

down, to get that increase down. And this is a big, big step forward for that. Half a degree might sound like a rounding error to some, but in truth, it is very, very, very significant.

But equally significant, however, are the tens of billions in new investments that will be up for grabs if we ratify this amendment.

Every year, millions and millions of refrigerators and AC units are sold around the world, and the United States ranks near the top of refrigerator exports. All of these products will need viable HFC refrigerant alternatives moving forward, and we need to take every step available to make sure those alternatives are provided by American companies and American workers, driven by American ingenuity.

By one measure, ratifying the Kigali Amendment will generate nearly \$39 billion in investments here in America in the next 5 years when combined with other steps we have taken to transition away from HFCs. It will create tens of thousands of new American jobs and increase U.S. heating, ventilation, and refrigeration exports by 25 percent in a few short years, by 2027.

Let me say that all again. Tens of thousands in new American jobs, nearly 39 billion in new investments, a surge in U.S. exports—all of that is on the table if we finish our work to ratify this amendment today. There is every reason in the world to say yes.

There is really no down side to ratification. The Kigali Amendment will not overrule or change any current U.S. law. It will require no one to replace their appliances at home. The United States will be able to lead the international process of implementing Kigali, ensuring U.S. businesses will set the terms of implementation that benefit them. And Congress will be perfectly free to change domestic policy to adapt to new technologies without having to worry about this agreement.

Even without the Kigali Amendment, the United States has already taken steps to transition away from HFCs, and U.S. businesses have been the ones leading the way. So it is no surprise that groups like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the American Chemistry Council, the Air-Conditioning, Heating & Refrigeration Institute, and even companies like Walmart and Honeywell all support the Kigali Amendment.

So in many ways, this is sort of a legislative layup. It is low-hanging fruit to secure billions in growth and tens of thousands of good-paying jobs. Again, there is every reason in the world to say yes and practically no reason to say no.

So for the sake of U.S. businesses, for the sake of U.S. workers, for the sake of U.S. exporters and U.S. investment, and for the sake of leadership in safeguarding our planet, I urge my colleagues to vote yes on ratifying Kigali later today.

#### DISCLOSE ACT

Mr. President, now on DISCLOSE. In the 12 years since conservatives on the

Supreme Court ruled in *Citizens United*, our elections have become rank—rank—with the stench of dark money.

Soon, the Senate will vote to erase this foulness when we hold the first procedural vote to take up the DISCLOSE Act. This has been a long time coming, and credit goes to Senator WHITEHOUSE, perhaps the Senate's most valiant enemy of dark money. I commend him; I thank him; and I stand with him in his efforts to shine a light on the corrosive power of dark money in our elections. No one has done more to shine the light on this evil, evil thing.

In free and fair elections—one person, one vote—American voters alone should have the power to determine the Nation's leaders without fear that their voices will be drowned out by powerful elites or special interests.

Sadly, unfortunately, dark money has rendered this ideal a fantasy. The idea of one person, one vote has been washed away by cascades of dark, undisclosed money pouring into our electoral system. Today, the average American—someone who might chip in \$30 or \$50 every now and then to support a candidate—is left practically powerless against billionaires and special interests who can cut million-dollar checks to promote candidates of their choice. Who here thinks that is a healthy democracy?

Because of today's broken campaign finance laws, many of these donations happen entirely in secret. It is a veil cast over our democracy that leaves vast majorities of voters behind.

And the problem is not just limited to our elections. Oh, no. Dark money has also corroded the judicial nomination process, as special interest groups spend tens of millions to push extremist judges onto the Federal Bench.

I believe that the awful decision in *Dobbs* was greatly affected by the fact that dark money is undisclosed.

The DISCLOSE Act operates off a simple premise: A healthy democracy is a transparent democracy, one where billionaires and mega-corporations don't get a free pass to exploit loopholes in campaign finance law in order to spend billions in anonymous contributions. That is the antithesis of democracy.

This shouldn't be a Democratic or a Republican view. After all, when was the last time any of us heard voters celebrate 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 the public doesn't think that, unless they themselves—a few, few—are cutting million-dollar checks in secret.

