

in the United States. Or they can vote to spend less money on nuclear weapons and cost overruns, and more to rebuild struggling communities in their home states.

In Dr. King's 1967 speech, he warned that "a nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death."

He was right. At a time when half of our people are struggling paycheck to paycheck, when over 40 million Americans are living in poverty, and when 87 million lack health insurance or are underinsured, we are approaching spiritual death.

At a time when we have the highest rate of childhood poverty of almost any major country on Earth, and when millions of Americans are in danger of going hungry, we are approaching spiritual death.

At a time when we have no national testing program, no adequate production of protective gear and no commitment to a free vaccine, while remaining the only major country where infections spiral out of control, we are approaching spiritual death.

At a time when over 60,000 Americans die each year because they can't afford to get to a doctor on time, and one out of five Americans can't afford the prescription drugs their doctors prescribe, we are approaching spiritual death.

Now, at this unprecedented moment in American history, it is time to rethink what we value as a society and to fundamentally transform our national priorities. Cutting the military budget by 10 percent and investing that money in human needs is a modest way to begin that process. Let's get it done.

Mr. SULLIVAN. So that was the liberal case, defund the Pentagon. The junior Senator from Vermont wrote that. The majority leader put out a tweet saying he was a proud supporter of the defund the Pentagon amendment. That was right here on the Senate floor.

Of course, there is the National Defense Authorization Act, the No. 1 bill that focuses on national defense for our Nation. That passed out of committee, the Armed Services Committee, in June in a very strong bipartisan vote, 23 to 3. It passed the House in July. We will have pay raises for our troops so the Army doesn't have to tell them go line up for food stamps because they are hungry. And we need to bring it to the floor right here.

So what are we doing? As far as I can tell, the majority leader doesn't want to bring up the Defense Authorization Act until December—December. That is why I joined a letter led by Senator TUBERVILLE, with whom I serve on the Armed Services Committee, signed by 20 of my colleagues, to say to the majority leader: Mr. Majority Leader, we have a dangerous world right now. Bring the NDAA to the floor. It is going to pass. It has great support.

By the way, I know the Democrat Senators feel this way, too, on this topic.

So we need to get this body back to what is important for our country—bolstering our economy, fighting inflation, bringing down energy costs, unleashing American energy, and definitely passing the legislation that funds our military, that provides pay raises for our troops during this very dangerous time.

So I again ask the majority leader to bring the NDAA to the floor. We need it.

I call on the President and his administration—the President of the United States, the Commander in Chief—to truly prioritize our military and their families, and that begins with putting an end to using them in a disgraceful way as political props for your partisan agenda.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). The Senator from Kansas.

ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY COORDINATION AND LEADERSHIP ACT

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, American aviation—something we care about greatly in Kansas but across the country—it is entering a new era of innovation and of growth. Industry and government in this circumstance need to work together to make certain the United States stays competitive and remains the leader in this arena.

In today's technology and research and development, there are unmanned vehicles. They are autonomous. They will be flying passengers and cargo from point to point in the United States.

These vehicles will take off vertically and land vertically, and it is important for us to begin the preparation for that development in our airspace, at our airports, in our communities, and across the country.

Bipartisan legislation, which I have introduced along with Senator SINEMA, the Advanced Air Mobility Coordination and Leadership Act, has been waiting Senate approval for weeks.

This legislation would instruct the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation to lead a working group comprised of members of various government Agencies and the civil aviation industry—a public-private effort.

Their objective would be for them to review the steps needed to mature AAM past its initial operations, ensure a robust domestic supply chain, identify current Federal policies that can be leveraged to advance this industry.

I thank Senator SINEMA for her help in moving this bill forward. It has been approved by the Commerce Committee, and the advocacy groups have been engaged in helping us develop the legislation and helping us work its way through the committee and through the Senate.

I also thank a number of Kansans who have provided information and support for this endeavor.

This legislation is crucial to ensuring the United States remains a leader in the aviation sector for years to come, and I am anxious for it to become law with the President's signature.

Therefore, as if in legislative session, I ask the Chair lay before the Senate the message to accompany S. 516.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair lays before the Senate the following message from the House.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 516) entitled "An Act to plan for and coordinate efforts to integrate advanced air mobility aircraft into the national airspace system, and for other purposes" do pass with an amendment.

MOTION TO CONCUR

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, now I move to concur in the House amendment, and I ask unanimous consent that the motion be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The motion was agreed to.

AMENDMENT TO MONTREAL PROTOCOL ("KIGALI AMENDMENT")—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I rise today to remind our colleagues of the incredible opportunity that we have before us today—incredible opportunity that we have before us today.

Later today, this body, the U.S. Senate, will have the opportunity to vote to ratify the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol.

What does that mean?

Kigali, as it is affectionately known, is a global treaty to phase down the use of hydrofluorocarbons, also known as HFCs. For years, HFCs have been widely used as a key component that are called refrigerants, but a key component in modern air conditioners, in refrigerators, and other cooling products. Yet, the United States is already transitioning away from using HFCs. We might want to ask, why?

Well, one reason is that American companies are at the forefront of developing the next generation of coolant technology, the next generation of refrigerants.

This transition away from HFCs is expected to stimulate literally billions of dollars in economic investment in this country—billions of dollars; create tens of thousands of jobs; and significantly increase U.S. exports, all using technology developed in this country—all by using technology developed in this country; putting Americans to work, using technologies developed by Americans.

Now, first, some history on how we got here.

HFCs came about to replace ozone-depleting substances, which created a hole in our ozone layer. I said to some of my colleagues yesterday at a luncheon where we were, Mr. President, that I first remember hearing about the hole in the ozone, I think, when I was in the Navy overseas, and reading about it in Time and Newsweek that I got in the mail while we were deployed and saying: I wonder what this is all about. What could be causing that? It turned out to be a big deal and one that still plays out today in the debate before us as well.

But in 1988, this very body, the U.S. Senate, voted unanimously to ratify the Montreal Protocol, an international agreement to phase out ozone-depleting substances that was negotiated under President Ronald Reagan's leadership.

Since then, the global consumption of ozone-depleting substances has declined by—get this—by 97 percent, while our economy has continued to grow.

Now, that is good news. That is really good news. But, unfortunately, there is some bad news.

The HFCs that have been used for years now to replace the ozone-depleting substances have been found to also be bad for our environment.

So in 2016, the global community got together and amended the Montreal Protocol to also phase down HFCs, hydrofluorocarbons.

This is not the first time we have ratified an amendment to the Montreal Protocol. The Kigali Amendment before us is the fifth amendment to the Montreal Protocol ratified by the United States.

The Kigali Amendment was transmitted to the U.S. Senate on November 16, 2021—almost a year ago—300 days, in fact, ago. Each day that has passed without ratification represents a further delay in supporting American businesses, in supporting American workers, and in growing our economic and national security interests and protecting our economic and national security interests.

Thanks to American innovation, we now have HFC alternatives that are cleaner and more energy efficient than HFCs. And the best part—here is the best part: These cleaner, more efficient HFC alternatives are being manufactured, as I said, right here, right here in the U.S. of A.

In recent years, the American industries' leadership on transitioning away from HFCs created an excellent opportunity for bipartisan action at the Federal level. And to that end, our friend and colleague Senator NEELY KENNEDY and I introduced something called the AIM Act, the bipartisan American Innovation and Manufacturing Act. That was in 2019.

Our bill proposed phasing down HFCs in our country by 85 percent over 15 years—not overnight, not in 1 year, not in 2 or 3 years but phasing down by as much as 85 percent within 15 years, the same timeline as the Kigali Amendment before us.

So 16 Democrats and 16 Republicans joined the AIM Act as cosponsors with Senator KENNEDY and myself. Additionally, a broad coalition of organizations, from the National Association of Manufacturers to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to the American Chemistry Council, endorsed our bill, along with a lot of other American companies.

In December 2020, the AIM Act became law under a divided Congress and a Republican administration. It was a bipartisan win—a bipartisan win. It was an American win as well.

Now it is time to build on that success. Now it is time to seize on the opportunity before us and ratify the Kigali Amendment.

The Kigali Amendment is good for our economy. Implementing the AIM Act, paired with ratification, will help generate nearly \$40 billion of new growth in investment in the U.S. economy by 2027.

It will also create roughly 150,000 American jobs—150,000 new American jobs—and increase U.S. heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, and refrigeration exports across the world by at least 25 percent over that same time period.

