

WBEZ is our public radio station in Chicago. This was on their website:

Chicago agencies and local groups tell migrants "We are so glad you are here."

They are getting an American welcome. They are being treated decently. They are being treated with respect.

Now, as we debate the politics of why they are here and whether they can stay, we shouldn't do it at the expense of demonstrating clear American values of humanity and caring. That is who we are. We are not going to allow these kids to reach a situation like they have before and be the victims of our political debate. We don't want kids in cages. We don't want kids forcibly removed from their parents. We don't want them to suffer on these bus rides, not knowing where they are going to end up and what is going to happen to them next. We are better than that as Americans, and we are better than that as a nation of immigrants.

I have said it on the floor many times, and I am proud to say it again: I am the son of an immigrant to this country. My mother came here at the age of 2 from Lithuania, brought with her the good luck that I could live my life and be part of the U.S. Senate and the governance of this Nation. We shouldn't look beyond that.

I will say the Presiding Officer holds a special place in the history of the Senate with her immigration status as well.

If you look in any direction, you are going to find immigrants, sons and daughters of immigrants, who really have made America what it is today. Let's get this right on a bipartisan basis. Let's not waste any time.

In the meantime, let us treat these people who are coming to our country and are now legally in the country with dignity and respect.

I yield the floor.

#### SOLID START ACT OF 2021

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. As if in legislative session and under the previous order, the Senate, having received from the House the returned papers with respect to S. 1198, the actions of the Senate on September 8, 2022, are vitiated; the committee-reported substitute is withdrawn; the Tester amendment at the desk, No. 5505, is agreed to; the bill, as amended, is considered read a third time and passed; and the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider (S. 1198) a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve and expand the Solid Start program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute is withdrawn.

The amendment (No. 5505) in the nature of a substitute is agreed to as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Solid Start Act of 2022".

#### SEC. 2. SOLID START PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 63 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subchapter:

##### "SUBCHAPTER II—OTHER OUTREACH PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

##### "§ 6320. Solid Start program

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out a program, to be known as the 'Solid Start program', under which the Secretary shall—

"(1) build the capacity of the Department to efficiently and effectively respond to the queries and needs of veterans who have recently separated from the Armed Forces; and

"(2) systemically integrate and coordinate efforts to assist veterans, including efforts—

"(A) to proactively reach out to newly separated veterans to inform them of their eligibility for programs of and benefits provided by the Department; and

"(B) to connect veterans in crisis to resources that address their immediate needs.

"(b) ACTIVITIES OF THE SOLID START PROGRAM.—(1) The Secretary, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, shall carry out the Solid Start program of the Department by—

"(A) collecting up-to-date contact information during transition classes or separation counseling for all members of the Armed Forces who are separating from the Armed Forces, while explaining the existence and purpose of the Solid Start program;

"(B) calling each veteran, regardless of separation type or characterization of service, three times within the first year after separation of the veteran from the Armed Forces;

"(C) providing information about the Solid Start program on the website of the Department and in materials of the Department, especially transition booklets and other resources;

"(D) ensuring calls are truly tailored to the needs of each veteran's unique situation by conducting quality assurance tests;

"(E) prioritizing outreach to veterans who have accessed mental health resources prior to separation from the Armed Forces;

"(F) providing women veterans with information that is tailored to their specific health care and benefit needs;

"(G) as feasible, providing information on access to State and local resources, including Vet Centers and veterans service organizations; and

"(H) gathering and analyzing data assessing the effectiveness of the Solid Start program.

"(2) The Secretary, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, may carry out the Solid Start program by—

"(A) encouraging members of the Armed Forces who are transitioning to civilian life to authorize alternate points of contact who can be reached should the member be unavailable during the first year following the separation of the member from the Armed Forces; and

"(B) following up missed phone calls with tailored mailings to ensure the veteran still receives similar information.

"(3) In this subsection:

"(A) The term 'Vet Center' has the meaning given that term in section 1712A(h) of this title.

"(B) The term 'veterans service organization' means an organization recognized by

the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of this title."