Even the Republican leader, who has dedicated much of his career to killing many campaign reforms, used to say in the distant past that disclosure and transparency are good things for elec-

tions. Unfortunately, that was a long time ago, and now all we hear from the other side are the absurd—and these are truly absurd—arguments that transparency somehow equates to suppressing freedom of elections. Tying logic and fairness into a pretzel knot to say that transparency is like suppressing freedom of expression is absurd. Imagine. Imagine this. Imagine being on the side of millionaires and billionaires who would no longer have the luxury of influencing our elections by cutting million-dollar checks in total anonymity. What a tragedy. Isn't that a shame? These poor billionaires and millionaires might have to disclose what they are doing.

Of course, of course, imagining being on the side of those millionaires and billionaires is ridiculous. If a multi-billionaire wants to spend colossal sums on candidates who are deeply anti-choice or who support insurrectionists—which some of these dark money, special interest, MAGA Republicans do—shouldn't the public have a right at least to know, simply to know it?

If someone wants to come here on the floor and argue otherwise, God help our democracy.

Louis Brandeis said over a century ago that sunlight is the best of disinfectants. The DISCLOSE Act would put that into practice.

So if you agree that the American people have a right to know who is trying to influence their elections, support the DISCLOSE Act. If you agree that America's representatives should only have one boss, the people, and not special interests, then support the DISCLOSE Act.

Democracy cannot prosper without transparency. Dark money, hidden secrets are the hallmark of dictatorships, left and right. We, in democracy, need transparency.

I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE for all he has done. I strongly support passing this legislation to keep the dream of our Founders alive—alive—in this century.

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, on Sunday's edition of "60 Minutes," President Biden made a bizarre attempt to deny the American people's pain from Democrats' runaway inflation. After the latest nationwide data reported that consumer prices are rising at 8.3 percent year-on-year, the President suggested the country should

be celebrating that they weren't rising even faster.

Working Americans aren't buying that insulting spin. Middle-class families aren't rejoicing that their daily life costs 8.3 percent more than it did a year ago and—listen to this—13.2 percent more than when President Biden took office.

In Parma, OH, one local grocer is working hard to keep her prices competitive but admits that “[w]e have been getting hit with all of our suppliers with chicken, ground meat, everything.”

And in Fairfield County, the head of one organization that helps feed folks experiencing economic hardship put it this way:

I think things are going to get a whole lot darker and more bleak before they get a lot better. We're desperately worried about food.

Across the border in West Virginia, in Fayette County, persistent high prices have one retired grandmother worried about how the rest of her family is making ends meet.

She said:

I'm already stressed and stressed and trying to figure out how [my daughter is] going to pay to keep the lights on, get groceries, get school clothes on her kid's back.

In Perryopolis, PA, one shopper told a reporter that besides cutting back at the grocery store, she had taken on a second job of working nights at a warehouse to help feed her family of four.

This is what she had to say:

Clothing, gas, just about everything has gone up, and food is a large part of it.

Meanwhile, the head of a small manufacturer in Big Bend, WI, reports that amid price spikes and backed-up supply chains, “trying to source products has been very difficult.”

In each of these States' cases—West Virginia, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania—one Senator tried to spare working families from all of this preventable pain. Each of those States has one Republican Senator who warned about inflation, who voted against inflation, and who voted for amendments that would have reduced inflation.

But, unfortunately, each one of those States also has a Democratic Senator who decided to vote in partisan lockstep to plow ahead with the trillions of dollars in reckless, inflationary spending. One Senator each from West Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin cast the tie-breaking votes to bring this pain down on their citizens' heads. Now, sadly, they are all paying the price.

Working families in West Virginia are paying Washington Democrats' inflation tax to the tune of an extra \$563 a month. Ohioans are paying \$661 more. In Pennsylvania, inflation is squeezing folks for an extra \$605; and in Wisconsin, it is \$673. Families in these States are paying a painful price for the deciding vote that their Democratic Senators chose to cast.

#### ENERGY

Now, Mr. President, on a related matter, Democrats' runaway inflation

includes skyrocketing costs to keep the lights on and to heat or cool homes.

