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No. 156

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 28, 2022, at 12 p.m.

Senate

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2022

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, a Senator from the State of Connecticut.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, who daily showers us with blessings, open our eyes to the generosity of Your grace.

Lord, help us to see in the beauty and bounty that surround us the movements of Your loving providence.

Remind our lawmakers of their responsibility to use Your blessings to make a better nation and world. Help them to understand that to whom much is given, much is expected. Lord, give our Senators the wisdom to release their control and ask You to take charge, guiding their steps by Your power.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication

to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 27, 2022.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, a Senator from the State of Connecticut, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. MURPHY thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

AFFORDABLE INSULIN NOW ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED—Resumed

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 6833, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows: Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 389, H.R. 6833, a bill to amend title XXVII of the

Public Health Service Act, the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to establish requirements with respect to cost-sharing for certain insulin products, and for other purposes.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, last night, our Democratic colleagues released a draft short-term government funding deal. Big parts of the draft are unobjectionable because they were negotiated across party lines. Both sides of the aisle want to prevent a government shutdown that no one wants. Both sides want to keep resources flowing to disaster-stricken communities. Both sides want to continue time-sensitive support for Ukraine.

But, unfortunately, our Democratic colleagues decided to put in extraneous partisan language—in fact, a poison pill. This extraneous poison pill is not related to keeping the government open. It was not negotiated across the aisle. In fact, both the Democratic chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Senator LEAHY, and the Republican vice chairman, Senator SHELBY, have stated publicly that this poison pill should not be in the underlying bill. The poison pill is a phony attempt to address the important topic of permitting reform.

It is much too difficult to build things in America and unleash American energy. Liberal regulations and redtape are a huge—huge—part of the problem. That is why Republicans are

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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the leaders on this issue. That is why my colleague Senator CAPITO has introduced a strong, robust package that would actually move the ball forward.

What our Democratic colleagues have produced is a phony figleaf that would actually set back the cause of real permitting reform. This is an issue where it should be very easy to improve upon the status quo, but, amazingly, our Democratic colleagues have managed to write language that would actually—listen to this—make things even worse.

Senator MANCHIN's bill goes out of its way to avoid actually amending the National Environmental Policy Act or any other environmental law. It layers new bureaucracy on top of existing bureaucracy. Its new requirements and deadlines are paper tigers with no enforcement.

The few parts of this legislation that would actually change the status quo would take things from bad to worse. For example, yesterday, a long list of State attorneys general wrote the Senate a panicked letter explaining that Senator MANCHIN's language would "eviscerate states' ability to chart their own land-use and energy policies."

"Eviscerate states' ability to chart their own land-use and energy policies."

Among other problems, they explain how this legislation creates a backdoor to sneak through an electricity grid takeover much like the Obama administration's unconstitutional so-called "Clean Power Plan."

These State-level officials are also sounding the alarm about higher costs for their citizens. They write the Manchin proposal could impose "potentially back-breaking costs on residents who may see no true energy benefit whatsoever."

Democrats' policies already have electricity costs skyrocketing at the fastest rate in more than 40 years. The last thing that struggling families need are more Democratic policies that raise utility bills even higher still.

This phony figleaf is "permitting reform" in name only. It was written to drain the political will for actual reform without creating any meaningful change that liberal special interests might actually dislike.

If tepid Democratic support for this phony figleaf is all that our colleague from West Virginia got in return for approving yet another taxing-and-spending spree during an inflation crisis, it is hard to imagine a worse bargain for a Senator or for the country.

So, if the Senate votes today on proceeding to a bill that has this partisan poison pill jammed into it, I will be voting no, and I would urge all my colleagues to vote no as well.

This all-Democratic government has a smooth and obvious path on government funding. The path is obvious. Drop the extraneous, partisan language and let the bipartisan CR move forward.

ELECTORAL COUNT ACT

Now, Mr. President, on an entirely different matter, this afternoon, those of us on the Rules Committee will mark up a bipartisan package of updates through the Electoral Count Act of 1887. I strongly support the modest changes that our colleagues in the working group have fleshed out after literally months of detailed discussions. I will proudly support the legislation, provided that nothing more than technical changes are made to its current form.

I particularly want to thank Senator COLLINS and Senators CAPITO, MURKOWSKI, PORTMAN, ROMNEY, SASSE, TILLIS, and YOUNG for their intense work with Democratic colleagues to get this right.

Congress's process for counting the Presidential electors' votes was written 135 years ago. The chaos that came to a head on January 6 of last year certainly underscored the need for an update, so did Januaries 2001, 2005, and 2017; in each of which, Democrats tried to challenge the lawful election of a Republican President. Obviously, in every case, our system of government won out. The Electoral Count Act ultimately produced the right conclusion: certainty, finality, and the transfer of power to the winning candidate. But it is clear the country needs a more predictable path to that outcome.

This bipartisan bill does not rashly replace current law with something untested. It keeps what has worked well and modestly updates what has not.

The bill's sponsors debated every provision and found bipartisan consensus. Bad ideas were left on the cutting room floor. The resulting product—this bill, as introduced—is the only chance to get an outcome and to actually make law.

Here is what the legislation does.

It raises the threshold for objecting to the electoral count—preserving options if something incredibly unlikely were to happen but ensuring claims with hardly any support can't paralyze the process. It makes the already plain fact of the 12th Amendment even clearer: that the Vice President has never had, and will never have, discretionary powers over the counting.

It protects States' primacy in appointing their electors but ensures they publicize rules actually before the election. It rejects unwise challenges like creating new causes of action that would leave every election up to the courts and create uncertainty. It makes modest technical updates to other pertinent laws such as the Presidential Transitions Act.

And Senator COLLINS' bill does all of those modest but important things without capitulating to our Democratic colleagues' obsession with a sweeping Federal takeover of all of our election law.

So I look forward to supporting the legislation as introduced in committee. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. 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.

(The remarks of Mr. DURBIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 4962 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

INFLATION REDUCTION ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, here is item No. 2.

For decades, Americans have paid the highest prices in the world for prescription drugs. On average, we pay nearly four times more than the people in Canada and other western nations for exactly the same drug. This price gouging by Big Pharma hurts Americans' health and their financial security.

I have stories sent to me from time to time from the people I represent, especially senior citizens, who tell me these sky-high prescription drug prices force them to choose between medications and other basic necessities like food and shelter. Phillip has one of those stories.

Phillip lives in a small town south of Chicago. He is 73 years old and is a diabetic. After having several heart and back surgeries, he can't work any longer. He takes several medications regularly. Now, you are going to recognize the name of one of them. It is called Trulicity—if you watch TV, you have heard that one—a noninsulin treatment that he uses to control his blood sugar and manage his diabetes, Trulicity.

Do you know the 1-month prescription cost for Trulicity? It is \$2,000.

So what does Phillip do, who can't work and has a fixed income? He tries to cut the pills in half to make his prescription last longer. Sometimes he just skips the medication altogether.

He is not alone. One in five Americans does not take the medications as prescribed because they are too expensive. In Phillip's case, even that isn't enough. At the end of the day, he had to refinance his home—what a time to do it, huh, with the interest rates?—because here in America, for too long, we have found it acceptable to allow pharmaceutical companies to charge what they wish. Not anymore.