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Chapter 63 of such title, as amended by subsection (a), is further amended—

(1) by inserting before section 6301 the following:

##### "Subchapter I—Outreach Services Program";

and

(2) in sections 6301, 6303, 6304, 6305, 6306, and 6307, by striking "this chapter" each place it appears and inserting "this subchapter".

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 63 of such title is amended—

(1) by inserting before the item relating to section 6301 the following new item:

##### "SUBCHAPTER I—OUTREACH SERVICES PROGRAM";

and

(2) by adding at the end the following new items:

##### "SUBCHAPTER II—OTHER OUTREACH PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

"6320. Solid Start program."

The bill (S. 1198), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

##### PUERTO RICO

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, today, my thoughts are with all our fellow Americans in Puerto Rico—and all communities across the Caribbean—battered by the destruction of Hurricane Fiona. As of this morning, well over a million residents on the island remain without power, and two-thirds remain without running water.

In a short while, I will get on the phone with the FEMA Administrator and urge that they be ready to approve temporary 100 percent Federal cost share for all emergency protective services that Puerto Rico conducts in the coming days. That means covering the island's costs for distributing food and water, disaster operations, and emergency medical care. Right now, the FEMA Disaster Relief Fund has about \$15 billion as of late last week—a fund we Democrats fought extremely hard to secure.

I will also join with my colleagues in the New York delegation to send FEMA a letter calling on them to be ready to support Puerto Rico on any upcoming request for aid.

Five years—almost exactly 5 years to the day—after Puerto Rico was devastated by Hurricane Maria, the Federal Government has a responsibility to make sure we don't repeat the mistakes of the previous administration. The Federal response should be swift, robust, and continued for as long as the island needs.

##### JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Madam President, now on judges, as we begin the third week of the work period, the Senate presses ahead to confirm more of President Biden's impressive lineup of judicial nominees.

This week, we will aim to confirm our sixth—yes, sixth—circuit court nominee of the month, and this one is especially important. It is to move forward on Judge Florence Pan to serve as a lifetime appointment to the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Columbia.

After the Supreme Court, the DC Court of Appeals is the most important Federal court in the country, with jurisdiction over cases involving Congress and executive branch Agencies. It goes without saying that those nominated to serve as jurists on this court must be individuals of the highest caliber, of impeccable credentials, and must show deep fidelity to the Constitution.

The President couldn't have done better than Judge Pan: a brilliant, accomplished, and truly bipartisan nominee. The Senate confirmed her to the DC district court with an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote of 68 to 30. Since then, her conduct on the bench has vindicated that margin. So I hope we can see similar bipartisan support this week.

The daughter of Taiwanese immigrants, Judge Pan graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and earned her law degree from Stanford, where she wrote on the *Law Review*.

As a judge for both the DC Superior Court and DC district court, she has seen practically every kind of legal dispute under the Sun: criminal law, family law, administrative law, consumer protection, immigration, employment law, and more. In short, she is a remarkably qualified and experienced jurist.

So I urge my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to vote in favor of advancing this nominee. A seat on the DC Circuit deserves to be filled by a high-caliber and impartial jurist, and, thankfully, we have that in Judge Pan.

TREATY DOCUMENT NO. 117-1

Madam President, now on the Kigali treaty, besides working on judicial nominations, the Senate will also vote this week to advance a pair of critically important measures on the floor.

First, we will vote tomorrow to proceed to the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol, an agreement from the 1980s that united much of the world in reducing the use of industrial chemicals harmful to our ozone layer. Three decades later, this agreement has been an unqualified success. The Kigali Amendment is a golden opportunity to strengthen U.S. businesses and secure an edge against China in the emerging industry of next-generation refrigerants.

Let me explain. It sounds a little complicated, but it is important. The Kigali Amendment, which has been negotiated by both Democratic and Republican administrations, would build on the Montreal Protocols by affirming the U.S. commitment to phase out the use of a particularly dangerous chemical known as hydrofluorocarbons, abbreviated commonly as HFCs. Though used only in small amounts in house-

hold appliances like refrigerators and air conditioners, they wreak havoc on our atmosphere. Many on both sides have long agreed we should transition away from their use.

