

the House, the Senate, and the White House, and, to my knowledge, they have not attempted to bring an immigration reform bill to the floor of the U.S. Senate. Furthermore, the President reversed all of the policies from the previous administration that affected the border when he took office.

Now we have got a situation at our southern border that is just nothing short of appalling, and if the President really had any interest in making the process at the border “safe, orderly, and humane,” as he said the other day, he would make securing our southern border a priority, and it is not. Unfortunately, given his record so far, I think it is more likely that we will see the scenes of chaos and human suffering continue.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes prior to the scheduled roll-call vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INFLATION

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, since the Biden administration really likes to celebrate things, I rise today on the 1-week anniversary of their party last Tuesday for their so-called Inflation Reduction Act.

Last Tuesday, most Americans and, certainly, most West Virginians weren't in a celebratory mood. West Virginians started their day with news that inflation rose to 8.3 percent in August, while President Biden and his party and climate activists began setting up for their Inflation Reduction Act party at the White House.

Meanwhile, that same day, the U.S. stock market had its worst day since June 2020, as the White House and its fellow Democrats celebrated their green spending bill that would only extend inflationary pain, but it does expand U.S. and IRS enforcement on Americans who are struggling to afford basic necessities.

Days after the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office published an analysis that the Inflation Reduction Act would actually not reduce inflation, particularly in the short term, President Biden announces that he will do student debt cancelation that would add another trillion dollars to the deficit.

Today and tomorrow, the Federal Reserve, which is our U.S. monetary watchdog, is meeting to set new interest rates in a bid to tame inflation. The body has had to raise interest rates aggressively by three-quarters of a point. In June, Chairman Powell, who is the Chairman of the Fed, admitted that the rate increase is “unusually large” and would not be “common.” The Fed will likely raise interest rates again by the same amount tomorrow, for the third consecutive time in a row. These are the most aggressive rate increases since the 1980s, when my mortgage was

way into the teens, that Chairman Powell has plainly stated will bring “pain to households and businesses.”

We can't forget that the Democrats alone passed a bill last year that they called the American Rescue Plan, which rescued nothing and, instead, endangered our fragile economy coming out of COVID by hypercharging inflation. Democrats alone drafted and pushed forward their most recent bill, bypassing the normal committee process, and Democrats alone passed it, rejecting every Republican amendment along the way.

In short, these policies continue to destabilize every single corner of our economy. Well, how do we know this? We see some of the statistics that I talk about. Well, I know it because West Virginians have lived it, and I hear from them frequently about their legitimate concerns. A retiree from Clarksburg, WV, wrote to me recently saying that she and her husband are “struggling every month” despite having done their due diligence to save well for their retirement. She says they are trying not to dip into their 401(k)s or their TSP retirement accounts but that it is getting “harder and harder” not to do that.

As inflation drags on, the lifespan of retirement savings will continue shrinking for our seniors in West Virginia, and those seniors account for 41 percent of our population.

Another West Virginian wrote to me about the tough choices her family is making:

The economy has crumbled in the blink of an eye. My husband and I have full-time jobs and two children. I'm tearful because I sit here looking at upcoming bills and I'm having to decide to pay a bill or buy groceries.

A resident from Weston, WV, told me that his insurance premiums recently increased and, when he asked the company why that happened, they told him pointblank it was due to inflation. In the same letter, the constituent wrote:

This crazy spending has to stop.

But it is not just West Virginians who are experiencing this inflationary problem. The National Defense Industrial Association, authored in part by former Deputy Defense Secretary David Norquist, released a white paper recently that indicated inflation has cost the Department of Defense \$50 billion and estimates that it will cost an additional \$110 billion to our Nation's defense from fiscal year 2021 through fiscal year 2023.

Think about this in the face of what we are talking about in terms of trying to help Ukraine overcome this terrible invasion by the Russians.