In addition, Kigali ratification is good for consumers. As EPA's data shows us, transitioning away from HFCs means average prices will be lower for consumers—lower for consumers, not higher. Something I think we all support in this body.

Ratifying Kigali will also build on our bipartisan success in the AIM Act by allowing the Federal Government to better protect U.S. companies from illegal dumping and smuggling of HFCs into our country from adversaries like China.

And then, lastly, Kigali ratification will ensure U.S. companies continue to have access to international markets so that modern, efficient, economical air-conditioners and refrigerators across the world will be stamped "Made in America," not "Made in China."

So today, we, the U.S. Senate, have an opportunity to make that vision a reality; to build on the decades-long bipartisan record of success from the Montreal Protocol to the passage of the AIM Act a couple of years ago; to show our Nation and to show the world yet another time that bipartisan solutions are lasting solutions. This is a bipartisan solution. This is a bipartisan solution, and it demands bipartisan support.

I hope our colleagues will join Senator KENNEDY and myself and many of our colleagues, and, frankly, a whole ton of businesses across the country and organizations who support what we are doing, and join us in supporting the ratification of the Kigali Amendment.

Let's seize the day or, as we say in Delaware, "Carper diem. Carper diem." I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

IRAN

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, tens of thousands of Iranian citizens are taking to the streets in dozens of cities across Iran as we speak. The chant that is echoing across that ancient land is: "Death to the dictator." Yet Joe Biden

and the Democrats in Washington would rather make another disastrous deal with the ayatollahs and those who declare "death to America" and who are, at this very moment, working to assassinate American citizens on our sovereign soil. Barack Obama's betrayal of the Iranian people during the Green Revolution is replaying before our very eyes.

The latest revolt against the ayatollahs was inspired by yet another reprehensible crime by this theocratic dictatorial regime against its own people.

Last week, the ayatollahs' thugs, known as the morality police, arrested a 22-year-old woman on the street for the heinous crime of allegedly not wearing a head scarf in public. They threw her into a police van; they brutally beat her on the way to the detention center; they inflicted terrible injuries on her, from which she soon died.

Countless Iranians were immediately horrified by this cold-blooded murder and are now taking to the streets to protest their illegitimate outlaw regime. They are burning hijabs and protesting the oppression under which they have suffered every day for 43 years. In the murder of this young woman, we see the true face of the ayatollahs, a regime which our President hopes to enrich with hundreds of billions of dollars and to appease with yet another terrible nuclear deal. In fact, just minutes ago, President Biden stood before the world at the U.N. General Assembly, stating at great length that he would continue negotiations toward this dangerous deal while offering only the briefest and emptiest of words to reproach the ayatollahs for the murder of this young woman for the grave crime of refusing to wear a headscarf in public and only the briefest of words for the thousands of protesters—at latest reports, seven of which have been murdered and many more shot and beaten—I would say this does feel a lot like *deja vu*, a replay of Barack Obama's betrayal of the 2009 Green revolutionaries. And why did he betray them in 2009? Was he caught flatfooted? Was he overwhelmed by events? Was he simply new to the job? naive? even incompetent? No. He betrayed those Green revolutionaries in cold blood because his one overriding objective was his terrible nuclear deal with Iran.

He wanted a deal because he believed America was to blame for the decades of tension and conflicts with Iran; that America had sinned and we needed to atone for our sins against Iran and to pull in our horns; and therefore he stood idly by so as not to offend the mullahs and their street militias as they beat the Iranian people.

And, today, for the very same reason, Democrats are once again selling out those brave Iranian protesters so they can once again try to buy the friendship of the oppressive ayatollahs. The U.S. Congress should stand with the Iranian people and prevent another betrayal by a Democratic President. And

you wouldn't think it would be that hard. I mean, on face value, you would think self-professed progressive Democrats would stand up as one against a so-called morality police who arrested a woman for the grave crime of not wearing a scarf over her hair in public and then beat her so severely that she died in custody.

Imagine what would happen if this had occurred in, say, Saudi Arabia. Imagine what these Democrats would be saying if a country in Western Europe enforced its laws in this way. You would expect that Democrats could marshal just a tiny bit of outrage—the tiniest bit of outrage possible when the ayatollahs arrest a woman for not wearing a headscarf in public and then beat her to death. But, no, they don't.

And to be honest, you don't even have to imagine these things either. We see how the Democrats have treated Iran for 13 years—as if America is at fault and we are the problem and Iran deserves an apology and hundreds of billions of dollars and to be brought into the civilized world. Look at how they treated Saudi Arabia as a pariah for years. In fact, look at Barack Obama's entire response to the Arab Spring in 2011. It was just like his response to the Green Revolution in 2009 in Iran. The Iranian people rise up in protest, silence; the people of Egypt rise up in protest, Barack Obama withdraws political support for Egypt's leader and demands his immediate resignation; protests in Libya where Muammar Qadhafi had been scared straight by George Bush and had come out of the cold, Barack Obama attacks his government and overthrows him militarily; protests in Syria, silence.

What is the common thread in those responses in 2009 in Iran and 2011 in Egypt and Libya and Syria and 2022 in Iran? It is very simple. If you are pro-American, you get condemned—maybe overthrown. If you are anti-American, you get rewarded with hundreds of billions of dollars and a blind eye toward your grave crimes against your people and your aggression against America and our allies throughout the region. Again and again, the Democrats excuse the crimes of our enemies while they obsess over the flaws of our friends.

As Jeané Kirkpatrick, the legendary Ambassador to the United Nations, once said—and it is true today of so many Democrats—“they always blame America first.”

We cannot allow Joe Biden to repeat the mistakes of Barack Obama and once again betray the brave people of Iran, which I would remind you is a mortal enemy of the United States. So I call on my colleagues to join me in standing with the people of Iran, with the brave people of that ancient nation who stand in the streets today chanting “Death to the dictator,” not with the dictator and the ayatollahs who still to this day chant “Death to America.”

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

TREATY DOCUMENT NO. 117-1

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, China is not a developing nation. China is the world's second largest economy. China is the world's largest manufacturer, and China is the world's No. 1 creditor. Yet this body, the U.S. Senate, is poised to ratify a treaty that ignores those facts and treats China with kid gloves. Simply put, the Kigali Amendment places America at a competitive disadvantage, using American taxpayer dollars to subsidize Chinese companies.

The Kigali Amendment restricts supplies of compounds called hydrofluorocarbons or HFCs, which are refrigerants used in most air-conditioning and refrigeration systems. The rationale is that HFCs leaking out of equipment and into the atmosphere add to climate change. However, even the EPA admits that HFCs contribute only five one-hundredths of 1 degree Celsius to projected increases in global temperature.

As a developing nation, designated as such under the Kigali Amendment, China is eligible to receive funding from the \$4.5 billion Multilateral Fund, of which the United States is, not surprisingly, the largest contributor.

If this treaty is ratified, the United States will be required under the treaty to meet strict deadlines for phasing out HFCs, while China is given an additional 10-year timeline to come into compliance with the same standards. It is doubtful, given its track record, that China has any intention of actually meeting its environmental obligations under this treaty.

Treating China as a developing country gives it an unfair advantage in the existing HFC market and allows China to continue production, allowing that country to continue to undercut the HFC market well into the 2040s. As the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases, China has a long history of disrespecting and disregarding environmental standards and has continually increased its emissions and investments in coal-fired powerplants since the 2015 Paris climate agreement.

Under this treaty, Chinese-based HFC producers will get the largest share of the controlled market in future supplies needed to keep existing cooling systems running. As it has done under past environmental treaties, China will continue to produce supplies that are not allowed under the updated environmental standards.

This is part of a conspicuous trend on China's part. China wants to get ahead by playing by a different set of rules than the rest of the world—and certainly a different set of rules than the United States has to live under. We know China ignores the rules and has little respect, if any, for international norms, and yet we continue to allow China to dominate markets with the financial support of American taxpayer dollars.

This is a point where it just goes too far. We can't give them that. They haven't earned that. There is nothing

about their behavior to suggest that they deserve this treatment. We shouldn't give it to them here.

