

Later today, the Senate will vote to advance the nomination of another outstanding individual, Andre Mathis, to serve as circuit judge for the Sixth Circuit. Mr. Mathis would be the first Black man confirmed to the Sixth Circuit in nearly a quarter of a century and the first to hail from Tennessee.

Growing up, Mr. Mathis knew what it was like to go days without food, water, or heating, and yet, despite immense adversity, he was the first in his family to attend college and graduate from law school with honors. He spent over 15 years in private practice and has an extensive pro bono record. If confirmed, I am confident Mr. Mathis would make an excellent circuit court judge.

Confirming judges will continue to be a very top priority for the Senate in the days and weeks and months to come. Last night, I filed cloture on two additional circuit nominees which Members can expect to begin voting on as soon as Thursday.

Now, I want to take a moment—a moment—to emphasize how far Senate Democrats have come in keeping our promise to bring balance back to the Federal bench, which under President Trump skewed dramatically to the hard right. To date, Senate Democrats have confirmed 76 Federal judges, far more than the number confirmed at this point in President Trump's Presidency. In fact, we have confirmed more judges than either President Trump or President Obama did this far into their administrations.

In a dramatic break from the past, 75 percent of these nominees have been women, half of them women of color. That is a figure, I dare say, that has never been seen before when it comes to judicial nominees.

We are going to continue prioritizing judges moving forward. We cannot let the judiciary succumb to the hard right because, as we have seen, the consequences are devastating to the American people.

INFLATION REDUCTION ACT

Mr. President, on Democratic results, the Inflation Reduction Act was signed into law less than a month ago and already the verdict is in. Our bill is already creating new investments, new jobs, new opportunities for American families—jobs here in America, not overseas.

Let me repeat the good news. The Inflation Reduction Act that every Republican voted against is already delivering for our country.

This morning, the New York Times reported that in the wake of the Inflation Reduction Act, a whole host of companies “have announced a series of big-ticket projects to produce the kind of technology the legislation aims to promote.”

For example, companies like Toyota have announced billions in new investments to start manufacturing batteries for electric and hybrid vehicles right here in America. Elsewhere, the company First Solar announced a \$1 billion

investment to build new solar manufacturing facilities in the Southeast. Their CEO is explicit that their decision hinged in large part on our legislation, saying it provided “a level of clarity” that made investment in the United States the right move.

The examples go on. Honda and LG Energy also recently announced over \$4 billion for EV battery production in the United States. Panasonic, which supplies parts to Tesla's EV production, said they are also considering \$4 billion to build another EV battery plant. And thanks to tax incentives we passed recently that specifically reward domestic battery production, Samsung has decided to accelerate plans to break ground on their own EV battery plant in the next few months in the United States.

These are just a few examples of how the Inflation Reduction Act is already delivering on its promise to create countless new jobs and ignite billions in private sector investment and pave the way for America to lead the future with cheap and reliable clean energy.

Had we not done this, these plants probably would have been built, most of them overseas. As electric vehicles become predominant throughout our country and the world, America would have lost out. We led the world in auto production in the 20th century, and because of this act and what Democrats, without a single Republican vote, have done, we are going to lead in the 21st century as well.

It is exciting and gratifying to know that millions of Americans will be employed in good-paying jobs, in jobs that have a real future.

All of this is the result of Democratic leadership keeping its promise to the American people. Again, I have to say, this kind of thing used to happen when Democrats and Republicans came together. It is shameful that not a single Republican voted with us to pass these investments—not one.

And, of course, I would also be remiss not to highlight all the ways that the CHIPS and Science Act is sparking a new wave of investment as well. Just recently, the CEO of Micron announced a \$15 billion investment in manufacturing last week, saying that the CHIPS and Science Act “made this investment decision possible.”

And Micron has committed to significantly more and even larger investments to come, I am happy to say.

When you pass good legislation, you get good results.

It has been a long time, sadly, since the American people have felt that Washington is capable of doing big things to meet big challenges. After 4 years where President Trump spent all of his time, it seems, just being nasty and negative and calling people names but never making promises and never getting anything concrete done, Democrats are actually delivering with real results.