Residential real estate has skyrocketed 43 percent in the past 2 years. In fact, this year, mortgage rates have risen from 3.2 percent to 6.3 percent, which is the highest they have been since 2008—setting all kinds of records here. So some are going so far as to predict an additional 17.8 percent rise in home prices over the next year.

A recent paper released by Goldman Sachs, aptly titled “The Housing

Downturn: Further to Fall,” warns that higher mortgage rates and reduced affordability will continue well into 2023. For first-time home buyers, that spells a death knell for their dream of owning their own home.

Again, what we are seeing in realtime are direct consequences of inflation fueled by spending. The increase in the price of groceries is unbelievable. It is unbelievable when you go to the grocery store. Over the past year, the price of basic pantry staples has continued to increase. The cost of eggs has gone up 40 percent; butter, 24.6 percent; luncheon meats, 18.2 percent. Fresh milk has increased 17.7 percent. Sugar, flour, bread, pasta, peanut butter, and cereals have increased between 15 and 23 percent. These are the things that families buy weekly to meet their grocery bill and to provide their children's breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

Simply put, elected Democrats in the Biden administration celebrated the so-called Inflation Reduction Act on a day when the Consumer Price Index on inflation increased. For the many constituents whom I talk to on a daily basis, inflation remains the No. 1 concern.

So this irony is not lost on me nor is it lost on the American public. It is not lost on millions of Americans making tough choices because of these policies, and it is painful; it is hard to watch; and in many of my constituents' opinion, it is as if the President and his party are not paying attention.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote occur now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON PAN NOMINATION

All postcloture time has expired.

Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Pan nomination?

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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 Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH).

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 340 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Bennet	Booker	Cantwell
Blumenthal	Brown	Cardin

Carper	Klobuchar	Sanders
Casey	Lujan	Schatz
Collins	Manchin	Schumer
Coons	Markey	Shaheen
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Sinema
Duckworth	Merkley	Smith
Durbin	Murkowski	Stabenow
Feinstein	Murphy	Tester
Gillibrand	Murray	Van Hollen
Hassan	Padilla	Warner
Heinrich	Peters	Warnock
Hickenlooper	Portman	Warren
Hirono	Reed	Whitehouse
Kaine	Rosen	Wyden
Kelly	Rounds	
King		

NAYS—42

Blackburn	Grassley	Paul
Blunt	Hagerty	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rubio
Braun	Hoeben	Sasse
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Johnson	Shelby
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cotton	Lankford	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Tillis
Cruz	Lummis	Toomey
Daines	Marshall	Tuberville
Ernst	McConnell	Wicker
Fischer	Moran	Young

NOT VOTING—6

Baldwin	Cramer	Leahy
Barrasso	Graham	Risch

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). 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.

The Senator from West Virginia.

ENERGY

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about how the current process that we are in right now with the energy challenges we have, not just in our country but around the world, and how the committee process, the committee process that we are working on, can help relieve the challenges that the American public have right now with high prices at the gas pump, high prices they are receiving in their homes for heating and all the necessities they have.

What is at risk right now—and I want people to understand. What is at risk is the energy independence and energy security of the United States of America. If we are going to remain the superpower of the world, if we are one country that has it all, you better have energy independence. If you can't produce your own energy and you are going to ask other people around the world to do what you won't do for yourself but you have the ability to do it and the resources to do it, God help us all. That is what we are dealing with.

So I am going to talk about how Congress can provide some relief here.

The 2022 Energy Independence and Security Act we have been working on is going to be paramount to maintaining what we have. That means that we have to focus on not blaming each other. This has become a personal thing back and forth, back and forth.

Some people on the extreme left—liberals—don't like it because they want many changes. We have some people in the conference over here, my Repub-

lican friends, who have always been for it, but now the leadership has made it personal to be against it. But let me tell you who suffers—it is all the people. All the American citizens are going to suffer if we don't do something.

We are all citizens of this great country, and we are all so grateful for having the opportunities we have by living here. But we have an abundant amount of energy—an abundant amount of energy that we can produce cleaner than anywhere else in the world.