To that end, later today, the Senate will likely vote on an amendment offered by Senator SULLIVAN and me. Now, it will not fix all of the flaws in the Kigali treaty; it will, however, begin to address the issue of China receiving special treatment at the expense of the American people. It will require the Secretary of State to propose the removal of China's designation as a developing nation to the Vienna Convention. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of our amendment and acknowledge the fact that China is not a developing nation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, the crisis at our southern border continues to break records. For the first time ever, the United States has encountered more than 2 million migrants at our southern border in a single fiscal year, and that doesn't even include data for the month of September.

Now, my State, the State of Texas, has a 1,200-mile common border with Mexico where most of these migrants show up, although some go to Arizona, some to New Mexico, and some to California. But the vast majority of these 2 million migrants have showed up on our backdoor step. This includes a hodgepodge of people, from asylum seekers to economic migrants, to criminals, to drug smugglers.

In each of the last 6 months, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection has logged more than 200,000 migrant encounters—for each of the past 6 months, 200,000 a month. The media used to lose its collective mind when 100,000 immigrants arrived in a single month, but I guess the public has become desensitized to these numbers because they are so huge, and we have now been operating at twice that level for 6 consecutive months.

Communities in my State of Texas have struggled to carry the weight of President Biden's border crisis, and nobody seemed to care. But the moment the burden reached the liberal enclaves of Manhattan and Martha's Vineyard, the outrage machine fired up.

Earlier this year, Texas Governor Greg Abbott began transporting migrants to other States and cities to ease the burden on communities in Texas. After all, what are we supposed to do? Two million migrants show up at the border. Are they supposed to stay there? Well, most of them have been in contact with relatives and other people in other cities around the country, and so they eventually make their way to their destination. And, if they are asylum seekers, they are given a notice to appear for a future court hearing, which probably will never occur because of the huge backlog in our immigration courts.

So Governor Abbott did what any reasonable person would do and began

sending these migrants to other places where they eventually will end up at their final destination, wherever that may be. You can imagine 2 million migrants showing up on your border and what the strain on local health systems is like, what the strain is on emergency response services. The more migrants that show up on our backdoor step, the lower the capacity to care for taxpayers who pay taxes to make sure those services are available.

At the same time, nongovernmental organizations—we call them NGOs—along the border are expected to pick up the Federal Government's slack and care for the migrants, which harms those charities' ability to support more Texans and other Americans who rely on them.

To state the obvious, the burden of this crisis should not fall on our border communities. The Federal Government, after all, is charged with the responsibility of managing our international borders, and that includes migration.

Simply stated, the Biden administration has refused to deal with this crisis or, frankly, even to really acknowledge it. But that doesn't change the fact that my State—or any other State, for that matter—should not be left to manage the fallout alone.

Now, since April, more than 11,000 migrants have voluntarily boarded buses from Texas to Washington, DC; New York; and Chicago. In the past, the leaders of these cities have made it clear that they would welcome migrants with open arms. They self-designate as a sanctuary city. Well, now this is their opportunity to provide that sanctuary and those services and relieve some of the burden on the border States that have borne the disproportionate burden for all this time. But you would have thought that something nefarious was going on or a genuine public emergency had occurred. They don't care a whit about 2 million people showing up on the Texas border. But when they show up on a bus in Washington, DC, or Chicago or New York, they howl like a dog that has been hit with a rock.

After ignoring the border crisis during the entirety of the Biden administration, the arrival of a few thousands migrants in these sanctuary cities has put them into an absolute panic. The Democratic Mayor of Washington, DC, for example, declared a public health emergency after her city received only a few thousand migrants. Two million migrants at the border in my State, Arizona, New Mexico, and California, and they didn't raise a peep. But a few thousand migrants to show up here in Washington, DC—roughly the same number that arrive on the southern border every single day—you would have thought there was an emergency.

The Democratic mayor of New York said that his city is “nearly to the breaking point.” This is a city of 8½ million people. Yet the mayor said his city is near the breaking point even

though it has welcomed only a few thousand migrants. Give me a break.

Our colleague from Illinois, the majority whip, called the transportation of these migrants “cruel and inhumane.” Giving people a bus ride to their ultimate destination strikes me as not cruel and not inhumane. The White House Press Secretary had the temerity to say it was “shameful and reckless.” Well, what is shameful and reckless is the Biden administration's border crisis that it simply ignored for the last 2 years.

Vice President KAMALA HARRIS even went so far as to call this “the height of irresponsibility” and a “dereliction of duty.” I doubt Vice President HARRIS recognizes the many layers of irony in that statement. After all, last March, she was designated as the border czar for the Biden administration, but she wouldn't visit the border. She was charged, by the President of the United States, with finding solutions to address this ongoing crisis. If she wants to talk about dereliction of duty, her refusal to acknowledge, much less address, the border crisis is a prime example of irresponsibility and dereliction of duty.

But what is even more misleading about her statement is the fact that transporting migrants to cities far from the southern border is nothing new. In fact, the Biden administration has been doing it all along. Here is a chart. It shows the cities that have been receiving migrants from the Biden administration since the President became President of the United States in January of 2021: In Washington State, Yakima, if I am pronouncing that correctly; Minneapolis; Denver; Phoenix; Yuma; even Atlanta; White Plains; Scranton; Baltimore; Harrisburg; Allentown; Jacksonville, FL; Birmingham, AL; Houston, TX; Brownsville; San Antonio; Dallas—all of these cities have been the recipients of migrants transported by the Biden administration.

In April of last year, the Associated Press published a story with the headline “Unaccompanied children from border arrive in Pennsylvania.” The following month, the local news station in Chattanooga, TN, posted a story with the headline “Late-night flights carrying migrant children arrive in Chattanooga.” Here is another headline from October of last year: “Biden administration quietly flies illegal immigrants to New York in the middle of the night.” We didn't hear the howls of protest from Mayor Adams or the Governor when the Biden administration was doing what they are now complaining about. Though they don't talk about it very often, the Biden administration has a history of transporting migrants to cities far from the U.S.-Mexico border, and they didn't call it shameful or reckless then.

Just to be clear, when somebody claims asylum at the border and passes an initial test of a credible fear of persecution, they are then given a notice

to appear for a future court hearing that may be years off, with millions of cases in the backlog. That is called a notice to appear, and it shouldn't surprise anybody that, over the years, after people have already made their way into the interior of the United States, that many of them don't show up for their court hearing. This is part of what the Border Patrol said is a lack of consequences associated with entering the United States in an irregular fashion. Oh, by the way, 90 percent of the people who do show up for their court hearing are not granted asylum. They don't qualify.

As I have stressed on many occasions, Mr. President, communities in my State do not have the capacity, the infrastructure, or the resources to handle this crisis alone. As New York City, the largest city in America, raises alarms over a few thousand migrants, I can't help but think about what happened when 15,000 Haitian migrants showed up under a bridge in Del Rio, TX, a town of 35,000 people. The group of migrants who showed up under that bridge in Del Rio equated to more than 40 percent of the city's population. Can you imagine what a challenge that was just to feed people, provide them humane treatment, sanitation. But if you extrapolate that 15,000 in a city of 35,000, that would be the equivalent of more than 3 million people showing up in New York City or 280,000 arriving in Washington, DC, in the course of just 1 week.

So whether they intended to do so or not, the mayors of Washington, DC and New York City—and Chicago, for that matter—have shown that the weight of this crisis is extraordinarily heavy, and they are only experiencing a tiny fraction of what Texas communities have faced every day for the last year and a half. And do you know what? Apparently the Biden administration simply doesn't care. As these mayors now know, caring for these migrants who cross our border is a herculean task because of the sheer volume of people coming across.

Legal immigration is part of the secret to our success as a country. We naturalize a million people a year. But these are people who have chosen to jump ahead of those waiting in line to enter the country lawfully, and we simply don't have the resources in place at the border or other places to deal with this vast tsunami of humanity—food, clothing, shelter, medical care, translation services, legal services, sanitation. Communities in Texas apparently have been expected to bear the entire brunt and the entire burden. It is time consuming, it is labor intensive, it is extraordinarily expensive, and it is dangerous.

The criminal organizations that are getting rich moving these migrants into the country for \$5-, \$10-, \$15,000 a person are flooding the Border Patrol with these migrants, diverting necessary resources from the Border Patrol from interdicting the drugs that

are entering our country that killed 108,000 Americans last year alone. Seventy-one thousand of those 108,000 died of fentanyl overdose, a synthetic opioid. Precursors come from China, get to Mexico, are manufactured there, and are smuggled into the United States. And fentanyl has taken far too many lives in every State and in every city in this Nation, and yet the Biden administration has not awakened to the fact that they are being played; that part of this business model, if you want to call it that, of flooding the border with migrants is to divert the Border Patrol and law enforcement officials from stopping these drugs, this poison, from coming into the country.

