

of 2022. When this bill passed the Senate a little over a month ago, I expressed confidence that this legislation would signal a turning point in our country's fight to lower costs, to meet our Nation's climate challenges, and to usher in the era of affordable clean energy.

A month later, the good news is already pouring in. Companies like Toyota have announced billions in new investments to start manufacturing batteries for electric and hybrid vehicles right here in America. Elsewhere, Honda and LG Energy have also recently announced over \$4 billion for EV battery production in the United States. And recently, the CEO of First Solar said it was the Inflation Reduction Act that provided the "clarity" needed to make their investments here in America.

Had we not done this, many of these plants would have been built but probably overseas. And yet, despite this record of success, despite the fact that Democrats have told Republicans that this is opening a new way for the future for American jobs with good futures here, not one Republican voted in favor of this bill.

That is the difference between the two parties in a nutshell: While MAGA Republicans are fixated on their extremist agenda, Democrats are focused on creating jobs, lowering costs, bringing our country together. While Democrats will join today with President Biden to promote our job-creating agenda, Republicans will spend today introducing new, radical legislation to ban abortions on the national level, right here on the Senate floor. That is the contrast between the parties, clear as day, and we know which side the American people are on.

And while Democrats want to lower costs, increase prosperity, and strengthen ladders to the middle class, the junior Senator from Florida, who serves as the chief elections architect for Senate Republicans, continues to promote tax hikes—tax hikes—for working families and putting Medicare on the chopping block.

This split screen is unmistakable for all Americans to see for themselves. Democrats will spend today focused on the job-creating, inflation-fighting agenda we promised and delivered for the American people, while Republicans continue defending tax hikes for the working class while pushing national abortion bans here in the Senate. And the American people will have no trouble deciding for themselves which party is truly in their corner.

#### JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. On judges, last night I moved to file cloture on the nomination of Sarah Merriam to be U.S. circuit judge for the Second Circuit. She will be the sixth circuit court judge this Chamber has considered since the beginning of this work period—the sixth. She will be in exceedingly good company.

Later today, we will vote on the nomination of Arianna Freeman to be U.S. circuit judge for the Third Circuit, followed by cloture on the nomination of Lara Montecalvo to serve on the First Circuit.

Altogether, the Senate has now confirmed 80—80—judicial nominations to serve lifetime appointments on the Federal bench. I made clear that confirming more of President Biden's judicial nominees would be a top priority for Senate Democrats, and we are making good on our promise by being on track to vote on six circuit court judges in the first 2 weeks of this work period alone.

Among the judges confirmed this month are a number of notable firsts: the first Latino to serve from the State of Washington to the Ninth Circuit, the first Black Tennessean to ever sit on the Sixth Circuit, and the first Asian American from anywhere to sit on the Seventh Circuit. And that is just in the last 2 weeks.

The 80 jurists we have confirmed also include the first Native American judge, the first Muslim American district judge, and the first Black woman, of course, in the history of the U.S. Supreme Court. I mention these firsts because even though it takes a lot to be a successful jurist, representation is a key part of the equation.

There has been a lot of talk lately about the public's trust in our courts—in my judgment, for very good reasons. So if our courts are to long endure—to say nothing of our democracy—they must reflect the rich vibrancy of our country.

So as we continue confirming judges, we will make sure that the individuals on the bench meet this important standard. We have come a very long way, but there is much work left to be done.

#### NATIONAL SEPSIS DAY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, finally, on sepsis, I want to say a few words on a health issue that rarely gets the attention it deserves here on the Senate floor, and that is the issue of sepsis. Every year, roughly 1.7 million Americans are infected with sepsis. That is a population roughly the size of Phoenix, AZ. Of those, 270,000—270,000—are ultimately killed by the disease.

For those unfamiliar, sepsis is a terrible, life-threatening condition where the body overreacts to an infection in an extreme way. Most cases are preventable, if they are caught with enough time. Sadly, because of a lack of public awareness, too many cases fly under the radar until it is too late.

So today, I am here to introduce a resolution designating September 13 as National Sepsis Day. It would encourage greater public education about this condition, urge Federal entities to streamline treatment guidelines, and marshal our resources to ultimately bring sepsis to an end.

The Federal Government has a great model to follow in my home State of

New York, which adopted Rory's Regulations to guide health officials when it comes to this illness named in honor of Rory Staunton, a 12-year-old from Queens who died from sepsis 10 years ago. These rules have undoubtedly saved countless lives and should inform Federal policy.

I cannot imagine the profound suffering that Rory's parents must feel to this day, but I hope they find strength in knowing that the rules bearing their son's name have gone a long way to help others.

It is time we take this disease seriously at the Federal level. For that reason, I am proud to introduce this resolution today.

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 ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

#### INFLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Just a few minutes ago, yet again, the American people received a monthly inflation report that was even worse than the expert predictions.

The expectation was that Democrats' runaway inflation might finally begin to actually level off. The top-line inflation rate was expected to fall. Instead, yet again, the opposite happened. Overall inflation was up even higher.

The prices this past August were still 8.3 percent higher than they were in August of 2021. Just a catastrophically high inflation rate.

Food prices went up another 0.8 percent just this past month alone. Overall food prices just logged their biggest 1-year increase since the late 1970s. Groceries in particular are now 13.5 percent more expensive than they were at this time last year. Democrats' policies are sucker-punching American families every time they set foot in the checkout line. Eggs are up 40 percent. Butter, up 25 percent. Baby food, up 13 percent. Chicken, dairy, bread, cereal, and canned fruits and vegetables are all up around 16 percent each. Coffee is up even more than that.