Senate Democrats have shown that with the right people in office, govern-

ment can work to promote, not hinder, the well-being and security of the American people. It is why we took on Big Pharma and won. It is why we took on entrenched oil interests and won. It is why we took on the NRA and beat them by passing the first gun safety law in decades. And all of this is the result of Democrats following through on our promise.

While the junior Senator from Florida continues to promote tax hikes for working families and putting Medicare on the chopping block, Democrats want to cut costs for families, increase prosperity, continue to strengthen ladders for people to get into the middle class and give them the stability to say that, once they are there, they are going to stay there.

Democrats have given America hope in the future, that in the new industries and new ways of thinking and new sciences, we are going to lead, not follow, not lag behind, not spend time, as President Trump did most of his time, playing petty political games and never getting anything done. We are getting stuff done—big stuff, important stuff, stuff that gives us a brighter future. That is why we work so hard to pass our agenda and, already, it is clear the American people are feeling the benefits.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

INFLATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, Washington Democrats have spent nearly 2 years—2 years—borrowing, printing, and spending our economy into turmoil. Families and businesses across Middle America are paying the price. I met with many of them in my home State of Kentucky over the past few weeks.

Since President Biden took office, prices in the Commonwealth have spiked by 13 percent. At the same time, we still have 19,000 fewer workers than before the pandemic.

During a meeting with the Kentucky Association of Manufacturers in Louisville, I heard directly from employers who would, under different circumstances, be powering our recovery. Instead, many are struggling to find enough workers to meet consumer demand.

In Hopkinsville, I spoke to farmers who have watched the price of energy skyrocket, raising the cost of everything from fuel to fertilizer. As a result, all Americans are paying higher prices at the grocery store.

While Eastern Kentucky struggles to recover from devastating floods, supply

chain issues and the increased cost of building materials are hamstringing the repair process and making it even harder to rebuild.

I am sure my Democratic colleagues heard similar stories during their own August travel. Kentuckians aren't the only Americans feeling pinched.

The official inflation numbers confirmed that yet again just after the Senate adjourned last month—a fifth straight month of inflation above 8 percent. Inflated gas prices, inflated utility bills, the worst explosion in grocery costs since 1979—these are the painful effects of Democrats' reckless spending.

Americans keep communicating over and over and over that runaway costs are their top concern, and they didn't like what President Biden and his party are doing about it.

Ah, but amazingly, just a few days before the latest inflation report, Democrats had just pushed through hundreds of billions of dollars more in liberal waste on a party-line basis. Democrats packed their bill with an environmentalist wish list that won't even affect climate. They sold it—listen to this—as an Inflation Reduction Act even though experts found it would do absolutely nothing meaningful to reduce inflation. They did find room for massive, job-killing tax hikes that will hit manufacturing especially hard and kill jobs on the brink of a possible recession.

It is not getting any easier to put food on the table, pay rent, or even keep the lights on, but here we are again, starting another Senate work period with not one word from the Democratic leader about plans to bring bills to the floor to cut inflation, fight the crimewave, or secure the border.

The American people have communicated loud and clear what their priorities are, and Democrats keep communicating loud and clear they simply do not care.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Mr. President, now on another matter, inflation is not the only way the last 2 years have shown that bad policies and bad ideas have real consequences. One especially damaging myth is the liberal notion that making our country kinder means having weaker public safety, weaker justice for criminals, and weaker borders. This misunderstanding dominates today's Democratic Party.

Across our country, Democrats have spent years—years—trying to defund law enforcement. Studies have proven that anti-police hostility changes how officers do their jobs, leading directly to more crime, including more murders. So liberals' nationwide anti-police PR campaign has literally cost people their lives.

When liberals do let police arrest criminals, a growing cadre of far-left prosecutors often simply declines to charge them. One liberal millionaire has donated more than a million dollars each to the campaigns of soft-on-

crime district attorneys in New York, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and Chicago.