We pressed for decades—both Democrats and Republicans gave these speeches; this was not just a Democratic issue—to lower prescription drug prices, at least for seniors. Last month, we did it right here on the floor of the Senate. The Inflation Reduction Act, which Congress passed without a single Republican vote, is delivering real relief now for families who are struggling with high prices.

A few minutes ago, the Republican leader was on the floor, telling us what a terrible bill that was, the Inflation Reduction Act. He didn't mention the

fact that it is going to do some remarkable things. It makes historic investments to address the climate crisis. That is one thing. It includes investments in renewable, affordable energy sources. That is certainly needed. These investments in renewable energy can save families hundreds of dollars a year in energy costs. That is real relief.

Just as an aside, last month, my wife and I decided to put solar panels on our home in Springfield, IL. We are not the first in our town, but we are certainly the first in our neighborhood. They predicted it will reduce our electric bill by 85 percent a month. Think about your own electric bill and what that would mean: money in hand.

There are tax credits to put on solar panels. How did we achieve that and put tax credits in for heat pumps and electric water heaters? We put it in the Inflation Reduction Act, which Senator MCCONNELL just came to the floor and said was a terrible bill. I think you are going to see more and more Americans making the choice our family made. I think they should.

The Inflation Reduction Act is also going to lower healthcare costs—one of the biggest items in every family's budget. First, it will begin to let Medicare negotiate fair prices for medications used by seniors.

Is that a radical idea, that a Federal Agency, on behalf of the people it serves, negotiates for lower drug prices? It is an idea that has been at work in the Veterans Health Administration for years. The VA, our VA, in serving our veterans—the men and women who serve this country—pays, on average, half of what Medicare pays for exactly the same drugs now because the VA could negotiate and Medicare could not.

The bill which Senator MCCONNELL took exception to now gives Medicare the power to negotiate lower prices for seniors, and 83 percent of Americans think that is a pretty good idea. How do we get 83 percent of Americans to agree on anything? They agree on that, as that is a good idea, and 71 percent of the people are from the party of the Senator from Kentucky.

Second, the Inflation Reduction Act will cap the price Medicare recipients pay for insulin—insulin: \$35 a month for Medicare recipients. That is the limit—and it limits seniors' out-of-pocket expenses for all medications to \$2,000 a year. Remember Phil? Phil was paying \$2,000 a month for Trulicity. Under this bill, which we passed here a month ago without a single vote from the other side of the aisle, we are going to limit seniors' responsibility under Medicare for prescription drugs to \$2,000 a year.

By the way, I believe we should cap the cost of insulin at \$35 a month for everybody, not just seniors. Guess what radical nation—what socialist nation—does that? Canada. Canada does it. Pharmaceutical companies still make a healthy profit. They just don't make a killing on a lifesaving drug.

Third, the Inflation Reduction Act will curb the outrageous cost increases that Medicare beneficiaries pay for medications. It does that by tying prescription drug price increases to the cost of living. Pharmaceutical companies that raise their prices faster are going to pay a penalty if they do. The days of Big Pharma raising prices they charge seniors at 5 or 10 times the rate of inflation are over.

Of course, the pharmaceutical giants and their lobbyists fought us every step of the way. They said: If you put limits on the prices we can charge, then we are going to have to cut our research.

Guess what they didn't tell you and what our colleagues on the other side of the aisle did not admit: It isn't true. Studies have found that Big Pharma could lose \$1 trillion in sales over the next decade, and it would still remain the most profitable industry in America. By the way, did you know these pharmaceutical companies spend more money on advertising and marketing than they do on research?

Point 2, did you know that the research that they are using is based on research that was started at the National Institutes of Health at the expense of American taxpayers? I am all for the National Institutes of Health. They use what the NIH develops to make new drugs. It is a good thing to do, and they are very profitable as they do it, so I don't want to hear that they can charge less and that they are not going to be able to survive. I don't believe it.

It is not only seniors who will save on healthcare costs. More than 14 million Americans who receive their health coverage through the Affordable Care Act marketplace will save hundreds—even thousands—of dollars on their monthly insurance premiums because of the Inflation Reduction Act.

Under the American Rescue Plan, we lowered monthly premiums for middle-income families and for those with ACA health plans. The Inflation Reduction Act will continue this for another 3 years, and I hope I am here to renew it. No one should go without medical care ever but especially not while we are fighting a worldwide pandemic.

Not only did our Republican colleagues vote against what I just described to you, lowering monthly premiums for families nationwide, but they went further and tried in every way they could think to gut the Affordable Care Act.

Two weeks ago, a Federal judge in the Northern District of Texas ruled that the Affordable Care Act's requirement that health plans offer free preventive health services, like vaccinations, was unconstitutional. In 2020, because of the ACA, 152 million Americans received these preventive health services, with no out-of-pocket cost, often resulting in the early detection of cancer, heart disease, and other serious conditions.

Now a group of Texas residents and businesses argues that that just vio-

lates their basic religious liberty—religious liberty. They picked a judge who has been friendly to them in the past. This same judge in northern Texas ruled that the Affordable Care Act was unconstitutional. That was overturned by the Supreme Court. Thank goodness.

It has been 12 years since the ACA became law. It is long past time for both parties to support this effort which provides health insurance for millions of Americans at an affordable cost. We need to bring down the cost of healthcare and prescription drugs for all American families.

The last item of good news comes from a blog that I read rather religiously by a lady in Maine, Heather Cox Richardson. Almost every day, she publishes a column for those who want to read it. I don't know if there is a subscription cost. She asks from time to time if you want to contribute to her effort. I do.

Well, today's is one that, I think, is worth reading and remembering.

She says:

A headline in The New York Times today read: "Factory Jobs Are Booming Like It's the 1970s." The story explained that more money in the hands of consumers thanks to Federal stimulus spending, along with a new skepticism of stretched supply lines, has created a rebound in American manufacturing.

Since the 1970s . . . outsourcing and automation have meant that every recession has seen factory jobs disappear [in America] and never return.

Well, there is good news. We now know that we have not only regained all of the manufacturing jobs lost during the pandemic, we have added 67,000 more.

Those numbers would be higher if the labor market weren't so tight, a condition leading employers to offer higher wages and better benefits.

The other point she makes is one that the National Economic Council Director, Brian Deese, told reporters: "One of the most striking things that we are seeing" is that American companies "are committing to build and expand" right here at home because of supply chain concerns. "Meanwhile"—get this—"the real net worth of the bottom 50% of U.S. households has climbed 60% [in the last year and a half] . . . now reaching \$67,524."

Inflation is a problem. Don't get me wrong; it is a challenge. Gasoline prices seem to be creeping down, at least in the Midwest. I can't speak for all over the country. Food prices are still too high. I have been to the supermarket over the weekend. I know what is going on. But we are seeing some evidence of progress on the economic front, and I certainly hope that it continues.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this column by Heather Cox Richardson be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SEPTEMBER 26, 2022

(By Heather Cox Richardson)

A headline in the New York Times today read: “Factory Jobs Are Booming Like It’s the 1970s.” The story explained that more money in the hands of consumers thanks to federal stimulus spending, along with a new skepticism of stretched supply lines, has created a rebound in American manufacturing.

Since the 1970s, authors Jim Tankersley, Alan Rappeport, and Ana Swanson explain, outsourcing and automation have meant that every recession has seen factory jobs disappear and never return as employers used downturns to move operations to countries with lower wage levels. This time, though, American manufacturers have not only regained all the jobs lost during the pandemic, they have also added about 67,000 more. Those numbers would be higher if the labor market weren’t so tight, a condition leading employers to offer higher wages and better benefits.