Then, yes, in every city in the Nation, we have seen a spike in crime. Do you know who the distribution network is in the United States for the drugs that the cartels smuggle across the border? It is gangs in every city and in every State in the country. And who is responsible for most of the gun violence and crime in our cities? It is these gangs that are the principal distribution network for the drugs that come across the border. Yet the Biden administration has not connected the dots. I don't know why. The DEA, or the Drug Enforcement Administration, the FBI Director—there are a lot of people in the administration who could inform the President and the Vice President of what the facts are, but they apparently are not even curious, or, if they know, they don't seem to care.

From El Paso to the Rio Grande Valley, as I said, Texas shares a 1,200-mile border with Mexico out of our total border of 2,000 miles. The communities situated along that border simply cannot handle the monumental job of dealing with this flow of migrants and the failure of the Federal Government to live up to its responsibilities. But this isn't a partisan matter.

My friend Oscar Leaser, who is the mayor of El Paso, TX—he is a proud Democrat—he has been busing migrants to get them off the streets of El Paso to the cities where they want to go.

He said a few days ago:

People are not coming to El Paso, they're coming to America.

It is only fair for other parts of the country to bear the burden that we have borne alone in my State and in other border States, as long as the Federal Government is simply advocating its responsibility to deal with illegal immigration and to fix this crisis. They know what to do. They simply are refusing to do it, presumably because some of their political supporters don't believe in anything except open borders.

The Biden administration has completely abdicated its duty to secure the border, and it has failed to supply border communities with the resources they need to try to manage this fallout. The truth is, no matter what the resources were, the numbers are just

overwhelming. And that is the point. The cartels get rich; they smuggle drugs and additional migrants; and that is the point. So it is not going to stop until the Biden administration wakes up out of its deep sleep and deals with the reality of what is happening at the border.

In the last 12 months, Customs and Border Protection has encountered more than 2.3 million migrants at the southern border, and that total grows every single day. All you have to do is turn on your TV set and see people streaming across the border, many of them turning themselves in, getting into this asylum system where they ultimately melt into the great American heartland, never to be heard from again, successfully making their way into the country.

Our amazing men and women at the Border Patrol are grappling with staffing shortages and poor morale. How would you like to be a police officer where the mayor and city council say: Well, we had to hire a police force, but we are really not going to fund that police force or we are not going to do anything to recruit more people to serve in that police force. And do you know what? We really don't care whether they enforce the law or not.

That is the message that the Border Patrol is receiving from the Biden administration. So, of course, morale is bad. Of course, it is hard to recruit. The agents are outnumbered, they are overwhelmed, and, frankly, disgusted with the lack of leadership.

Border communities are buckling under the weight of vast humanitarian needs, and now even the self-proclaimed sanctuary cities don't seem to want to help. Unfortunately, the Biden administration appears to have no intention of fixing the problem. And it sure seems like they don't think anybody else should have to help either.

It is leaving Texas and other border States to buckle under the weight of a crisis that we had no hand in creating. It is forcing Texas taxpayers to make up for the failure of the Federal Government to perform its responsibilities. And what is worse, President Biden, Vice President HARRIS, and Members of this body are trying to paint my State as the enemy for trying to deal with the hand that it has been dealt while they continue to refuse to lend a helping hand.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

DISCLOSE ACT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I wanted to come to the floor and kick off the process that will culminate tomorrow with our vote on the DISCLOSE Act.

The DISCLOSE Act will get rid of dark money in our politics. President Biden gave a good speech about it yesterday to help stir interests and progress in this area.

There are problems with dark money in and of itself. It contributes to what has been called the tsunami of slime in

our politics, because when the slimy ad has a fake, phony front group's name on it and no actual real entity or company or association is accountable for that, well, then you can lie to your heart's content, you can smear to your heart's content, and there is no accountability.

So there are reasons for getting dark money out of our elections on their own: just giving disproportionate power to special interests, sliming up our elections, allowing a lot of bad actors powers that they don't deserve, and putting enormous power in the hands of people who are, A, politically active enough to be willing to spend that kind of money and have a motive in legislative outcomes to spend that kind of money that regular citizens can't begin to match.

But there is a lot more to it than that. There is a lot more to it than that, because, like corruption, dark money is used to achieve other goals. And those other goals have had very important policy effects in our country.

Climate change we are dealing with daily now in floods, in fires, in droughts, in species moving about—particularly in Rhode Island, our ocean fisheries are moving about. The oceans are acidifying. We are putting essential operating systems of our planet in danger and onto a course that mankind has never seen before in the entire history of humankind.

When I got here in 2007, this was addressed as a bipartisan problem. There were three different bipartisan Senate bills, all of which were very consequential. It would have made a huge difference. Senator McCain ran for President carrying the Republican Party banner with a significant and serious climate platform, and it looked like democracy was responding to this problem in a responsible way. All of that activity came to an instant shuttering halt in January of 2010.

What happened in January of 2010? What happened in January of 2010 was that the U.S. Supreme Court let loose one of the worst decisions it has ever rendered—the Citizens United decision—and that decision allowed unlimited money to flow into politics.

Of course, if you can spend unlimited money in politics, you suddenly have an unprecedented motive to hide it. If the most you can give is \$3,500 or \$5,000 from your PAC, it is not worth putting a lot of effort into hiding that; plus, nobody really cares. But if you can give \$35 million, plus, let's say you are a polluting fossil fuel company and you don't want people to know that, now it is worth putting quite a lot of money into the apparatus of hiding who you are. It is an expensive apparatus. It is a real apparatus. Senators have gone to the floor before to describe it. We have used this graphic.

This is the web of climate denial that has been chronicled by scientists who study as a phenomenon climate denial and how the money flies around

through these different groups and how they use it to hide what they are doing on climate.

Well, once that got launched, that was the end of bipartisanship on climate. We lost a decade. I think history will show that the lost decade from January 2010 until now is one that these pages and children across the country will pay a very steep price for.

Why would they be willing to do it? Well, the fossil fuel industry has an annual subsidy of \$660 billion, basically, from being allowed to pollute for free—\$660 billion.

If you are protecting a \$660 billion subsidy, how much would you be willing to spend any given year to protect it? If you spent \$6.6 billion a year, you would still be earning 100 times your investment. Sure enough, we have seen dark money explode into expenditures by the billion. And as that happened, climate progress ended.

Look at voter suppression. Across the country, there was a wave of Republican State legislatures passing voter suppression laws. Was it an amazing coincidence that they all happened to do that at the same time? Evidently not, because there is actually a tape from Heritage Action—one of the dark money groups behind those voter suppression campaigns—where the person briefing the big donors admitted this:

We're working with these state legislators . . . in some cases we actually draft [the bills] for them or we have a sentinel on our behalf give them the model legislation so it has that grassroots, you know, from-the-bottom-up type of vibe.

The whole thing was a dark money fake fed into these State legislatures by dark money and no small amount.

This is a \$24 million investment—

The speaker said—

We . . . started . . . right after the November election. . . . we've driven hundreds of 1000s of calls, emails, placed letters to the editor, hosted events, and run television and digital ads.

So voter suppression is an artifact of dark money.

And, last, Court capture. I have got a series of speeches that I have given so far—18 of them. When I do, I put my "Scheme" poster up because this was a scheme; indeed, a scheme and a half.

At this point, what we know is that at least \$580 million was spent on phony front groups using dark money out to capture the Court. We don't know how much additionally went into political coffers to reward people for their Court-packing enterprise or to threaten to punish people if they didn't go along with the Court-packing enterprise, but it was quite a show.

This is just one little node of that \$580 million Court capture enterprise. It shows two groups, which is the current, sort of, best practices—worst practices, better to say—in political influence. You have a 501(c)3 and a 501(c)4 side by side, same location, same staff, indistinguishable in any real sense. And then in this case, they pushed

what they called fictitious names so that their phony front groups had phony front groups that had names like Judicial Education Project and Honest Elections Project Action. But here is one that was somewhat significant, the Judicial Crisis Network, because Judicial Crisis Network took \$15 million checks, \$17 million checks and turned that money to TV ads to stop the confirmation of Justice Garland and to push through the confirmation of Justices Gorsuch, Kavanaugh, and Barrett. So dark money flows into all these other areas.