The Los Angeles DA has presided over a 69-percent increase in shootings and a 40-percent spike in car thefts. Chicago's liberal DA “appeared to be simply dropping nearly 30 percent of all felony cases, including”—listen to this—“alleged murders.” Philadelphia's liberal DA has presided over an 85-percent spike in shootings and a huge increase in murders since he took over.

In the name of equity or compassion, these people are announcing they will not prosecute entire categories of crimes. No wonder American cities are becoming more dangerous by the day.

A couple years back, a former DA from outside Boston published a list of crimes she would not prosecute: shoplifting, breaking and entering, resisting arrest, and, even in the middle of the opioid crisis, possession with intent to distribute. As a reward, Washington Democrats made Rachel Rollins the U.S. attorney for Massachusetts. She got a promotion.

Just last month, Senator RUBIO put forward an amendment to increase funding for cops and keeping violent criminals behind bars. Democrats blocked it.

Every Senate Democrat has also voted multiple times to strip Customs and Border Protection of the only remaining emergency authorities to contend with the historic surge in illegal immigration unfolding on their watch. Of course, the open-door policies our colleagues support in office are rooted in open-border rhetoric that they have embraced literally for years.

On the campaign trail, then-Candidate Biden himself said, “You want to flee . . . you should come.” So on President Biden's watch, illegal immigrants flocked—literally flocked—to the border, some carrying his campaign's flags and T-shirts.

There is an outright security crisis at our southern border. We are in the middle of the most illegal immigration arrests in more than two decades. This year, just January to August, Border Patrol says they have already run into nearly double the number of known criminals this fiscal year as they saw in the entire year—entire year—before President Biden took office and huge, huge upticks of deadly drugs like fentanyl.

But Democrats aren't just ignoring a security crisis; it is a humanitarian crisis as well. Waves of unaccompanied children have stretched Border Patrol's facilities to the limit. Under incompetent leadership, the Department of Health and Human Services has had to scramble to help ensure the safety of children in its custody.

There is nothing—nothing—compassionate about tolerating or even encouraging anarchy down at the border, violence in our streets, and a steady erosion of public safety. It is neither fair, nor is it compassionate, not to

any Americans, least of all to the vulnerable people Democrats say—say—they are helping.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INFLATION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, sometimes around here, in what a lot of people refer to as the “ivory tower,” we talk about issues like they are abstract issues, like they don't have any real world effect. And I just wanted to touch on something, before I begin on my other subject here today, which is related to recent information that has been put out by the Department of Agriculture, the USDA's Economic Research Service, which is the arm that does projections on the economy and the farm economy, generally. What they are now concluding is that in 2022, there are going to be record cash receipts—record cash receipts—crop production, livestock production—record levels, 14-percent higher year over year. But what they go on to say is that even with record cash receipts up by 14 percent, net cash farm income is going to be down. Net cash farm income is going to be down by 1 percent.

Why is that? Well, because if you look at what has increased, increased costs on farmers in this country, they have reached some record levels. If you look at, for example, fertilizer. Farmers will spend 84 percent more, or \$21 billion more, on fertilizers than they did in 2020; 65 percent, or nearly \$8 billion, more on fuel and oil; and more than \$18 billion more on feed for livestock. Then you add in, on top of that, debt, which, for a farm operation, obviously, they are a very debt-intensive operation. So with higher interest rates and record farm debt of \$496 billion, that is expected to increase interest payments by 37 percent, or more than \$7 billion, from 2020, or 2 years ago.

So my point, simply, is that, at least in my part of the country, with corn, soybeans, wheat, livestock, and cattle prices expected to go up in record numbers in terms of overall gross farm income—gross cash receipts—that you would think would lead to good times in American agriculture, because of inflation, a 14-percent increase in gross cash receipts is going to result in an actual loss, a reduction year over year from 2021, when it comes to inflation-adjusted net farm income.

So I make that point simply to illustrate how critical it is that, as policymakers, we acknowledge what is happening in the real world, because I think around here the Biden administration tries to downplay this inflation issue like it is a nonissue.