Biden has made it clear that he is trying to overturn 40 years of “supply side” economics, ushered in by President Ronald Reagan. This system was designed to free up capital at the top of the economy through tax cuts and deregulation in the belief that putting capital in the hands of the wealthy—the “supply side”—would lead them to invest more in the economy, thus making it grow more quickly and providing more jobs. While Republicans came to embrace that ideology wholeheartedly, in fact it never showed signs of increasing economic growth. What it did was to move wealth dramatically upward. It also made the measure of the economy the health of Wall Street rather than Main Street.

Since Abraham Lincoln’s administration, which faced a similar economic stratification upward. Biden has followed in this tradition. Insisting that he would build the economy “from the bottom up and the middle out,” he, along with the Democrats in Congress, bolstered domestic manufacturing with measures like the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, and the CHIPS and Science Act.

Now, statistics show, that investment has paid off. Chad Moutray, the chief economist for the National Association of Manufacturers, told the New York Times reporters: “We have 67,000 more workers today than we had in February 2020. I didn’t think we would get there, to be honest with you.”

National Economic Council director Brian Deese told the reporters, “One of the most striking things that we are seeing now is the number of companies—U.S. companies and global companies—that are committing to build and expand their manufacturing footprint in the United States, and doing so based on their view that not only did the pandemic highlight the need for more resilience in their supply chains, but that the United States is creating a policy environment that makes long-term investment here in the United States more attractive.”

Meanwhile, the real net worth of the bottom 50% of U.S. households has climbed 60% since Biden took office, now reaching \$67,524.

One of the things that will continue to feed this change is the plan to forgive significant student loan debt, especially among low-income Black and Brown Americans. This story is hitting the news today after the Congressional Budget Office responded to a series of questions posed by Senator Richard Burr (R-NC) and Representative Virginia Foxx (R-NC), both fervently opposed to the program. The CBO’s responses to those specific questions have been widely published, suggesting the program will cost the U.S. \$400 billion. This is sparking cries about its expense, but this particular CBO number cal-

culates the cost over the next 30 years rather than the usual ten, does not address the stimulus effects of the relief, and does not take into account how much anyone would actually have repaid. The estimate is, the CBO states in its letter, “highly uncertain.”

In contrast to Biden’s economic program, on Friday the new government of Prime Minister Liz Truss announced the most radical tax cuts in Britain since 1972, cutting the top income tax rate as well as corporate taxes to spur the economy. This unfunded cut will mean borrowing at rising interest rates. Concerns about inflation, already hammering the British economy, made the value of the pound, which is the English unit of currency, drop to its lowest level since 1985.

These different economic visions are in conflict here in the United States. Former Trump economic advisor Steve Moore reacted to the Truss tax cuts by saying: “This is exactly what we should be doing in the US.” White House economic advisor Jared Bernstein said: “President Biden has been very clear about the negative track record of trickle-down, Reagan-style tax cuts.”

Republicans have managed to keep voters behind their economic program by downplaying it and emphasizing cultural issues, primarily abortion, which reliably turned out anti-abortion voters. Now that the Supreme Court has overturned the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortion, Republicans have a demographic problem: a majority of voters support reproductive rights and are turning out to vote, and there is no longer a reason for anti-abortion voters to show up.

So Republican leaders are downplaying abortion: reporter Eric Garcia noted today that Republican representative and Senate candidate Ted Budd (R-NC), who is a cosponsor of the House version of Senator Lindsey Graham’s (R-SC) national abortion bill, didn’t mention his stance in a recent rally with former president Trump. They are also inventing new cultural crises, most notably an attack on LGBTQIA folks but also a renewed attack on immigrants.

Trump has gone further, jumping aboard the QAnon train, which the FBI considers a domestic terrorism threat, as his own legal troubles are mounting. His lawyers failed to slow down the criminal investigation into his theft of documents, including many marked with the highest levels of classification. New York Attorney General Letitia James has sued Trump, his company, and his children and two associates for fraud. And now the House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the U.S. Capitol is beginning to turn up more information.

On Friday the committee subpoenaed Wisconsin House Speaker Robin Vos to ask about a phone call he had with Trump in July 2022 (not a typo) in which Trump tried to get him to change the 2020 result in Wisconsin. Vos is challenging the subpoena.

In the lead-up to Wednesday’s midday public hearing of the committee, Zachary Cohen of CNN reported today that election denier Phil Waldron, a former Army colonel associated with Trump loyalist Michael Flynn, was in contact with White House chief of staff Mark Meadows in late December 2020 about gaining access to the voting systems in Arizona and Georgia. Waldron referred to Arizona as “our lead domino we were counting on to start the cascade,” to overturn the election.

Meanwhile, Ginni Thomas, the wife of Supreme Court justice Clarence Thomas, was texting QAnon links to Meadows. And now, after flirting with QAnon since 2020, Trump has embraced it wholeheartedly, first “retruthing” social media posts featuring him as a QAnon hero and warning that “The

Storm Is Coming,” then using QAnon music at a rally. Now, he has sent out an email calling for the death penalty for drug dealers—a favorite theme of fascists since the 1930s and a major part of the program of former dictator Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines, whom Trump admires—along with the warning that “Under Democrat control, the streets of our great cities are drenched in the blood of innocent victims,” tapping into the QAnon themes of violent retribution for those they see as preying on America’s youth.

“I certainly will do whatever it takes to make sure Donald Trump isn’t anywhere close to the Oval Office,” Representative Liz Cheney said this weekend at The Texas Tribune Festival, which highlights politics and policy. “And if he is the nominee, I won’t be a Republican.” She warned that a Republican majority in the House would empower Trump Republicans like Jim Jordan (OH), Marjorie Taylor Greene (GA), and Lauren Boebert (CO).

And when asked if Trump should testify before the committee, Cheney answered: “Any interaction that Donald Trump has with the committee will be under oath and subject to penalty of perjury.”

NOTES

Jeff Stein@JStein WaPo

Former Trump economic adviser Steve Moore on Liz Truss tax policy: “I’m very supportive of what they’re doing. This is exactly what we should be doing in the US . . . I’m surprised the market has not reacted positively but I think that’s going to reverse course.”

September 26th 2022

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/26/business/factory-jobs-workers-rebound.html>https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/understanding-the-pounds-sudden-crash/2022/09/4f195480-3d96-11ed-8c6e-9386bd7cd826_story.html<https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/a-guide-to-statistics-on-historical-trends-in-income-inequality>https://fred.stlouisfed.org/graph/?graph_092257*David Doney@David Charts*

Real net worth of the bottom 50% households set another record in Q2 '22, reaching \$67,524, up 10% from last quarter and up 60% since Biden started.

This is driven by home prices, big wage gains, and full employment.

September 26th 2022

<https://www.cbo.gov/system/files/2022-09/58494-Student-Loans.pdf>*Ronald Klain@WHCOS*

If you want apples-to-apples, note that this is a THIRTY year score; most often, CBO estimates a program’s cost over its first TEN years.

When @POTUS announced this, the WH said it would cost about \$24b in the first year. This @USCBO estimate puts the first year cost at \$21B.