I have always said let's do decarbonization. We all should be committed to decarbonize to help the atmosphere and to help the climate. That is our responsibility as human beings and especially in a developed nation in the developing world.

Decarbonizing means two things, however you intend to interpret it. Some people want to decarbonize by basically eliminating anything that has fossil. Well, guess what. Our friends in Europe tried that. Our European friends tried that. Look where they are.

Then there are those of us who want to basically say: We can decarbonize by producing more fossil, which is cleaner in the United States of America, and basically dispersing the dirty fossils produced around the world. That is all we are saying.

When you have oil and gas coming from Venezuela, which is produced with no oversight whatsoever—dirtier than any place in the world—we were going to go to them and remove sanctions to help us? That makes no sense. We were going to ask Iran, which is the most prolific terrorist supporter in the world, which made no sense whatsoever. When we are asking Saudi Arabia to please produce more oil to help us—no support—it makes no sense at all.

So this is what we are talking about. I have this item here that kind of spells out what we are confirming. Here is the common permitting timelines for energy and minerals projects. The timeline for the United States is a minimum of 5 to 10 years—a minimum of 5 to 10 years; Canada, 1 to 3 years; Australia, 1 to 3 years, and they haven't deleted any of their oversight for review. They haven't deleted any of that.

Now let me tell you the extremes that are going on in the world today. The European Union, which has had a pretty stringent oversight on environment, they are considering emergency bypassing all environmental reviews because it is critical to them. Energy has been weaponized by Putin. Energy has been weaponized, and we in America can offset that. We can.

No matter what you want to build, whether it is transmission, pipelines, hydropower dams, more often than not, it takes too long. It drives up cost. You can double your cost within a 5- to 6-, 7-year period, double from what the original cost may be in projected cost. Today's energy and mineral projects, as I have said before, take too long.

Then you come over here, look basically at what the U.S. citizens—all 330 million people—are subjected to. Natural gas, up 200 percent. The cost of natural gas, 200 percent. The cost of natural gas in Europe, 1,100-percent increase—1,100 percent. Predicted by next year, some utility—homes will be paying \$7,000 a month. They are going to be subsidized by the government; they can't do that forever. Can you imagine those types of outrageous costs? Gasoline. Gasoline is up 67 percent, under both this administration and previous administration—67 percent. Electricity is up 15 percent and climbing and climbing.

When you have countries, such as Australia and Canada, that are doing it and doing it in a clean fashion but also doing it in an accelerated fashion, that is something we should be looking at. We have talked about permitting for years and years and years. If you are on the renewable side and you want all renewable, no fossil whatsoever, you can't get a transmission line done. If you are going to build a wind farm or a solar farm in the middle of the desert where there are no people and you have got a build to take the electrons, take that electricity back into the marketplace, you have got to cross a multitude of State lines.

You have got to have permitting reform to get it done. You are not going to be able to deliver the energy that people need. Look at our friends, whether it be in California or look at what has happened in Texas—all this. It is very, very fragile what is going on.

But then the good news is, next week, we are going to have an opportunity to help accelerate these energy projects clear across the country and the needs that we all have, if we don't let politics get in the way. If we basically look at what the United States of America needs, what the people in this country need, and what they want to make sure that we have the energy independence to do it ourselves and not rely on foreign supply chains, that is what it is about.

I have always said, if I can go home and explain it, if I can talk to all of you and explain it, I can vote for it; I can explain what we are doing. I truly can—whether it be from the IRA, a bill that basically gives us a pathway to walk and chew gum, provide the energy we need for today but also invest in the energy we need in the future. We are doing both, but you can't do them unless you have permitting reform.

Now, everyone thinks this is a side deal. There is no side deal. We talked about all of this at one time. We put this project together under one auspice of energy independence and the security this Nation needs and the relief the citizens need from high inflation—that is what—and also the support that we need for our allies in Europe that are having a difficult time.

So let me lay out the facts and explain why voting for energy permitting