

With the President's blessing, somebody who served more than three decades in the Senate and who railed against efforts to eliminate the filibuster, the 60-vote bipartisan consensus requirement before bills can be advanced—the President, in spite of his previous comments supporting that requirement, the so-called filibuster—this time, with the President's blessing, Senate Democrats tried to change the rules of the Senate to secure a purely partisan win.

What we witnessed in the Senate yesterday evening was a remarkable show of priorities of our Democratic colleagues. Forget the rules, forget compromise, forget consensus building, and forget the traditions of this institution, our Democratic colleagues proved that they are willing to taking a wrecking ball to this Chamber in pursuit of power.

It is no wonder that President Biden's approval ratings continue to

plummet. One recent poll found that only 33 percent of the respondents to that poll approved of the job that he was doing. After all, after everything the President promised, and with his dismal record of actually delivering on that promise, it is hardly surprising that the American people are disappointed.

In addition, inflation is up, wages are being eaten away by inflation, eroding the cost of living, and our country feels more divided than ever, despite the President's extravagant promises 1 year ago today, just out here on these steps.

The man who positioned himself as an experienced, unifying leader for the country has spent virtually all his time pursuing partisan ends. As a result, the Democratic Senate majority has wasted a lot of valuable time. I am disappointed by the wasted opportunities during the past year.

Floor time in the U.S. Senate is a precious commodity. It is the coin of the realm. There are a lot of great ideas that occur outside of this Chamber, but unless it can get time on the floor, it doesn't happen. But rather than taking up bills that did have that proud, bipartisan support, wasting time on purely partisan bills has resulted in very few accomplishments.

I can only hope that the second year of the Biden administration will bring more bipartisan cooperation. Hopefully, the administration can learn from its mistakes of the last year. This parade of dead-on-arrival legislation isn't helping the American people. The only way we can accomplish anything is by working together and building consensus.

Again, voters elected a 50-50 Senate, a closely divided House, and a President who promised to bring people of different views together. Let's hope this next year, the second year of the Biden administration, the President will see fit, along with our Democratic colleagues, to deliver on that commitment made 1 year ago today.

I yield the floor.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from Alaska.

S.T.A.N.D. WITH TAIWAN ACT OF 2022

**Mr. SULLIVAN.** Madam President, today I introduce the S.T.A.N.D. with Taiwan Act of 2022, which would mandate comprehensive and devastating economic and financial sanctions against the Chinese Communist Party, key sectors of China's economy, and leaders in the Chinese Communist Party, if the Chinese People's Liberation Army initiates a military invasion of the island democracy of Taiwan. Representative MIKE GALLAGHER of Wisconsin introduced an identical bill in the House today as well.

I am hopeful that when my colleagues come back from recess, the vast majority of Senators here, Democrats and Republicans, will end up joining me in supporting this important bill.

Last March, in a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, I posed this