Peter Baker@peterbakernyt

Biden’s plan to wipe out significant amounts of student loan debt for tens of millions of borrowers could cost about \$400 billion, the nonpartisan CBO reports, renewing the debate over his decision. @katierogers <https://t.co/0flmC500bN>

September 26th 2022

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/trump-north-carolina-abortion-roe-ted-budd-b2175540.html>*Kyle Cheney@kyledcheney*

NEWS: The Jan. 6 select committee subpoenaed Wisconsin House Speaker Robin Vos over the weekend and is seeking his testimony by *today* about a July phone call he had with Donald Trump.

September 26th 2022
<https://www.cnn.com/2022/09/26/politics/meadows-texts-phil-waldron-seize-voting-machines-election-fraud/index.html>

Brian Klaas@brianklaas

The former president, many of his aides, Republican members of Congress, and the wife of a Supreme Court justice, are all directly promoting QAnon—which the FBI classifies as a domestic terrorism threat. The GOP has become an authoritarian, conspiracist, extremist party.

60 Minutes@60Minutes

Ginni Thomas, Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas' wife, texted links tied to QAnon to ex-White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, according to former Jan. 6th staffer Denver Riggleman, Riggleman says her actions "should be an eye opener for everybody" <https://t.co/tgVFPfR661> <https://t.co/zGFNWaTIG5>

September 26th 2022

Jeff Sharlet@JeffSharlet

Big: Trump follows up his full QAnon embrace with email labeled "The Death Penalty," calling for execution of drug dealers & signaling to Q, I'd argue, many more executions after that. No question he's borrowing from former Philippines dictator Duterte, whom he admires & envies.

September 26th 2022

<https://www.texastribune.org/2022/09/24/liz-cheney-texas-tribune-festival>

Mr. DURBIN. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SINEMA). Without objection, it is so ordered.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, this week, the Senate has one extremely important item on our agenda: to keep the lights on; in other words, to pass a government funding bill. We are just 3 days from the end of the fiscal year, and the Democrat-controlled Senate has yet to pass a single appropriations bill—no funding for our military, no funding for veterans services, no funding for border security, nothing.

Now, this deadline does not sneak up out of nowhere; it arrives on the same day every year. Yet here we are, 3 days before the funding expires, and not a single appropriations bill has been voted on.

The majority leader conceded a long time ago that the regular appropriations bills would be punted to a later date and we would pass a short-term funding bill to bridge the gap. As a general rule, I am not a fan of short-term funding bills. They don't provide the stability or predictability we need to plan for the future. That is especially true for America's military, which is operating in a dynamic threat environment with countless unknowns. In order to plan for and prepare for the future, government Agencies need a predictable budget, and stopgap bills simply don't cut it.

As though this last-minute funding gambit isn't dramatic enough, the ma-

majority leader has raised the stakes even higher. He is not putting a clean funding bill on the floor; he is weighing it down with partisan freight. This is part of a political horse trade that happened a couple of months ago. In order to get the senior Senator from West Virginia to vote for his reckless tax-and-spending bill, the majority leader promised to attach permitting reform to the government funding bill. Forget the fact that Senator MANCHIN's permitting bill was nowhere near complete; the majority leader blindly agreed to tack it on to must-pass legislation.

Senator MANCHIN, the senior Senator from West Virginia, finally released his bill last week, and it became clear why he was so desperate to attach it to a must-pass continuing resolution. That is because the bill doesn't even come close to delivering the real common-sense changes that were promised. The provisions meant to speed up the approval process for new projects lack teeth, making them unlikely to produce any real progress.

The bill doesn't touch the environmental reviews, which cause a lot of delays to happen in the first place. On top of that, it is a power grab by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, granting them unprecedented authority to force electric transmission lines on States. Under the current law, States have the authority to decide whether or not to grant transmission lines to run through their States. It is part of something called State sovereignty, federalism. Under this bill, that would change, though. The unelected leaders at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission could override a State's objection to a new project transmitting renewable energy.

In short, if a State like Illinois needs a new interstate transmission line to help meet its clean energy mandates, its neighbors will have no choice but to oblige. It will be forced on them. Folks in Indiana or Ohio or any other State could be forced to help subsidize the costs of Illinois' renewable energy. This is a far cry from the kind of commonsense permitting reform that Senator MANCHIN has been talking about.

This bill falls short in almost every regard, which is why we have seen such broad bipartisan opposition. There aren't many Energy bills where my vote aligns with that of the junior Senator from Vermont, Senator SANDERS, but this is one of them.

Despite the strong opposition to Senator MANCHIN's bill, the majority is still moving forward with a procedural vote this evening. He knows it will fail. It will not succeed. Then, Senator SCHUMER, the majority leader, will have a choice: pass a clean funding bill to keep the lights on, to keep government open, or shut down the government over their reckless tax-and-spending spree deal cut behind closed doors last summer.

If you remember, a couple of months ago, at the same time he professed publicly and privately that the disastrous,

radical tax-and-spending spree bill was dead, the senior Senator from West Virginia was negotiating a sweetheart deal in secret, unbeknownst to Republicans and, by the way, unbeknownst to all Democrats other than the majority leader. Fast-forward to today. When that deal falls apart this evening, he will need to abandon his secret deal with Senator SCHUMER.

For our country's sake, I hope the majority leader and Senator MANCHIN won't shut down the government. With so much economic uncertainty already, the last thing we need is a government shutdown.

LEGISLATION

Madam President, this is the last week the House of Representatives will be in session until after the election. Once the Chamber gavels out at the end of the week, Members will go home, and they won't return until November 14. That doesn't leave a lot of time to accomplish the work of the American people. In fact, after this week, the House is scheduled to only be in session for 4 more weeks this year.

As my colleagues here in the Senate know, the House has a lot to do and not a lot of time to do it. Since the start of the Congress, the Senate has passed a long list of bipartisan bills that are still awaiting action in the House. Many of these bills passed this Chamber unanimously and will provide critical support for our communities.

Here is just one example. Last year, Senator PADILLA, the junior Senator from California, and I introduced a bill to support infrastructure and disaster relief projects all across the country. Our bill would open up billions of dollars for States and local governments to put toward their most critical projects without adding a penny to the deficit. That is because the money that would be freed up has already been appropriated for COVID-19 relief but is in excess of what the States and local governments need for that purpose. Our bill would take the handcuffs off and allow them to spend that money if they want. They are not required to do so, but if they want, they can spend up to one-third of their excess funds on infrastructure or disaster relief, and it doesn't add another penny to the deficit.

Over the last year and a half, I have heard from leaders all across my State of Texas who are frustrated about the handcuffs that have been put on them when it comes to spending the money that Congress had appropriated for COVID-19 relief. Senator PADILLA told me he is hearing the same thing from leaders in California. So we got to work. We spoke with folks in our States as well as our Senate colleagues and administration officials, and we came up with legislation that was simple but very effective in providing that sort of flexibility that our local communities and our States have asked for.

With some places, that means pandemic-related expenses, which will

take the priority. Our legislation won't interfere with any plans to spend that money on already-approved pandemic expenses, but it will give the States and localities without that need the option to invest those funds in infrastructure projects.

Usually, what happens here in Washington is the U.S. Congress appropriates money, and it literally takes a couple of years to get the money from DC down to places like Austin, TX, where the Texas legislators can then figure out how to disburse those funds. Now, we know they already have the money in their hands, but they simply can't use it because of the restrictions placed on those funds.

