

and fuel. Under the Biden administration, farm production expenses will reach a record high this year. Fertilizer prices are on track to increase by 84 percent—84 percent. That is a staggering increase. Fuel prices are on track to increase 65 percent. And there is no end in sight.

Farmers are facing a huge increase in interest costs thanks to a combination of higher interest rates and record-high farm debt. Gross farm income is actually supposed to reach a record level this year, but those gains are expected to be entirely wiped out by inflation—and then some. Thanks to inflation, net farm income is expected to decrease. At a time when gross farm income is expected to reach a record level—14 percent higher year over year than last year—net farm income, inflation adjusted, is actually going to go down because of the impact of inflation.

Meanwhile, Democrats were at the White House celebrating a bill that will not only do nothing to address our inflation crisis but will drive up energy bills for American farmers and American families.

Agriculture is the lifeblood of my State of South Dakota, and addressing the needs of farmers and ranchers is always one of my top priorities here in the Senate. While it is, unfortunately, going to be difficult to stop Democrats from prolonging our inflation crisis as long as they are in charge in Washington, in the meantime, I am doing everything I can to make life easier for our farmers and ranchers.

One of my top priorities right now is preparing for the 2023 farm bill, to make it as effective as possible in addressing the challenges that are facing our farmers and ranchers. I have been holding roundtables in South Dakota to hear directly from producers about their priorities for the farm bill. So far, I have held roundtables covering row crops, conservation, and livestock. I also participated in a farm bill panel at Dakotafest and an Aberdeen Area Chamber of Commerce farm bill discussion at the Brown County Fair.

I look forward to continuing to receive input from producers as the time to draft the farm bill approaches. I have also begun introducing legislation—based on my conversations with farmers and ranchers—that I will work to get included in the farm bill.

In March, I introduced the Conservation Reserve Program Improvement Act, which would make CRP grazing a more attractive option for farmers and ranchers by providing cost-share payments for all CRP practices for the establishment of grazing infrastructure, including fencing and water distribution. It would also increase the annual payment limit for CRP, which has not changed since 1985, to help account for inflation and the increase in land value.

In May, I joined Senator KLOBUCHAR to introduce the Agricultural Innovation Act. Currently, the U.S. Depart-

ment of Agriculture collects reams of data on conservation practices. The problem is that a lot of this data is often not analyzed and presented in a way that would be useful for farmers and ranchers.

The legislation Senator KLOBUCHAR and I introduced would provide for better processing and development of the data that the USDA collects so that farmers and ranchers can evaluate the impact of conservation and other production practices on things like soil health, crop yields, and profitability. Our bill would make it easier for farmers and ranchers to decide what conservation practices to adopt by, among other things, helping producers identify the ways that adopting conservation practices can improve their bottom line.

In the next couple of weeks, I will be introducing another piece of legislation for the 2023 farm bill to improve the effectiveness of livestock disaster assistance for producers. Too often, producers find that accessing disaster relief programs at the Department of Agriculture is an arduous and lengthy process. I am working on legislation that would make it easier for farmers and ranchers to access the Livestock Forage Disaster Program and the Emergency Conservation Program so that producers can receive timely assistance in the wake of natural disasters like drought and flooding.

The U.S. Drought Monitor plays a critical role in triggering USDA disaster assistance, and I am working to build on my previous efforts to improve weather monitoring and the accuracy of the Drought Monitor.

This isn't a farm bill issue per se, but I am also introducing legislation today to prevent Democrats from using funding in the recently passed and misnamed, as I pointed out earlier, Inflation Reduction Act to monitor livestock methane emissions.

It is very clear that elements of the radical environmental left would like to see U.S. livestock producers out of business entirely. My legislation is designed to forestall future attempts to curtail beef production by preventing the Biden Environmental Protection Agency from using funds in the Democrats' bill to monitor livestock emissions.

Agriculture is a challenging way of life. In addition to backbreaking work in all weather, our Nation's farmers and ranchers have to contend with the uncontrollable whims of the weather, which can wipe out a herd or a crop in a day. And as if the actual challenges of the job weren't enough, over the course of the Biden administration, our Nation's farmers and ranchers have had to deal with soaring inflation.

I am incredibly grateful for all the South Dakota farmers and ranchers and all of our Nation's farmers and ranchers who continue to persevere during these difficult circumstances. I will continue to do everything I can in Washington to make their jobs easier

and to support them as they do the essential work of feeding our Nation and the world.

NOMINATION OF LARA E. MONTECALVO

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Lara Montecalvo to serve on the First Circuit Court of Appeals. Ms. Montecalvo has significant litigation experience at both the trial and appellate level and will be an outstanding addition to the bench.

She attended Swarthmore College and Boston College Law School. Ms. Montecalvo then worked in the Justice Department's Tax Division as a trial attorney. In 2004, Ms. Montecalvo began working in the Rhode Island Public Defender's Office. She became the Rhode Island Public Defender in 2020.

As a DOJ trial attorney and as a State public defender, Ms. Montecalvo gained experience in both State and Federal court. She has tried more than 20 cases to verdict, including 15 as sole counsel. In addition, she has personally handled more than 80 appeals. The American Bar Association rated her "well qualified" to serve on the First Circuit, and she has the strong support of Senators Reed and Whitehouse.

Ms. Montecalvo has shown that she is committed to equal justice. I will be supporting her and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. THUNE. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. ERNST. 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.

VOTE ON MONTECALVO NOMINATION

Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Montecalvo nomination?