We are also witnessing the dangerous vulnerabilities that Democrats in places like California have built into their electrical grids. California Democrats have spent years putting “green” lifestyle preferences ahead of the basic needs of working families. The result is a grid that is both more expensive and less reliable. We have seen the same California Democrats, who have spent years pushing their citizens to buy expensive electric cars, now begging the public not to plug them in.

Even as California teeters on the brink of an energy crisis of European proportions, Washington Democrats are pushing the rest of the country in that very same risky direction. They made their signature priority for this year spending even more of the people's money to take us even farther in the wrong direction even faster.

Last month, our Democratic colleagues rammed through a gigantic party-line bill that raises taxes on reliable domestic American energy in order to subsidize wealthy people buying electric cars or fancy, new appliances. Every Democratic Senator cast the deciding vote for that reckless spending spree.

That includes the senior Senator from West Virginia, who claims he only did so because the Democratic leader promised him that Democrats would line up behind permitting reform to make it easier to build things and complete projects in our country. But now, very predictably, this backroom deal is crumbling before our eyes. Almost 60 days after our colleague from West Virginia gave up his vote for this vague promise, it still appears the far left and House Democrats want no part of his backroom deal they didn't sign on to.

As for the Republican side, our colleague Senator CAPITO has put forward a real, actual, substantive permitting reform bill that would make the commonsense changes our country needs. Senator CAPITO's substantive bill stands in stark contrast to what every indication thus far suggests will be weak, reform-in-name-only legislation from her home State colleague.

As luck would have it, Senator CAPITO's real plan is also closer to passing the Senate than Senator MANCHIN's reform-in-name-only plan. Senator MANCHIN recently told reporters that his version may need 20 Republican votes to become law, but Senator CAPITO's plan only needs Senator MANCHIN and nine other Democrats to get on board. We are talking about real, substantive reform that is already closer to becoming law. But so far, our Democratic colleague from West Virginia has refused to back his colleague's commonsense proposal. He has shown little appetite to actually get something accomplished.

So talk is cheap. If our colleagues across the aisle want real permitting reform, Senator CAPITO's fantastic bill

only needs Senator MANCHIN plus nine more Democrats to clear this Chamber. Otherwise, it would appear the senior Senator from West Virginia traded his vote on a massive liberal boondoggle in exchange for nothing.

#### DISCLOSE ACT

Mr. President, on one final matter, finally, with all of these national crises hammering families, the Democratic majority is using the Senate schedule to demonstrate that they do not care.

The Democratic leader is not spending floor time on a bill to combat Democrats' inflation crisis or their immigration crisis or their violent crime crisis or their energy crisis, not on legislation to help American families' daily lives in any way. Instead, the Democratic leader is setting up a vote on a bill to erode the First Amendment and make political speech more difficult. Instead of trying to address the root causes of their unpopularity, Democrats are attacking the American people's ability to speak out against them.

The Democrats try to ram through political takeover bills like this zombie DISCLOSE Act once or twice every year. This legislation would give Democrats' friends in the unelected bureaucracy even more power to police the political speech and activism of private citizens.

Remember, donations to political action committees and electioneering nonprofits are already publicly disclosed. That is already the law. What Democrats want is a huge, new step that would reduce private citizens' privacy and chill Americans' constitutional rights. The same Democrats who wouldn't condemn angry mobs gathering outside the private family homes of Federal judges now believe that vastly more information about private citizens' political views should be made public.

It is no mystery as to how these things fit together. Even the liberal ACLU warned years ago that what the Democrats want to pull off “unconstitutionally infringes on freedom of speech and the right to associational privacy.”

I don't often say the ACLU has it right, but they do here.

Instead of addressing the reasons why Americans are upset with Democrats, the Democrats are trying to legislate our citizens into sitting down and shutting up.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada.

#### ABORTION

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. President, in the months since the conservative majority on the Supreme Court struck down *Roe v. Wade*, the assault on reproductive rights by anti-choice, MAGA Republicans has been relentless.

Anti-choice States across the country have already enacted strict and rigid abortion bans that strip our rights away, threaten to jail women and their doctors, and put women's