Senator PADILLA's and my bill would remove those restrictions for important purposes, like infrastructure and like disaster relief; things like widening highways, constructing bridges, extending railways, expanding broadband. Our bill includes a long list of qualifying expenses.

It also will allow leaders to put their funding toward disaster relief, which is a major need in areas all across the country. Places like Texas and Kentucky, for example, have experienced devastating flooding in the last few months. Puerto Rico, we know, has just been hit by a terrible hurricane and is still trying to restore power. Florida is bracing for impact of Hurricane Ian as it makes its way to the gulf coast. California continues to battle destructive wildfires.

Our bill would allow leaders to open up disaster relief funds virtually instantly, as soon as the President signs the bill into law. They already have the funding in hand. They won't have to wait for a Federal disaster declaration or emergency funding from Congress; they could write the check themselves and mobilize resources instantaneously. It is no surprise this bill passed the Senate 100 to 0. It was unanimous.

These are the sorts of commonsense things that will benefit communities all across the United States. This bill will open up tens of millions of dollars for infrastructure projects in communities all across the country, and it will support critical disaster relief efforts as well. It will empower State and local leaders to make the best decisions for their communities. It will ensure that this funding can deliver on its intended purpose, which is to alleviate the financial burden imposed by the pandemic on our State and local governments. I hope Speaker PELOSI will bring up and pass this bill as quickly as possible. It would help her State of California, but more importantly, it would help the entire country.

But this is just one of many bipartisan bills that are currently sitting in the House since the start of Congress—the Senate's unanimously approved bills that I have introduced to prevent and identify child sexual abuse; to provide incarcerated individuals with ac-

cess to treatment for their substance use disorder; to facilitate more cross-border trade with our neighbors to the north and the south; to support programs and help individuals experiencing mental health crises; to provide tax relief to survivors of human trafficking; to equip law enforcement officers with the tools they need in order to help people in crisis.

It would be a shame if the Speaker declined to bring these bills up and pass them. I am sure they would pass by overwhelming votes in the U.S. House of Representatives, as they did here in the Senate. But the House is only scheduled to be in session a few more weeks this Congress. It is time to get moving on these commonsense, noncontroversial, nonpartisan bills. Otherwise, we will have to start back at square one next year.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I have a short update on today's vote for the information of all Senators.

Later this afternoon, the Senate is scheduled to hold a cloture vote on a motion to proceed to a vehicle for the CR.

Now, Senate Republicans have made very clear they will block legislation to fund the government if it includes bipartisan permitting reform because they have chosen to obstruct instead of work in a bipartisan way to achieve something they have long claimed they wanted to do.

Because American families should not be subjected to a Republican-manufactured government shutdown, Senator MANCHIN has requested, and I have agreed, to move forward and pass the recently filed continuing resolution legislation without the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2022.

Senator MANCHIN, myself, and others will continue to have conversations about the best way to ensure responsible permitting reform is passed before the end of the year.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader for those comments and for his leadership on this and so much else, including the subject that Senator WYDEN and I will be talking about today: Social Security.

I rise to discuss an issue that Senator WYDEN and I have worked on, and I am

honored to be part of this with a Senator who began his career active in the Gray Panthers. So his commitment to Social Security almost goes back to almost before I was born, if I can say it that way.

Everything we do here—everything we do here—should come back to the dignity of work; the idea that hard work should pay off for everybody no matter who you are, no matter where you live, no matter what kind of work you do to support yourself and your family.

When work has dignity, people always, always, always should have a secure retirement. That means they can count on Medicare. It means they can count on Social Security. It means we protect in this body—Senator MARKEY has been very involved in this, too, as the Presiding Officer. It means we protect people's pensions. It means people should make enough to save.

It is why we saved—this body. I remember sitting here with Senator CASEY on March 6, 2021, and saying to him this was the best day of my career, when we voted 51 to 50 to save the pensions of 100,000 people in Ohio, over a million workers around the country, the same day we passed the Child Tax Credit extension, which dropped the poverty rate in this country by 40 percent.

It is why we still fight for the Delphi retirees who lost their pensions through no fault of their own, through no wrongdoing of their own, through no malfeasance or anything else of their own. They lost it because the system didn't guarantee it. It is why we will always, always fight back against attacks on Social Security. A secure retirement should never be partisan.

Social Security and Medicare are two of the most popular and most unifying institutions in the country.

Think back. We have had Social Security since the Roosevelt days. We have had Medicare since the LBJ days—so 80, 90 years of Social Security. The first Social Security check was in 1940 to a woman in Vermont. We have had Social Security for 82 years.

Medicare, passed by a Democratic House and Senate, with some Republican support joining President Johnson creating Medicare in the 1960s—again, two of the most popular and most unifying institutions in the country.

Social Security is our government's promise to working men and women, a promise they will be able to retire with dignity.

Support for Social Security among the voters, among the public, cuts across party lines, geographic lines, racial lines. Almost everybody in this country supports Social Security.

Americans want to not only protect Social Security and Medicare, but they want to make it stronger.

I said almost everybody in the country supports Social Security and Medicare. Well, Mr. President, as you know and Chairman WYDEN of the Finance

Committee knows, almost everybody except a whole lot of people who come to the Senate and, down the hall, come to the House of Representatives and think their mission is to privatize Social Security and privatize Medicare.

So why do they do that?

Well, it is their answer to pay for everything. How can we afford handouts to corporations? Well, the way to pay for it is to cut Social Security and you privatize Medicare. How do you pay for tax cuts for the wealthy? Well, you wipe out the retirement security of Americans. You cut Social Security. You privatize Medicare. That is their answer, time after time after time.

They don't really want to talk about it this close to an election. As soon as this election is over, we know the crescendo; we know the loud voices, again, from Senator SCOTT, the leader, who happens to also run the Republican Senate Campaign Committee—the Senator from Florida who is a freshman who believes that privatizing—that we should have to renew Medicare and Social Security every 5 years. Like we don't want anybody to feel comfortable or be able to plan for the future or to feel, like, just secure in their retirement.

So it is always the same plan from the corporate elite and think-tank extremists.

So when I said almost everybody, it was not quite fair to say it is only Republican Senators and Republican House Members. It is also the corporate elite, in many cases. It is the people at these rightwing think tanks, funded by billionaires, who think this is some way that—they come up with some new scheme to disguise their unpopular agenda: privatize Social Security or means-testing Social Security. Whatever it is, the plan is the same: to kill off Social Security.

This time it is Senator RICK SCOTT and Senate Republicans' plan to terminate Social Security. As I said, they want to get rid of this bedrock promise. It doesn't matter to them that most Americans support Social Security.

That is why, this week, Senator WYDEN, who, as I said, began his activism as an activist for the Gray Panthers in Portland, OR; Senator CASEY, who sits next to me, one of the leaders in this Senate, a Senator from Pennsylvania—he came to the Senate the same day I did—who is one of the leaders of this Senate and on Senator WYDEN's committee to fight to affirm that Social Security should remain a guarantee for every American whom we want because our government should work for people, not against them.

When workers have dignity—when work has dignity, we honor the retirement security people earned. It should be an easy decision.

I urge my Republican colleagues in this body—colleagues, frankly, with healthcare and retirement plans paid for by taxpayers—we all have that in

this body—to think about the generations of Americans who have benefited from Social Security and the generations to come who are relying on the promise of Social Security.