By ratifying the Kigali Amendment, businesses that specialize in the next generation of refrigerant technologies would see new markets open for them. In fact, one study suggests U.S. net exports could increase by \$6 billion annually—\$6 billion. So this is a jobs bill.

Combined with previous measures to reduce HFCs, this step could help create 150,000 new jobs here in the United States. All the while, we would get a much needed leg up on Chinese businesses that still lag behind—for now—in developing viable HFC alternatives. Failure to ratify the Kigali Amendment would mean squandering billions in economic activity and potentially over 100,000 good-paying American jobs.

The good news: This measure has broad support from the business community, including the Chamber of Commerce, the American Chemistry Council, the Semiconductor Industry Association, and many others. The same support should manifest itself here in the Senate.

The first vote on cloture will require 60 Senators to move forward. And because this is a treaty, we will then need the support of two-thirds of the Chamber to ratify.

For the sake of U.S. businesses, U.S. innovators, and the sake of our climate and American dominance in emerging markets, I urge my colleagues from both sides to vote in favor of advancing and ratifying the Kigali Amendment.

#### DISCLOSE ACT

Madam President, finally on the DISCLOSE Act, today, I am announcing the Senate will vote this week to take up a measure critical to fighting the cancer of dark money in our elections: the DISCLOSE Act.

I have long promised to bring this bill to the floor, and I want to thank all my colleagues and in particular Senator WHITEHOUSE. He has done an amazing job documenting and pressing forward on trying to eliminate the evil scourge of dark money. He has been an amazing leader in championing this legislation.

The DISCLOSE Act is premised on a simple idea: Americans deserve to know who is trying to influence their elections. Sadly, most Americans today are largely in the dark, thanks to the abominable decision in *Citizens United* handed down by the Supreme Court's conservative majority. Their ruling has paved the way for billions in unlimited campaign contributions by Super PACs and other dark money groups over the last decade. Ordinary citizens, meanwhile, have had their voices drowned out by elites who have millions to spare for political donations.

And the worst part? Much of this spending happens entirely in secret. That is not like a democracy. It is a

veil cast over our democracy that must be ripped away once and for all.

The DISCLOSE Act is simple. It would require Super PACs and other dark money groups to report anyone contributing \$10,000 or more during an election. It would likewise require groups spending money on judicial nominees to disclose their donors too. There is no justification under Heaven for keeping such massive contributions hidden from the public.

This week, Republicans are going to have to take a stand on whether they want to fight the power of dark money or allow this cancer to grow even worse. Limiting the power of dark money shouldn't be a Democratic or Republican view; it should be bipartisan through and through.

I hope Republicans will join us, because Americans intuitively understand that right now, there is a stench taking over our campaign finance law. After all, when was the last time any of us heard voters cheer on the spread of dark money? When was the last time any of us heard voters say it is better for billionaires and special interests to buy elections in secret rather than be held accountable to the public? Of course, they don't think that unless they themselves are the ones cutting the multimillion-dollar checks.

So this week, all of us will go on record on whether or not we think Americans deserve to know who is spending billions to sway our democracy. It will be our chance to put into practice the famous saying by Judge Louis D. Brandeis that "sunlight is said to be the best disinfectant."

I once again commend Senator WHITEHOUSE for his years of leadership in fighting this wave of dark money, and I urge all my colleagues to support this measure this week.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas.

#### DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, when Attorney General Garland went through the confirmation process for his current job as Attorney General of the United States, he made a solemn pledge to keep politics out of the Justice Department. I, for one, was encouraged by his statement, having seen the disastrous politicization of the Justice Department under former Attorneys General Eric Holder and Loretta Lynch.

Attorney General Garland said this. He said:

I will never make a decision in the Department based on politics or partisanship.

I took him at his word. I hoped we wouldn't see a return to the days when people saw double standards play out in the Justice Department based on who happened to be in office, who happened to be investigated. But, clearly, under Attorney General Garland's leadership, the Department of Justice has pointed its arrows toward concerned parents, for example, who are exercising their First Amendment rights to