If you like climate denial, you love dark money. If you like voters having their votes suppressed by partisan legislators, you love dark money. And if you like a captured Court that dances to the tune of the dark money donors who stocked it, you love dark money. And that is before we even get to its pernicious, insidious, clandestine effect in our elections.

With that, I see that my time has expired and that Senator GRASSLEY is here for his time, so I yield the floor to my friend Senator GRASSLEY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). The Senator from Iowa.

FENTANYL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today, roughly 175 Americans will die from fentanyl poisoning. Many of them won't even know that they have taken the fentanyl. They will think they have taken Xanax for anxiety or oxycodone for pain. That is what Devin Anderson—you will see his picture here in a minute—of Shelby, IA, thought when he took a fentanyl pill marked like an oxy.

Devin had fought hard for his sobriety. He had enrolled in treatment and moved back home, but he was struggling with anxiety. To cope, he took a pill from a friend.

Devin's coworker came to pick him up for work in the early morning of February 24 of this year. Devin wasn't ready, so his coworker called him. When Devin didn't answer, he called again. Devin's 14-year-old brother heard the phone ringing. He went downstairs to investigate and found Devin unresponsive.

Devin was 23 years old when he died. His mom wants you to know that Devin was a kind person and he was loved by his friends.

In 2021, fentanyl killed more Americans between the ages of 18 and 45 than any other cause. That is more than COVID-19, cancer, and car accidents combined.

Six months ago, I stood where I am now and asked for a permanent solution for fentanyl scheduling. Today, we are absolutely no closer to a permanent solution than we were back then, 6 months ago.

While Congress has been waiting to take action, the cartels have not. The cartels have simply rebranded, coloring fentanyl like candy to addict America's children. Fentanyl is in our

schools, like in Blackwood, NJ, where a 12-year-old overdosed on a schoolbus after his uncle made him clean a fentanyl trap house; or in Chipman Junior High School in California, where a 13-year-old brought 150 fake Percocet pills laced with fentanyl, with 4 out of every 10 fake pills containing a potentially lethal dosage of fentanyl. Both of these schools are hours away from the Mexican border, but despite Customs and Border Protection's efforts, fentanyl has reached our children's hands.

So when the Vice President tells the press that our border is secure, we all know that is just plain wrong and irresponsible, and that attitude, that the border is secure, ends up killing.

In the Federal Government's absence, parents like Arletha and Robert Gilliam have been forced to fill the void. Their daughter Ciara died last month because of fentanyl. And you see Ciara right here. By all accounts, Ciara had a big heart. As her dad puts it, if you were in a bad mood, Ciara would make sure that that bad mood didn't last very long. Even though she had graduated from Iowa's Ankeny Centennial High School and lived on her own, she still FaceTimed her mom every day.

But on August 23 of this year, no one could get hold of Ciara, so her grandparents drove by her house. Her car was in the driveway. Ciara's grandparents knocked, both on her doors and her windows, with no response. Finally, Ciara's grandpa crawled through her bedroom window. There, he found her dead on her bedroom floor. Fentanyl shut down her organs, and she went to sleep. She never woke up again. She was only 22 years old.

Ciara's parents are now searching for answers they never should have had to find in the first place. They have offered a \$50,000 award to locate the dealer who supplied the fake pill that killed their daughter. They deserve better than that. They deserve congressional action, and they deserved it in 2017 when the DEA, the Drug Enforcement Administration, first scheduled fentanyl.

Grieving parents are the unsung heroes in the fight against fentanyl. Time after time, they push through their heartbreaks to share their stories, as you have heard me tell for two families, and now they demand action so that more kids don't die. It is time for Congress to match the efforts of those parents.

The Department of Justice has been very clear:

The permanent scheduling of FRS is critical to the safety and health of our communities and class-wide scheduling provides a vital tool to combat overdose deaths in [America].

End of quote from the Department of Justice.

For those whom we have lost, like Ciara and Devin, and for the countless lives that we will save if we take action, it is time that we give them the

tool they need, and that is the scheduling of fentanyl—and on a permanent, long-term basis.

COMBATING VIOLENT AND DANGEROUS CRIME
ACT

Mr. President, on another subject—and a shorter subject for anybody waiting to talk—it is dangerous to live in many places in America, especially in blue cities. Like inflation, violent crime remains very high. For example, compared to 2019 midyear figures, America's largest cities have seen a 50-percent increase in murders and a 36-percent increase in aggravated assaults. And it is no mystery what is causing this spike in crime. Blue city progressive, pro-criminal prosecutors and radical bail reform laws fuel this spike, a spike in violent crime, by letting dangerous, repeat criminals go unpunished and, in some cases, even uncharged.

The recent tragedies in Memphis, TN, earlier this month underscore the dangers that families face at the hands of chronic criminals. And remember the words “chronic criminals” because the fact is that the majority of violent crimes are committed by a relative handful of repeat offenders like the two in Memphis. For example, criminals in Chicago charged with shootings and murders have, on average, 12 prior arrests. In Oakland, CA, only around 400 people, or just one-tenth of 1 percent of Oakland's population, were responsible for a majority of the city's murders. Now, just think, one-tenth of 1 percent of the population of that city is responsible for a majority of the murders in Oakland.

Federal law enforcement has a unique and very vital role in targeting repeat violent criminals, but for the last 2 years, the Senate's ability to actually pass bills that expand criminal law to reduce violent crime and target repeat violent criminals has hit a brick wall. It is just impossible to get any consensus even though we all know it is a very major problem.

In July, as part of my effort to promote a solution to this problem of major crime caused by a very small number of people in each community, I introduced a bill that I entitled “Combating Violent and Dangerous Crime,” which is cosponsored by 26 of my Republican colleagues in the Senate. The House companion bill was introduced September 15, with seven Republican cosponsors.

The bill has seven simple solutions that will help to reverse this violent crime spike by putting dangerous criminals in jail and keeping them there. These commonsense solutions will fix real problems and bring immediate relief and increased safety to communities plagued by the scourge of violent crime.

Given the unprecedented increase in murders, we can and we should make it easier to prosecute murders. This bill will do that.

Mr. President, 2021 was the deadliest year to be a law enforcement officer

since 9/11. We should make it easier to prosecute people who attack law enforcement. This bill will do that.

Carjackings are way up nationwide—200, 300, and even 400 percent in some cities. We should deter carjacking with sufficient sentences. This bill will do that.

Dangerous drugs are being marketed to young people as colorful candy—I just spoke about that—and these children are dying from overdoses. We should make it so that no children die from fentanyl made to look like candy. This bill will do that.

Bank robbery, kidnapping—the list of violent crimes that would be strengthened by this bill goes on and on.

I stand ready to work with Democrats who want to provide relief to their constituents from this crime-wave. So if any of them are open to any of these provisions, I want them to know that I am ready to work with them. Let's partner together to make the American people safer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

INFLATION

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, over the past week, Americans were hit once again with a grave inflation report. Worse, the American people got more evidence of just how out of touch the White House and congressional Democrats are with the damage inflation is doing to families across the country.

We were all hoping President Biden's crushing inflation might show signs of easing and give folks a chance to catch their breath after months and months of watching their paychecks shrink. That is not what happened at all. Inflation is up 8.3 percent from a year ago—a disastrous number.

We are feeling the inflation in every aspect of our lives, from paying utility bills to gassing up cars, to rent and insurance, and, especially, to the basics like food. Grocery prices are up 13.5 percent from this time last year, which is a crushing blow to most Americans who visit their local store once a week, like I do. Milk is up 17 percent. Bread and chicken are up 16 percent. Eggs are up an outrageous 40 percent. And the list goes on and on.

I do my own shopping for my family, and I see this weekly, and it is incredible. This is a reality, but President Biden appears to be living in a very, very different reality. When the latest bad inflation numbers were released last week, the President and Washington Democrats threw a party on the White House lawn. That is right, a party—a lawn party. The President and Democrats celebrated as the rest of us watched the Dow plummet and received an inflation report confirming that this is the worst year for food and electricity inflation since the fallout from President Jimmy Carter.

What exactly did they celebrate? Their latest reckless, Big Government spending bill.