I have listened to their speeches for years extolling the value of hard work. I have heard some of them trying to run from their own plans to end Social Security. But the American people are on to Senate Republicans.

The American people watched as all 50 Republicans voted against or essentially did nothing to solve the multi-employer pension crisis. They are watching—a few exceptions. Senator PORTMAN has been helpful on this, on the bipartisan Delphi retiree fix, but many are trying to block it.

The public watches as the Republican caucus tries to end Social Security for good.

If the American people don't need to worry about the Republican Senate plan to end Social Security, now is your chance to prove it. This is your chance, by voting—this is your chance to live up to your own words and co-sponsor this resolution that Senator WYDEN and I and Senator CASEY are leading.

Show Americans that if you work hard all your life, your government, your Senator will be there for you and that you are not working in this body to undermine the promise of Social Security.

Senator WYDEN and I have worked together to protect Social Security for years.

What is at stake with these attacks? Why do we need to show a united commitment to Social Security in the U.S. Senate?

Senator WYDEN.

Mr. WYDEN. Thank you very much, Senator BROWN. And I see in the Chair another strong supporter of Social Security, the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts.

And for colleagues who aren't aware, Senator BROWN is our chair of the Subcommittee on Social Security in the Senate Finance Committee. This is a crucial subcommittee for all the reasons that Senator BROWN just mentioned, and I am just going to make a couple of points, and if my colleague is still on the floor, maybe we can have a little bit of a colloquy.

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

Mr. WYDEN. Thank you.

What Senator BROWN has illustrated again is the differences between the two parties on Social Security and Medicare, and my colleague was kind enough to go back to my past as codirector of the Oregon Gray Panthers.

Ever since those days, the difference between the two parties has been that on our side of the aisle, we are very blunt when we get asked about Social Security and Medicare. As Senator BROWN just said, on our side, we make it clear that Social Security and Medicare are a guarantee. They are not a voucher. They are not something that

is going to be thrown to the private market. They are a guarantee.

What we hear from our colleagues on the other side is sort of a word salad, but it nearly always involves a statement about how much they want to protect Social Security, but then we hear a lot about privatization, about portability, about investment.

It is anything but what you just heard Senator BROWN say; that Medicare and Social Security are not something to be privatized; they are about a guarantee.

And we should make no mistake about it, seniors, others who are eligible for the programs have earned these benefits. They have earned these benefits.

And yet, somehow, our colleagues on the other side of the aisle and candidates don't get what the programs are really all about.

For example, not long ago, I saw a Republican Senate candidate out West say in a primary forum: Congress ought to "privatize Social Security and just get the government out of it."

"Just get the government out of it."

Now, apparently, he is the nominee, and he is for protecting Social Security. He swears up and down he is for protecting Social Security—huge about-face.

I heard another westerner asked on live TV about his thoughts on Social Security. And he said nothing about a guarantee. He said: We ought to look at portability issues and individual accounts and benefit cuts are on the menu.

Again, this is kind of Washington lingo, Washington code for unraveling the guarantee that is Social Security and Medicare that I learned about in those days when I was codirector of the Oregon Gray Panthers.

And Americans don't want their elected representatives to cut this crucial set of programs that are earned benefits. And they certainly don't want their elected officials and candidates to talk out of both sides of their mouth.

Now, I mentioned this question of westerners and where westerners stand, but apparently this opposition to these core principles of Social Security doesn't just reside in the West. It seems to spread across the country. Senator RICK SCOTT has proposed ending, again, the guarantees of these bedrock programs—Social Security and Medicare—and just sunseting them after just a few years—sunseting them.

So as I would say to my colleague, who has worked with me on a lot of these issues, let's just unpack that for a minute. We believe that Social Security and Medicare are guaranteed. They are not subject to these annual, political kind of battles and pushed and prodded for political advantage. They are guaranteed. But yet, after quoting those in the West who want to come join us, now we have a southerner in a position of great importance who wants to sunset programs like Social

Security and Medicare after just a few years and, in effect, throw them to the winds to see what kind of politics might be put in place.

I don't believe that is acceptable. Senator BROWN, the chair of our subcommittee, doesn't believe that is acceptable. Social Security is among the most foundational principles in our country's history, providing financial security through guaranteed benefits for millions of Americans. Over 70 million Americans receive Social Security and Supplemental Security Income every year.

Mr. BROWN. Senator WYDEN, would the Senator yield for one moment?

Mr. WYDEN. I would be happy to and, particularly, so you can tell everybody again why you feel so strongly.

Mr. BROWN. I would like to ask you this. You had said that Senator SCOTT, who is the chairman of the Republican Senate campaign committee, represents the third largest State in the country, Florida. He said he wants to sunset? What exactly—just explain that so my colleagues understand it. The word "sunset" doesn't sound so bad until you really explain it. And I know Senator MARKEY understands it, but explain that, if you would.

Mr. WYDEN. Yes. What "sunset" means is you would unravel the basic principles of Social Security and Medicare. We don't subject them to annual or regular political fights. We have said that people have earned those benefits, and we aren't just going to set arbitrary dates and say we are going to, in effect, move on and we will decide what happens to seniors and the disabled based on the politics of the moment.

It is a 180-degree departure from the kind of guarantee that you spelled out that I feel so strongly about. We don't say we are just going to have these arbitrary changes that could put at risk the entire program.

Mr. BROWN. So he is saying then, so I understand this right. Senator SCOTT, the chair of the Republican Senate campaign committee, representing the third largest State in the country, is saying that every 5 years, if the Senate doesn't say yes to Social Security and Medicare, then they are unraveled and they die. It is up to the Senate to say yes every 5 years?

Mr. WYDEN. My colleague from Ohio is being way too logical because, you bet, what this essentially means is if you sunset it, the program and the benefits are not going to continue as they have. As you said, if people decide because of some particular kind of flurry at the moment that for some cause they don't want to continue it, the well-being and security of seniors is jeopardized.

Mr. BROWN. So if there is a President and a Senate and a House in 5 years that want to privatize Medicare and Social Security, or a President who wants to veto it, or a Senate leader, like Senator MCCONNELL, who has

never really believed in it, they can do nothing. They just do nothing. So it is up to the people who support Social Security and Medicare to keep it going every 5 years. In other words, the burden is on the supporters, the public—which is, to me, 90 percent of the public who likes this. So that is the way it works, right?

Mr. WYDEN. You have stated it well. It would mean that when you sunset it, you would have to have a brand-new fight to reestablish its primacy as a guarantee. You sunset it.

Mr. BROWN. Well, go back to that. You said "a brand-new fight." I am not a historian. I like reading history, but I know enough about Medicare because I care a lot about the history, as you do, of that—and Senator MARKEY and others and Senator LEAHY, who is on the floor about it too.

President Truman wanted to enact Medicare, but he couldn't get the Congress to do it. And then President Kennedy wanted to enact Medicare, and he couldn't get Congress to do it. It probably took the Kennedy assassination and all that was happening to sort of light the fire under Congress to pass Medicare.

So you would need that kind of political will. In other words, it took almost 20 years to pass Medicare. So if Medicare were to expire, you would need a huge public wave with elected officials who want to do it to get it back, in effect.

Mr. WYDEN. Nope, no question about it, and it would put in jeopardy fundamental core principles that seniors all across the country—in Ohio and Oregon and Massachusetts—have been able to count on. When you sunset it, you say you can't count on it. You have to wait for another political battle.