Housing and shelter costs were up. Medical costs were up. Furniture, up. New cars, up.

Electricity costs were way, way up—a 15.8-percent increase since last year. So let me say that again. Inflation on Americans' electricity bills alone—alone—is 15.8 percent in just the last 12

months. This is the largest 1-year increase in electricity prices since 1981, when the statistic was looking back into the final months of Jimmy Carter.

Even if you take out energy and food prices—two areas where the administration likes to pass the buck and pretend they are powerless—inflation skyrocketed 0.6 percent in just the month of August alone.

Eight-point-three percent inflation—just an astonishing number. And remember, this figure only looks back 12 months, but we are now more than 12 months into the Democrats' inflation spiral. Prices are 8.3 percent higher today than in August of 2021, but remember, in August 2021, the baseline, we were already talking about runaway inflation. Prices were already way up compared to the year before that. So the 12-month number dramatically understates the total damage that Democrats have caused.

Here is the comparison that matters most to American families, especially with an election in less than 2 months: How are things today compared to January 2021, when this all-Democratic government was sworn in? How are they compared to January 2021? Here is the answer: Food prices are up a total of 13.9 percent since President Biden was sworn in. Gas prices are up 58.5 percent. Electricity costs are up 21.6 percent. And the overall, across-the-board inflation rate since President Biden took office is a catastrophic—catastrophic—12.5 percent.

This very day, President Biden and Democrats are having a big celebration for their latest reckless spending bill, which they pretended would reduce inflation but which nonpartisan experts say will actually make it worse. They could not look more out of touch if they tried.

#### BORDER SECURITY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, now on another matter, this past weekend, Vice President HARRIS made a surprising announcement on "Meet the Press." The Vice President declared—listen to this—"The border is secure."

We are about to close the fiscal year with more than 2 million illegal immigrant encounters on our southern border, breaking the alltime record that we only just set last year. Seizures of lethal fentanyl are also on pace to exceed last year's total. They are up more than 200 percent in just the latest month on record. These are not the signs of a secure border, and the American people know it. An outright majority of the country disapproves of how President Biden has been handling this issue. The Vice President's claims aren't fooling anyone.

For years now, this crisis has stretched border communities to the breaking point and caused ripples throughout the entire country. All the while, Democrats have claimed it would be cruel or uncompassionate to have a functioning southern border or actually enforce our laws.

Now, in recent weeks, the country has been treated to one of the more striking displays of irony we have seen in quite a while.

For many years, while the citizens and local governments on the border have cried out for help and law enforcement, various Democrat-run cities and States that aren't on the border decided to set themselves up as virtue signaling sanctuary cities, where immigration laws supposedly simply do not apply. For years, much of the political left has suggested there are no legitimate practical reasons why our country would want secure borders or to enforce its immigration laws. Only racism or xenophobia could possibly explain it.

Well, for several weeks now, some of these overwhelmed States have decided to try taking some of these Democrat-run jurisdictions at their word.

Governor Abbott in Texas and Governor Ducey in Arizona have put a very small proportion of the illegal immigrants pouring into their States onto buses bound for the self-advertised sanctuary cities of New York and Washington. And do you know what? Just this very small taste of chaos, this tiny little sliver of what many places in America have been dealing with for years, has these cities' Democratic leaders outraged, anxious, and scrambling.

Eric Adams, the mayor of New York, has only had to receive in 5 weeks roughly the number of people the Border Patrol encounters in 7 or 8 hours. New York has had over a month to handle a fraction—a fraction—of 1 day's share of border crossings. Yet the mayor says having to deal with this is "horrific." New York City officials complain that they are overwhelmed.

Here in Washington, the destination for fewer than 8,000 illegal immigrants, the Democrat Mayor has declared a public health emergency. She begged the Pentagon to send in the National Guard for help. The Defense Department, of course, turned her down.

It is incredible just how quickly Democrats change their tune when they have to stomach one single spoonful—spoonful—of the policies they have been force-feeding the rest of our country. Oh, it is challenging to have waves of illegal immigrants pouring into your community? This creates challenges for housing and medical care and resource allocation and law enforcement? Who knew all this?

As one former mayor from the frontlines of this crisis put it recently, "The city of McAllen was able to deal with thousands of immigrants a day. I think they can handle a few hundred."

Maybe this will be the wake-up call the Democrats need to finally understand that functional nations—functional nations—need functional borders.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Arianna J. Freeman, of Pennsylvania, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, 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. KING. 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.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. KING. Mr. President, this is going to be an unusual set of comments for me because I am going to start out with some personal history, which I hope will make sense in terms of what I want to address.

I started working in the alternative energy industry in 1983. When I say industry, it was, actually, a very small company developing small hydro projects in Maine and New England. We then worked on the development of biomass projects. We, later on, worked on wind power and then also on the development of large-scale conservation. So my professional life has largely been occupied with energy and particularly with renewable energy.

At the same time, I had a deep history in Maine in environmental matters. I represented the environmental community in Maine before the Maine Legislature, in the seventies, if you can believe that anybody around here was still doing things in the seventies. I also, as Governor, was very active in conservation matters and am proud to say that, during my 8 years as the Governor of Maine, we put aside and set into conservation and protection status more land than in the prior 175-year history of Maine combined. This has been a passion of mine, the protection of the environment, for my entire life—so the history of renewable energy development and also environmental advocacy.