I don't have to remind you that, just over a year ago, the Democrats rammed through their \$2 trillion spending spree despite economists warning that it would be a catalyst for rampant inflation. Economists warned us then, and they are warning us now, about the misnamed Inflation Reduction Act; namely, that it won't do anything to ease inflation, but it will certainly add to the deficit.

Apparently, hosting a big party is preferable than heeding these non-partisan warnings and getting to work to get our Nation back on the right track.

When the “Inflation Act” was on the floor, Republicans tried countless times to adopt solutions to tackle inflation, crime, and secure our border. But our efforts were consistently shut down because not one Senate Democrat could spare a penny from the Green New Deal. No, they have their own priorities, and they are awfully out of touch with the priorities of American families.

On Sunday, we were given more evidence that the President is living in a completely different world than the rest of us. The President appeared on “60 Minutes,” where he discussed several challenges currently facing our Nation, only, according to him, our Nation is doing swell. And indeed, the President seemed to paint a rosy picture of little to no inflation and suggested we should be relieved by the new inflation numbers.

When asked what he could do better and faster to help Americans get some relief at the grocery store checkout line, he claimed inflation was up “hardly at all.”

“Hardly at all”? Say that to parents paying 40 percent more for a dozen of eggs just to feed their children breakfast. Say that to workers who are watching their savings dwindle month after month because their paychecks can't keep up with these prices. Say that to the Americans who are just barely getting by in this economy.

President Biden, you may not have to visit the grocery store or pay an electricity bill, but my constituents do.

Time and time again, the President and his allies in Congress have proven he is out of touch with American priorities and in denial about the real suffering and fears of the American people. They are right to question whether they can still afford the leadership they are getting out of the White House and the Democrat-led Congress.

It is high time for the President and Democrats to align their priorities with those of the people, allow real solutions to be considered on the Senate floor, and get out our economy back on its feet.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I think you all might remember when the Biden administration's so-called

experts claimed that inflation was “transitory.” It ended up that they couldn’t have been more wrong by using that word.

Since President Biden took office, Iowans have seen prices rise 13.7 percent. That adds an extra \$666 to their monthly budget. Couple that with falling real wages, and Iowans have been strapped very thin.

This combination of rising prices and falling real wages has hit rural Iowa communities particularly hard. As a result, according to a report issued by Iowa State University, the disposable income of rural Iowans fell 33 percent over the past 12 months alone. It is no wonder, then, that the high cost of living is the number one concern that I hear about from Iowans as I travel all of our 99 counties.

However, here in DC—and remember, DC is an island surrounded by reality—here in this town, the primary concern of President Biden and congressional Democrats has been enacting their very partisan agenda.

They have refused to work with Republicans on sensible policies to tame inflation and provide targeted relief. In the process of doing that, they haven’t even followed the advice of their own brethren. And I will use Larry Summers as an example, that Harvard professor and former Secretary of Treasury. He said, way back in January, before this President was sworn in, that the economy was turned around: Don’t spend any more money or you are going to have inflation.

And, immediately, within 60 days of being in office, this new President and this new Congress passed a \$2 trillion appropriations bill to feed the fires of inflation.

So instead of taming inflation, they rebranded the reckless tax-and-spending spree that they had pursued for more than a year as a bill recently passed called the Inflation Reduction Act, which I call the “Inflation Enhancement Act”—never mind that outside experts uniformly concluded the bill’s hodgepodge of the Green New Deal and the subsidies that go with that program and the tax hikes would do nothing to address inflation today.

Of course, if you want to stop inflation, now caused by excessive government spending, the first thing you should do is stop spending; or another way you can say it—and common sense dictates this: When you are in a hole, quit digging.

Instead, Democrats doubled down with Big Government spending and coupled it with job-killing tax hikes. The National Association of Manufacturers said they would lose about 217,000 jobs. Democrats’ policy decisions made even less sense given that, only a week before, we learned our economy had shrunk for two straight quarters, indicating recession.

And everyone knows, as President Obama once said—and this seems to be the third term of the Obama Presidency, but this is what he said when he was actually President:

The last thing you want to do is to raise taxes in the middle of a recession.

And yet it was done in that bill in August by more than \$300 billion. The last thing our economy needed was another tax-and-spending spree, but Democrats just couldn’t let go of their wish list.

What is more, at the height of hypocrisy, Democrats touted the Inflation Reduction Act as an example of fiscal responsibility. Yet the supposed savings they claim will result from the bill was then immediately dwarfed in just 1 day of actions by President Biden’s unilateral student loan announcement, which will cost American taxpayers at least \$500 billion. And some people are saying it could cost up to \$1 trillion.

When President Biden announced that he was wiping out \$10,000 to \$20,000 of student loan debt for people making as much as \$150,000 or \$250,000 for households, that likely illegal action will send the bill for this student loan giveaway to Americans who did not attend college or people who graduated from college already paying off their college expenses. And at the same time, it is going to fuel the fires of inflation.

So much, then, for the lip service about deficit reduction and inflation. But we now know that that inflation was not transitory. It is persistent. Iowans are sick and tired of paying the price for the failures of this Biden economy.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to discuss how consumers are paying more for less reliable energy as a result of the policies of the Biden administration and congressional Democrats. North Dakotans are paying 60 percent more for gasoline since January of 2021, and diesel remains at nearly \$5 a gallon.

Prices are high because we have a supply problem. Our friends and allies in Europe are facing an even worse supply crisis, and unless the Biden administration changes its approach, American families and businesses will continue to face these inflationary pressures.

Fortunately, the solution is clear. More energy supply means consumers pay less. More supply is what helps us get prices under control, get inflation under control, and consumers relief.

In 2019, the United States was producing nearly 13 million barrels of oil a day. Today, that production is down at about 11.8 million barrels a day. That is because the policies of the Demo-

crats in Congress and the Biden administration include blocking energy production on Federal lands, and that is curtailing supply. Our vast supply of taxpayer-owned oil, gas, and coal resources on Federal lands are a national strategic asset. Yet President Biden and his “keep it in the ground” allies treat our NG reserves as a liability.

Recent analysis by the Wall Street Journal shows that the Biden administration leased only 130,000 acres for new oil and gas production in the first 19 months of this administration. Let me repeat that number. The Biden administration has only leased 130,000 acres for new oil and gas production in its first 19 months. For comparison, President Reagan leased 47.6 million acres during the same time period. The Biden administration, in just under 2 years, leased 130,000 acres. The Reagan administration leased 47.6 million acres during the same amount of time.

That is the point. We need to take the handcuffs off our producers if we are going to produce more energy here at home. And nobody produces energy better, more cost effectively, more dependably, and with better environmental stewardship than America. We do the best job of anybody in the world. New energy leases are needed to grow oil production and supplies for the long-term, otherwise production will continue to fall, and that means higher energy costs for our consumers.

Instead of defending previously held lease sales, the Biden administration is relying on litigation from environmental allies to block permits needed for energy development. That only further increases our reliance on adversaries like Russia, Iran, and Venezuela, countries with little or no regard for environmental stewardship or human rights. They are our adversaries. How in the world can we put ourselves subject to their energy production? Energy production is part of national security. Energy security is national security.

Natural gas prices also remain high and families are being hit with higher utility bills. Electricity prices are up nearly 16 percent compared to last year. As we approach the winter months, natural gas bills are up 33 percent over the same period, and with winter coming on, they are going to go up more.

The Biden administration’s policies are undermining our energy security, and because the cost of energy is built into our entire economy, inflation has been driven to record heights. Everything you buy has an energy component in it. When energy costs go up because the administration won’t let us produce more here at home, it causes inflation in everything you buy—everything you buy, not just at the gas station but in the grocery store or anywhere else because of the energy component.

Despite these challenges, President Biden and congressional Democrats doubled down by passing their partisan

tax-and-spend bill that will make it more expensive to produce energy in the United States. The bill includes a new tax on natural gas. That doesn't make energy cheaper; that makes it more expensive. The bill includes a new tax on natural gas and also makes oil and gas production on Federal lands more expensive through higher fees and royalty rates. So they are driving up the cost of energy.

In addition to levying \$739 billion in new taxes on hard-working families, the bill was loaded with \$370 billion in Green New Deal spending. Instead of tax hikes and wasteful spending, President Biden needs to take the handcuffs off our domestic energy production. Instead of higher taxes and fees, more mandates, and less energy development, we need to take the handcuffs off our domestic energy producers to lower energy costs and help reduce the burden of inflation, which harms every American but particularly those low-income Americans who are struggling with the higher cost of everything from putting food on the table to gas at the pump, to anything and everything they buy. We need to change this policy direction, and it needs to happen now.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

The Senator from Wyoming.