And I would just say to my colleagues—showing how extreme the position is of our colleague from Florida, Senator SCOTT—that Senator Orrin Hatch, the late Senator Hatch who worked with us, when he was in the Senate said: We will update the Medicare guarantee to start covering chronic care. This is something the Senator from Massachusetts has worked with me on, home care for seniors. So Senator Orrin Hatch, our late colleague and my personal friend, who was not exactly a liberal, he understood what you and I are talking about: that Medicare and Social Security are a guarantee. And when we talked about chronic care, he said: We are going to update the Medicare guarantee—nothing about saying: Well, gee, maybe we will do something after we sunset it. So my colleague has said it well.

Mr. BROWN. Let me ask another question. So if Senator SCOTT gets his way or Senator MCCONNELL, the Republican leader, gets his way, and all the new candidates Senator SCOTT is helping to get elected, if they get their way and pass Senator SCOTT's bill to sunset, would Senator SCOTT still have government healthcare and a government pension?

Mr. WYDEN. He hasn't talked about it, but I think that would certainly be one of the questions our constituents would ask about, because this issue of there being a double standard between seniors at home and their elected officials would be very real. He hasn't spelled out how he would deal with that, but there is certainly the question of elected officials, because we have these retirement benefits that have been part, again, of a program that has been established for some time. They haven't been talked about.

But I will tell you, I think the chair of the Social Security Subcommittee and myself on the Finance Committee, we are going to go out there and say: No double standard.

You can be sure of that. If something is sunsetted for working people and seniors and the disabled, we are certainly not going to let Senator SCOTT pretend that somehow it is business as usual for elected officials.

Mr. President, I think Senator BROWN started us off very well, and he is asking questions that I think millions of Americans are going to ask. My understanding is that my colleague from Ohio, the chairman of the subcommittee, is going to be looking at a lot of these issues in his subcommittee. But certainly this last point, about politicians talking out of both sides of their mouth and saying somehow that we are going to have a program sunsetted for seniors and the disabled—Social Security, Medicare and others—but we are not going to even talk about what happens for elected officials is an example of how you shouldn't legislate. It is an example of what I believe could be a double standard.

And I will just close, unless Senator BROWN wants to. In fact, I am going to let Senator BROWN do it. I thought, as I listened to Senator BROWN, and I put it in the context of all these years with the Gray Panthers, that everybody can understand what Senator BROWN is talking about. Medicare and Social Security are a guarantee—period—inviolable, as a result of the history that we have had in this country where people worked so hard for this.

On the other side, we are talking about privatization, we are talking about portability, and we are talking about lots of new cost analyses in the private sector and individualized programs. I am for individualized programs on top of Social Security, not in place of it.

So I really appreciate your resolution, Senator BROWN, and I am going to do everything I can to support it.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you, Senator WYDEN. And I will yield back my time in 30 seconds.

Mr. President, thank you for your indulgence. Senator LEAHY will be speaking in a moment. And, Senator LEAHY, chairman of the Finance Committee, we are just asking for cosponsors. We have a number of colleagues that have cosponsored this to make sure that Social Security is with us—a strong, good

Social Security system—as long as we are a nation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I understand the floor vote is going to be soon. I ask unanimous consent that it be after I finish my remarks.

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

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, listening to Senator WYDEN and Senator BROWN about Social Security, I would tell my colleagues that the first recipient of Social Security was a Vermonter. And Vermonters at that time, I believe, were the most Republican State in the Nation.

I remember growing up as a child hearing so many people say: Well, I may disagree with a whole lot of things that President Roosevelt and the Democrats did, but Social Security, I am all for that.

And I learned that as a child, and it has been part of my mantra ever since, along with Senator BROWN and Senator WYDEN. Social Security is a contract, and we should follow it.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to H.R. 6833 and take up a substitute amendment containing a continuing resolution to fund the Federal Government through December 16. I will vote to invoke cloture and move the process forward. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Funding the Federal Government is the most basic responsibility of Congress. The continuing resolution before the Senate today will keep vital services running for the American people through December 16, provide critical support for Ukraine, secure the LIHEAP safety net ahead of winter, and provide emergency relief to communities recovering from natural disasters around the country.

However, let me be clear, this is only a temporary measure. As the chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am committed to completing the work of the Appropriations Committee before the end of this Congress. In a time of rising inflation, when everything costs more—energy, food, fuel, housing—we must respond accordingly. Running on autopilot after December would be irresponsible, and the American people deserve more.

Our Federal agencies run thousands of programs every day that benefit working families. From nutrition programs to small business loans and grants, from affordable housing to healthcare for our Nation's veterans, from childcare services to our Nation's schools, the Federal Government provides services that impact nearly every aspect of Americans' lives. At a time of rising inflation, we cannot fund these critical programs at last year's levels without cutting services or underfunding needs. It is simple math. Enacting full year appropriations bills

into law must be our top priority. We owe it to the American people who sent us here.

This bill addresses several urgent and pressing issues that cannot wait. The third hottest summer on record has strained one of our most successful safety nets—the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, LIHEAP—as families' energy costs went up with the record-setting temperatures. This bill contains \$1 billion to bolster LIHEAP ahead of the winter, where Putin's war on Ukraine and inflation are expected to drive energy costs even higher. No family should have to choose between heating their home or buying food, not in Vermont and not in any community across the country. I am glad that we were able to secure these needed resources.

The bill includes \$12.35 billion in emergency assistance for Ukraine, further demonstrating our resolve to stand with the people of Ukraine against President Putin's illegal, brutal war on their country. These funds will provide much-needed training, equipment, logistical support, supplies, and weapons to the military and national security forces of Ukraine at this pivotal point in the war. These funds will also be used to provide direct assistance to Ukraine to help its government maintain day-to-day operations while it fights to repel Russia's invasion. And it provides funding to replenish U.S. stocks of equipment that have been provided to the government of Ukraine and to other countries in support of the cause.

The bill provides \$2.5 billion to support recovery efforts following the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire in New Mexico. The largest fire in New Mexico's history has scorched hundreds of thousands of acres, destroyed homes, displaced thousands, and sparked a fresh water crisis in the community of Las Vegas, New Mexico. This is not an issue of red States or blue States, we are the United States, and we must stand with communities in crisis wherever they may be.

The bill also includes \$2 billion in community development block grants to help address unmet recovery needs in communities experiencing major disasters in 2021 and 2022, such as Kentucky, Missouri, and Puerto Rico. And with Hurricane Ian advancing in the Gulf, the CR also includes an additional \$18.8 billion for the FEMA disaster relief fund. We must ensure FEMA has the resources to meet this challenge, and this bill provides those resources.

I am disappointed that, due to Republican opposition, there is no additional funding to combat COVID-19 or monkeypox. Reductions in the current infection levels for COVID-19 are a direct result of the investments we have made in vaccines, therapeutics, and testing over the past 2 years. If we hope to avoid a surge this winter, we need the resources to continue that effort. And we should be investing now to

get ahead of monkeypox before it continues to spread both in the United States and overseas. Not providing these resources is short-sighted, and I will continue to fight for the necessary funding to continue to combat these terrible diseases.

Now Congress must do its job and complete the appropriations process before the end of the year. I look forward to working with Vice Chairman SHELBY, Chair DELAURO, and Ranking Member GRANGER to get this done.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 389, H.R. 6833, a bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act, the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to establish requirements with respect to cost-sharing for certain insulin products, and for other purposes.