Ms. ERNST. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 335 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Baldwin	Collins	Heinrich
Bennet	Coons	Hickenlooper
Blumenthal	Cortez Masto	Hirono
Booker	Duckworth	Kaine
Brown	Durbin	Kelly
Cantwell	Feinstein	King
Cardin	Gillibrand	Klobuchar
Carper	Graham	Leahy
Casey	Hassan	Lujan

Manchin
Markey
Menendez
Merkley
Murkowski
Murphy
Murray
Ossoff
Padilla

Peters
Reed
Rosen
Sanders
Schatz
Schumer
Shaheen
Sinema
Smith

Tester
Van Hollen
Warner
Warnock
Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

[Rollcall Vote No. 336 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Baldwin
Bennet
Blumenthal
Booker
Brown
Cantwell
Cardin
Carper
Casey
Collins
Coons
Cortez Masto
Duckworth
Durbin
Feinstein
Gillibrand
Graham
Hassan

Heinrich
Hickenlooper
Hirono
Kaine
Kelly
King
Klobuchar
Leahy
Lujan
Manchin
Markey
Menendez
Merkley
Murkowski
Murphy
Murray
Ossoff
Padilla

Peters
Reed
Rosen
Sanders
Schatz
Schumer
Shaheen
Sinema
Smith
Tester
Van Hollen
Warner
Warnock
Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

NAYS—47

Barrasso
Blackburn
Blunt
Boozman
Braun
Burr
Capito
Cassidy
Cornyn
Cotton
Cramer
Cruz
Daines
Ernst
Fischer

Grassley
Hagerty
Hawley
Hoeven
Hyde-Smith
Inhofe
Johnson
Kennedy
Lankford
Lee
Lummis
Marshall
McConnell
Moran
Paul
Portman

Risch
Romney
Rounds
Rubio
Sasse
Scott (FL)
Scott (SC)
Shelby
Sullivan
Thune
Tillis
Toomey
Tuberville
Wicker
Young

NOT VOTING—1

Stabenow

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). 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 action.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 1032, Sarah A.L. Merriam, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Sherrod Brown, Tammy Baldwin, Tina Smith, Jeanne Shaheen, Chris Van Hollen, Elizabeth Warren, Catherine Cortez Masto, Raphael G. Warnock, Tim Kaine, Benjamin L. Cardin, Christopher Murphy, Maria Cantwell, Christopher A. Coons, Jack Reed, Gary C. Peters, Tammy Duckworth.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Sarah A.L. Merriam, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 47, as follows:

NOT VOTING—1

Stabenow

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 47.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Sarah A. L. Merriam, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

CONFIRMATION OF E. MARTIN ESTRADA

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the confirmation of Martin Estrada to be U.S. attorney for the Central District of California.

The Central District of California is the largest Federal judicial district in the country. It serves over 19 million Californians, almost twice as many people as the next largest district, and it serves about half the population of the State of California.

It spans from San Luis Obispo County, home of Los Padres National Forest, all the way to Riverside County and the Mojave Desert. It spans from the Pacific Ocean to the eastern border with Arizona and Nevada. And it is home to some of the most diverse communities in the country.

So having painted that picture of the district that it serves, you can imagine that to effectively serve as the chief Federal law enforcement officer for such a large and diverse district, you need someone with a proven track record of experience, of credibility with the community, and the character to fight for truth and fairness in our judicial system.

Martin Estrada is exactly the right person for the job. He is a proud son of immigrants from Guatemala. Martin has spent most of his life in and around the Central District community that he will now serve as U.S. attorney.

He was raised near Costa Mesa in Orange County and earned his undergraduate degree at the University of California, Irvine. After earning his law degree at Stanford Law School, Martin returned home to the Central District, where he clerked for Federal District Judge Robert Timlin and then later for Judge Arthur Alarcon for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

After spending time as an associate at the highly regarded Los Angeles law firm of Munger, Tolles & Olson, Martin served for 7 years as an assistant U.S. attorney in the Central District, working to protect communities from major crimes. Now, since 2014, he has been a partner at Munger, Tolles & Olson, and he has represented clients from before both Federal and State courts in a diverse array of legal practice areas. Meanwhile, he has maintained a significant pro bono practice, fighting for equal justice and equal access to justice for Dreamers, Latinos, Native American students, students with disabilities, and more. He has excelled at every stage of his career, and he is more than qualified to serve as U.S. attorney for California's Central District.

I have no doubt that he will bring a temperament, intelligence, and work ethic worthy of the community he will now once again serve.

I want to thank all of you, colleagues. I want to thank you for supporting his confirmation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 4845

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, in the last few weeks, students in Uvalde and the rest of Texas started a new school year. Three and a half months ago, on May 24, 19 innocent children and 2 teachers were murdered by a deranged, evil gunman.

There are no words to describe a monster who enters a school and murders little children—19 children, 19 families in Uvalde who lost their little boys and their little girls, 2 teachers who are no longer here with us.

I was in Uvalde the day after the shooting. I sat down with local officials and law enforcement. I went to the prayer vigil that night where the entire Uvalde community came together, praying, weeping, and mourning the unbelievable loss of those 19 precious children and 2 teachers.

The Uvalde shooting was the deadliest school shooting in Texas history. Before that, I was in Santa Fe, where yet another evil madman killed eight students and two teachers. I was also at Sutherland Springs, the worst church shooting in U.S. history. I was in El Paso. I was in Midland-Odessa. I was in Dallas.