INFLATION

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor today to talk about the Biden economic crisis that the American people are facing every day.

Last week, Democrats threw a big party at the White House; even Hollywood celebrities flew in to celebrate. If you take a look at what was going on, on the split-screen television all across the country, they saw Democrats celebrating and the stock market collapsing; people's savings, retirements evaporating; Democrats dancing.

It was the worst day on Wall Street since the pandemic, and by the time the party at the White House was over, \$1.6 trillion was erased from the value of those who hold American stocks.

So why did this happen? The reason that this happened was because just hours earlier the world found out that inflation in America went up once again.

Prices people have to pay for things are up more than 13 percent since the day Joe Biden took office. Costs which economists predicted would go down last month, actually went up instead.

Well, the economists made a prediction, but the American people know what they are facing every day when they go to the grocery store, pay their rent, pay their energy bills, try to buy back-to-school supplies for their kids.

Inflation is now going up after the Democrats passed a reckless tax-and-spending bill. This is nothing to celebrate even though they were down at the White House celebrating. The American people aren't celebrating; they are suffering. They are suffering the worst inflation in over 40 years.

Prices have risen faster than wages for 17 consecutive months—17 months in a row, prices rising faster than wages. With each passing month, the American people can afford less and less. Now people have cut into their savings, borrowed money, just to get by.

Credit card debt is climbing. Reports across the Nation are more and more people are buying on layaway. People on fixed incomes cannot keep up; they are falling further behind. And it is no wonder then that many seniors are delaying their retirements.

Rising costs are hitting our troops. Right now, our troops are watching their paychecks disappear, melt away. According to a recent report, the Army is now recommending our troops sign up for food stamps.

The U.S. Army—can you imagine such a thing?—is recommending troops sign up for food stamps. After the deadly and disgraceful evacuation of Afghanistan, people knew Joe Biden had very little respect for our men and women in uniform. What we are seeing today is a national failure by Joe Biden and the Democrats. Our heroes in uniform should not have to rely on welfare in order for them to serve the Nation.

Our soldiers should not have to find themselves in a battle against Joe Biden's inflation.

Now, the U.S. Senate still hasn't passed a defense bill this year. We are waiting to go. Senator SCHUMER says, well, we will do that next month. It just shows that Democrats do not prioritize our national defense. It always goes to the bottom of the list—leave it for last. Democrats have other priorities like their James Taylor concert last week at the White House on the lawn.

Democrats have been too busy paying off the climate activists to pay our troops. The Senate ought to get to work on a defense bill immediately. We should ensure that our troops, whether they are serving at F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming, Luke Air Force Base in Arizona, or Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada, or Buckley Space Force Base in Colorado, that they get a raise so they won't further be hurt by Joe Biden's inflation.

Now, many Democrats seem oblivious to the pain and suffering that they have caused American families. When Joe Biden took office, inflation was essentially nonexistent. A gallon of gas was \$2.39. In today's prices, it is almost \$3.70 a gallon, higher in States like Nevada, Washington State, and others.

When Joe Biden took office, economists were predicting an economic boom. Now our economy continues to shrink, and just in a matter of months,

Joe Biden took us from recovery to recession.

And recovery right now is nowhere in sight. Consumer confidence is worse today than it was during the lockdowns of 2020, hard to believe but true. This summer, we saw the lowest consumer confidence ever recorded in the history of polling for these sorts of things.

Families feel very stressed about the future, and prices continue to climb. Now, ultimately, this means that we are going to have layoffs at a time when people are running out of savings.

A poll last week showed that people across the country are cutting back on spending on just about everything just to keep up, just to avoid falling further and further behind. Some are cutting back on groceries. Some are growing their own, trying to grow their own food instead of going to the grocery store.

At the same time, the Federal Reserve is getting ready to raise interest rates again, maybe as soon as today.

This year, we have already seen the largest rate hikes in 40 years. Rates are going higher and higher and higher as the Democrat-caused inflation wildfire continues to burn.

There is no end in sight and no relief for the pain being caused to American families. Mortgage rates have almost doubled this year. They are the highest they have been since the great recession, and they are going to go even higher.

At the same time, mortgage applications have dropped significantly. More and more people are giving up on the American dream of even owning their own home. To make matters worse, it doesn't look like interest rates are coming down any time soon.

You know, it is very easy to cause inflation, very difficult to get rid of. Last March, Joe Biden caused inflation with the stroke of a pen on a bill that every Democrat in this body voted for, and working families all across the country have suffered ever since.

Interest rate hikes are designed to slow down the economy. And yet we have an economy that is already shrinking, and they want to slow it down some more. It shrank for the first 6 months of this year. That has always been the definition of a recession. The administration is even trying to redefine recession while we are in the middle of one because they don't want to own it, but they do.

The pain and suffering that people are being subjected to has no end in sight, and the policies of this President and the policies of the Democrats who have all voted for it—every one of them—have brought us inflation and recession.

The wealthy elites that run the Democratic Party are doing just fine. It is the hard-working men and women all across the country who are suffering. Republicans are committed to help lower prices for working men and women all around America.

Certainly, in my State of Wyoming, it is a major concern, major discussion. It is what I hear about. What I heard about Friday at our Victoria's football game and the tailgate party is what things cost, trying to just stay ahead, trying to keep ahead, trying to fall less far behind.

We are committed to getting the economy back on track. It is time for the Democrats to get their priorities straight. We need to pass a defense bill to take care of our troops. We need to stop the reckless spending and the tax hikes.

These are the policies that have caused the cost of everyday items to continue to go up. The Democrats need to stop strangling American energy. That is what is driving up the price, not just at the pump but electric bills, home heating, natural gas, all of the things that the American people need and want, energy that is affordable, available, and reliable.

The American people deserve much better than what we have been getting from the Democrats, and the Democrats—let me point out—are in full control of the House, the Senate, and the White House.

It is their policies and their positions that brought us 40-year high inflation, food going up faster and faster, 13 percent inflation since the day Joe Biden and the Democrats took over. It is time for a change.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

AMENDMENT NO. 5518

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I call up my amendment No. 5518 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Alaska [Mr. SULLIVAN], for himself and Mr. LEE, proposes an amendment numbered 5518 to the resolution of ratification to Treaty Document No. 117-1.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To ensure that the People's Republic of China is not treated as a developing country)

In section 1, in the section heading, strike "DECLARATION" and insert "DECLARATIONS AND A CONDITION".

In section 1, strike "declaration of section 2" and insert "declarations of section 2 and the condition of section 3".

In section 2, in the section heading, strike "DECLARATION" and insert "DECLARATIONS".

In section 2, strike "following declaration" and all that follows through the period at the end and insert the following: "following declarations:

(1) The Kigali amendment is not self-executing.

(2) The People's Republic of China is not a developing country, and the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations should not treat the People's Republic of China as such.

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 3. CONDITION.

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following condition: Prior to the Thirty-Fifth Meeting

of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, the Secretary of State shall transmit to the Secretariat of the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer a proposal to amend Decision 1/12E, "Clarification of terms and definitions: developing countries," made at the First Meeting of the Parties, to remove the People's Republic of China.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, about 4 years ago, I was part of a meeting with several Senators—there were about 11 of us—here in the U.S. Capitol with the Chinese Ambassador. And in the meeting, I had raised a number of issues about the lack of reciprocity that China has with regard to the United States: market access on our trade; their ability to invest here but we couldn't invest there; the fact that they have all kinds of journalists in America and we can't have journalists over there—just across the board on so many things—Confucius Institutes in American universities, no equivalent in Chinese universities. No reciprocity on so many topics.

And I will never forget the response of the Chinese Ambassador to the United States. With 11 U.S. Senators right there, he said: Well, Senator, I agree there is a lack of reciprocity in a number of areas, but that is because China is a developing country.

China is a developing country. That is what he said just 4 years ago. And my response was: Mr. Ambassador, with all due respect, can you please stop using that talking point about your country being a developing country? It is kind of an insult to all of our intelligence. And to be honest, you are not a developing country. The American people know it; the world knows it; and you need to stop telling everybody and using that as a crutch.