Charles E. Schumer, Raphael G. Warnock, Tim Kaine, Sherrod Brown, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Angus S. King, Jr., John W. Hickenlooper, Michael F. Bennet, Cory A. Booker, Christopher Murphy, Amy Klobuchar, Gary C. Peters, Edward J. Markey, Benjamin L. Cardin, Jeanne Shaheen, Richard Blumenthal, Jeff Merkley, Alex Padilla, Catherine Cortez Masto.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to H.R. 6833, a bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act, the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to establish requirements with respect to cost-sharing for certain insulin products, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BARR), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY), the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 72, nays 23, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 349 Leg.]

YEAS—72

Baldwin	Cantwell	Coons
Bennet	Capito	Cornyn
Blumenthal	Cardin	Cortez Masto
Blunt	Carper	Cotton
Booker	Casey	Duckworth
Boozman	Cassidy	Durbin
Brown	Collins	Ernst

Feinstein	Markey	Schumer
Gillibrand	McConnell	Shaheen
Graham	Menendez	Shelby
Grassley	Merkley	Sinema
Hassan	Moran	Smith
Heinrich	Murkowski	Stabenow
Hickenlooper	Murphy	Sullivan
Hirono	Murray	Tester
Hyde-Smith	Ossoff	Tillis
Kaine	Padilla	Van Hollen
Kelly	Peters	Warner
Kennedy	Portman	Warnock
King	Reed	Warren
Klobuchar	Romney	Whitehouse
Leahy	Rosen	Wicker
Luján	Sanders	Wyden
Manchin	Schatz	Young

NAYS—23

Blackburn	Hoeven	Rounds
Braun	Inhofe	Sasse
Cramer	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Crapo	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cruz	Lee	Thune
Daines	Marshall	Toomey
Fischer	Paul	Tuberville
Hawley	Risch	

NOT VOTING—5

Barrasso	Hagerty	Rubio
Burr	Lummis	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PETERS). On this vote, the yeas are 72, and the nays are 23.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Montana.

TRIBUTE TO DR. DOUGLAS REISIG

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today, I have the distinct honor of recognizing Dr. Doug Reisig of Missoula County as Montanan of the Month for his distinguished career as an educator and for his devotion to Montana students, Montana parents, and the community.

Doug was born and raised in Montana. He earned his master's degree from the University of Montana and his Ph.D. from Montana State. Back home in Montana, Cat-Griz bipartisanship is what Doug has in his back-ground. You see, Doug taught at Billings West High School before accepting a job at the St. Ignatius School District. It was in St. Ignatius that he met his lovely wife Mary Jo. Doug and Mary Jo have been married for almost 43 years and have raised two wonderful daughters, Megan and Callie. They are now the proud grandparents of four grandsons.

Doug has been a teacher, building administrator, and superintendent for 46 years, serving as superintendent at Hellgate Elementary for the past 34 years. Prior to his retirement, he received the G.V. Erickson Award from the School Administrators of Montana for his contribution to education in our great State.

Since Doug took over as superintendent, the school has seen a 33-percent increase in enrollment. He also oversaw the construction of the new middle school, and during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, under Doug's leadership, Hellgate Elementary was a leader in delivering meals to children in need and even went the extra mile by selflessly donating his increase in salary to the Family Resource Fund. With Doug's direction and precautions in place, both Hellgate Elementary and

Middle School were in session 5 days a week during the 2020 and 2021 school years.

It is my honor to recognize Dr. Doug Reisig for serving the State of Montana as an educator and for his dedication to ensuring that Montana students have a very bright future ahead.

Congratulations on your retirement, Doug. You truly make Montana proud.

MORNING BUSINESS

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE-EXECUTIVE
MICHAEL BUCHANON

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, after 29 years as Warren County judge-executive, Mike Buchanon is retiring at the end of his current term this January, leaving behind an impressive legacy of public service. He has overseen explosive growth in his county over the past three decades, developed Bowling Green into a center for art and recreation, and left an enduring mark on the residents, businesses, and new initiatives he championed. Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Judge Buchanon on his well-deserved retirement and thanking him for his contributions to Kentucky.

I have been proud to call Judge Buchanon both a close colleague and a personal friend during his three-decade tenure on the job, working with him to promote job growth, workforce training, and development in South Central Kentucky. As a former judge-executive, I know both the difficulties and rewards of his position intimately. Judge Buchanon shares the passion I felt for my constituents during my time as Jefferson County judge-executive. After all, they are not just your voters; they are also your neighbors, family, and friends. Every achievement on the job brings real, tangible change to the community you call your home.

Judge Buchanon built his reputation for diligent leadership in the face of intense crises. From almost the moment he started the job, a major snowstorm battered Warren County, forcing Judge Buchanon to declare an emergency and call in the National Guard. Toward the end of his career, he faced similar disasters, first with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and then with last winter's devastating tornado outbreak. In each of these emergencies, he worked long days and nights to ensure the security and safety of his constituents, deftly handling communication with my office and other Federal authorities to ensure Warren County received the assistance it required.

When not dealing with crisis situations, Judge Buchanon dedicated his time to helping Warren County grow. That growth came from a multitude of directions: the addition of tens of thousands of new residents during his tenure, the arrival of major new businesses, and the cultivation of one of Kentucky's finest art scenes and public recreation systems, to name just a few.

He fostered this development by maintaining a consistent pro-job, pro-business mentality, persistently pitching Warren County to private sector investors as a premier location for expansion opportunities.

His tenure has left a physical mark on the surface of Bowling Green. From the Kentucky Transpark industrial park, which is now home to 2 dozen companies employing some 3,000 people, to Bowling Green's downtown revitalization, anchored by the Southern Kentucky Performing Arts Center, to the county's large and growing public park system, his touch is apparent all across Warren County. Judge Buchanon is a builder, understanding long ago that, for Bowling Green to achieve the success it has found today, its leaders needed to invest in projects that would be attractive to the residents of the future.

Judge Buchanon has achieved success in part because of his dogged efforts, but also in part because his long tenure enabled him to plan and actualize projects over an extended timeframe. That would not have been possible were it not for the support he has seen among voters, time and time again, since his first election three decades ago. He has cultivated a close relationship with his constituents, earning their trust and votes seven consecutive times, a rare feat for elected officials. No doubt, they are sad to see their foremost champion depart after so many years of success, even as he plans to stay closely involved in Warren County government.

But Judge Buchanon has undeniably earned his retirement. His wife Ellen, two sons, Michael and Roy, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren have stood by his side during his long public service career, offering support and understanding when he had to work long nights on behalf of his community. Now, he looks forward to having "time to go to my grandkids' ball games and travel some with my family." He certainly deserves the respite.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Judge Buchanon for his decades of service to his constituents and the entire Commonwealth of Kentucky. Warren County's future is bright because of his dedicated work. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Judge Buchanon on his retirement and wishing him the best as he moves on to the next chapter of his life.

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE-EXECUTIVE
MIKE MALONE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, in his 8 years as Carter County judge-executive, Mike Malone has battled Mother Nature, invited new development to his community, and tried to bring neighbors on all sides of the political aisle together around their shared values. It hasn't always been easy, but with dogged determination, Judge Malone has left Carter County a safer, more beautiful, more united