What does that have to do with the amendment that I just called up?

Well, today, before we vote on the Kigali treaty, I have an amendment that I am asking all of my colleagues here in the Senate to support. I am not talking about the merits of the Kigali treaty itself. There is an element of this treaty that raises a principle that is at stake right now that is so important with regard to China, the United States, and the rest of the world.

This treaty that we are getting ready to vote on continues to classify China as a "developing country."

Why does that matter?

Well, as I mentioned, it is a facade. China is not a developing country; it is the second largest economy in the world. It is one of the most industrialized countries in the world. It has one of the biggest militaries in the world. The World Bank even now considers China an upper middle income country.

But what China keeps trying to do in international organizations and in international treaties is continue to get the same benefits as truly developing countries, such as Ghana, Somalia, Nigeria, Bangladesh. These are the countries that need global assistance, not China.

So my amendment today is very simple to this treaty. It first says that the U.S. Senate concludes:

The People's Republic of China is not a developing country, and the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations should not treat the People's Republic of China as such.

And then my amendment goes one step further, and it makes the advice and consent of the Senate for this treaty contingent upon the Secretary of State of the United States going to the U.N. and the Vienna Convention Secretariat to file an amendment to the treaty that clarifies that China should be taken off the annex that defines it as a developing country.

So we have a declaration—China is not a developing country—and then it says to the Secretary of State, before you get the advice and consent of the U.S. Senate, you shall go to the U.N. and file an instrument that says China should be removed from the list of countries to this treaty that are called developing countries.

And, again, this matters. This matters, for example, on this treaty.

Why?

Because in this treaty, the developing country annex gives those countries under that annex much longer time to implement the treaty, and it actually gives them funding from the U.N. to implement the treaty.

Now, where does that funding come from?

Most of it comes from the United States. So, in essence, right now, the way the treaty is organized, the United States gives the U.N. money to help implement the treaty, and a lot of that money is going to go to China.

Does anyone in the U.S. Senate think that makes sense? Does anyone in America think that that makes sense?

It does not.

Furthermore, on this treaty and on so many other international agreements, whether at the U.N. or other places, when you give China more time for implementation, particularly as it relates to the global environment, all you are doing is harming the global environment.

China is a developed country. China is an industrialized country. The U.S. Senate, the international organizations where China is a member, need to start recognizing this.

So I am proud to say I worked closely with Senator BARRASSO and Senator LEE on this amendment. I actually wish it were stronger.

Senator BARRASSO was here on the floor, talking about his amendment. I actually think that is the preferred way to go, but we couldn't get agreement in terms of the Barrasso amendment, so I am encouraging all of my colleagues to vote on this principle: The U.S. Senate, on any international agreement or any international treaty, should no longer agree to the obvious. China is not a developing country; it is an industrialized country, and we should make clear in the Senate and in

international organizations that that is the view of the United States, and we need to encourage the Secretary of State, which is exactly what my amendment does, to make sure the U.N. and other countries agree with us on that.

I encourage all of my colleagues to vote yes on this amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to conclude my comments before the vote.

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I rise today to once again urge my Senate colleagues to take the bipartisan, practical pro-manufacturing step of providing advice and consent to ratifying the Kigali Amendment.

Each of the four previous amendments to this treaty, the Montreal Protocol, have enjoyed overwhelming bipartisan support in the Senate, and Kigali should be no different.

Our companies are clear. They want us to approve this treaty so that they can maximize their export potential of cutting-edge chemicals that they have pioneered. They want us to approve the treaty. It will generate billions of dollars in economic activity and create thousands of jobs here at home in the United States.

They are also clear that if we fail to ratify, they stand to lose. They will be locked out of export markets in key products. American workers will suffer, which is why the National Association of Manufacturers, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and impacted industries all support the action we are prepared to take.

Now, I have heard the concerns that some colleagues have raised about China and how it benefits from its antiquated status as a “developing country” under the Montreal Protocol. Frankly, it is a fair point to raise, but it should have no bearing on whether we join Kigali.

The simple fact is, whether we join Kigali or not has no impact on whether China is treated as a developing country—none. On the other hand, ratifying Kigali will have a major positive benefit for us because China has doubled down on yesterday’s chemicals, and we, the United States, lead on all the alternatives. Joining Kigali will turn the world away from China and its companies and towards our competitive strength. It is good for the United States and our businesses, and it is bad for China. However, I also recognize the plain fact that China is no longer a developing country, and I agree that it should not enjoy advantages under the Montreal Protocol that it received because of decisions made more than 30 years ago.

I have been a steadfast champion of addressing the challenges China presents as they are, not as we hope for

them to be. I led passage of the Strategic Competition Act and my Taiwan Policy Act, which was recently voted out of the Foreign Relations Committee on an overwhelming bipartisan basis. So I have no problem acknowledging that China should no longer qualify as a developing country, and for that reason, I support the Lee-Sullivan amendment.

The Senate’s constitutional role on treaties is both unique and vital. What we are doing today will directly, positively—if we adopt ratification—impact American workers, American businesses, and American consumers. It will meet our challenge against China. It will create greater security at home. It will create great prosperity. There are few things that we do in the Senate that can improve our economy, create jobs, and meet the challenge of China in this one dimension.

For all of those reasons, I urge my colleagues to support providing advice and consent for the Kigali Amendment after the Sullivan amendment is considered.

TREATY DOCUMENT NO. 117-1

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, as the current ranking member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works—EPW—Committee, I submit these comments to provide the Senate with additional information on the existing domestic authority to phasedown the production and consumption of hydrofluorocarbons, HFCs. The EPW Committee has jurisdiction over air pollution, and in the 116th Congress, managed the development of the domestic authority to implement the Kigali Amendment. See 218 Cong. Rec. S7926, daily ed. Dec. 21, 2020, statement of then-EPW Chairman JOHN BARRASSO, then-EPW Ranking Member TOM CARPER, and Sen. JOHN KENNEDY).

As the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations clearly states in Senate Executive Report 117-2, no further legislation is required to implement the Kigali Amendment and the Amendment is not self-executing. New authority is not granted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency—EPA—through ratification.

In section 103 in division S of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, the American Innovation and Manufacturing—AIM—Act of 2020, P.L. 116-260, was enacted. That law established a new, national program administered by the EPA to phasedown the production and consumption of certain HFC substances due to their significant global warming potential. Specifically, the AIM Act requires the EPA to implement an 85 percent phasedown of the production and consumption of regulated HFC substances, requiring levels to reach approximately 15 percent of their 2011–2013 average annual levels by 2036.

The AIM Act provides all the necessary authorities to phasedown the production and consumption of HFCs

in the United States in line with U.S. obligations under the Kigali Amendment and is already being implemented by the EPA. In October 2021, the EPA issued a final rule establishing the allowance allocation for 2022 and 2023, along with establishing a trading program for HFCs. 86 Fed. Reg. 55,116, Oct. 5, 2021. As stated in that final agency action, the Kigali Amendment and the AIM Act have “a nearly identical list of HFCs to be phased down following the same schedule.” Id. at 55,124. The EPA is currently developing regulations to update allowance allocations and the trading program for 2024 and later years.

I thank my colleagues at the U.S. Senate committee on Foreign Relations for providing a clear Congressional statement that no new legislation is required and that the Kigali Amendment is not self-executing. As Congress has already enacted the required domestic implementing legislation, I support ratification.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays on the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays are ordered.

Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

AMENDMENT WITHDRAWN

Under the previous order, amendment No. 5503 is withdrawn.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 5518

The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 5518.

The yeas and nays have been previously ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant 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 Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH).

The result was announced—yeas 96, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 342 Ex.]

YEAS—96

Barrasso	Cornyn	Hickenlooper
Bennet	Cortez Masto	Hirono
Blackburn	Cotton	Hoey
Blumenthal	Cramer	Hyde-Smith
Blunt	Cruz	Inhofe
Booker	Daines	Johnson
Boozman	Duckworth	Kaine
Braun	Durbin	Kelly
Brown	Ernst	Kennedy
Burr	Feinstein	King
Cantwell	Fischer	Klobuchar
Capito	Gillibrand	Lankford
Cardin	Graham	Lee
Carper	Grassley	Lujan
Casey	Hagerty	Lummis
Cassidy	Hassan	Manchin
Collins	Hawley	Markey
Coons	Heinrich	Marshall