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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BEN RAY LUJÁN, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Our Father in Heaven, as Hurricane Ian wreaks havoc, protect those in harm's way. Lord, we thank You that the winds and the waves obey Your will.

Today, make us aware of our need for Your presence, and empower us to reach out to others in Your Name. Lord, teach us to pray, and sustain us by the wonders of Your Word. Give us truths that will strengthen our minds, souls, and hearts. In times of distress, grief, confusion, and misunderstanding, illuminate our paths with the light of Your companionship.

Guide our lawmakers in their challenging work, for You have promised never to leave or forsake them.

We pray in Your merciful 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 senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,

Washington, DC, September 28, 2022.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BEN RAY LUJÁN, a Senator from the State of New Mexico, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. LUJÁN 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 senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

TRIBUTE TO ERNIE MANN

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, before I begin my remarks, I was just watch-

ing the "TODAY" show. That is why I was late.

They have a surprise neighbor of the month, and when they come in and surprise him, all his neighbors are there because he is such a great neighbor.

Well, Ernie Mann—who is the father of Steve Mann, who has been my deputy State director since I have been Senator for over 20 years—a teacher in the community, a volunteer firefighter for 60 years, and just a great guy and a wonderful Yankee fan. They had Nestor Cortes get on the phone and speak to him. He was just made the neighbor of—I think it is of the month, but maybe it is of the year. Anyway, he deserves it. It was wonderful. It was beautiful to see.

So, Ernie—and to all the Mann family, including the great Steve, who has done such a great job for me—congratulations. Good luck. It was beautiful. It was beautiful.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. President, now let's get to the substance of the day.

Last night, by a vote of 72 to 23, the Senate agreed to advance a shell for a continuing resolution to keep the government open until December 16 and avoid a needless government shutdown.

As my colleagues know, government funding runs out Friday at midnight, whereupon a partial shutdown would begin if we do not act. We must work fast to finish the process here on the floor, send a CR to the House, and then send it to the President's desk before the clock runs out. With cooperation from our Republican colleagues, the Senate can finish its work with keeping the government open as soon as tomorrow. There is every reason in the world to get to yes, and I look forward to working with Leader McCONNELL to make sure we can do that and not bump up into the Friday midnight deadline.

I urge my colleagues on both sides to work with us together to speed this process as quickly as we can through

• 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 floor, especially since the CR contains many things both parties support.

I am talking about billions in disaster aid to help communities in Kentucky, Louisiana, Alabama, Texas, Alaska, and Puerto Rico, battered by floods and disasters over the past year; as well as help for New Mexico to recover from its worst wildfire in the State's history.

We must also renew the FDA user fees for the next 5 years to prevent the slowdown of innovative drugs and medical devices so needed by our people and to prevent thousands of workers—good, hard-working workers—who help approve these drugs and make sure they are safe from being furloughed.

And, crucially, we must also approve critical emergency aid for the people of Ukraine. Over the past few weeks, it has become clear that U.S. assistance has made an enormous difference in helping Ukraine defend itself.

I want to salute President Biden. He has done a masterful job in helping the Ukrainians and leading us. But the Congress in a bipartisan way has gone along in the past. We have not only got along, but we enthusiastically supported our help for Ukraine. I certainly enthusiastically support it, and we have to continue. The conflict in Ukraine is far from over and our obligation remains to help them, however we can, to beat the brutal, nasty, vicious Putin.

I want to also thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who worked day and night to put this CR together, especially my friend Senator LEAHY, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, and Ranking Member SHELBY for his good work. They are both retiring. Let's hope this is the last CR they do so we get an omnibus done in December.

I also want to recognize all of my other colleagues on the Appropriations Committee and in the Senate and all their great staffs, who have worked hard to make sure we don't have a needless shutdown.

Twenty months into the Democratic majority, I want to take a moment to highlight the many, many accomplishments we have secured in this Chamber, the most in recent memory. This is one of the most productive Congresses we have had in a very long time, and we have worked hard every step of the way to improve the lives of the American people, to help those in the middle class stay in the middle class, and to help those struggling to get into the middle class, making it a little easier for them to get there.

A few months ago, for instance, after the tragedies in Uvalde, Buffalo, and so many others, the Senate came together on a bipartisan basis to break the grip of the NRA and pass the first gun safety bill in three decades. It was the first gun safety bill since the Brady Act, which I was proud to author as a Member of Congress, 30 years ago. It took 30 years to get some real progress made, but we did, and we have to continue.

A few weeks later, we passed the largest expansion of veterans' benefits in a generation to help veterans suffering from cancers, lung diseases, and other ailments stemming from toxic exposure. Again, it was a bipartisan bill. Senators Tester and Moran led the way. It was a really good bill, and thousands and thousands and thousands of veterans who risked their lives for us are now getting the help they always needed and deserved.

And, as Ukraine fights for survival, we strengthened NATO—again, bipartisan—by adding Finland and Sweden to its ranks, sending Putin a clear message that he can't intimidate America or Europe.

And, as the Chinese Communist Party continues its drive to outcompete the United States, we passed the CHIPS and Science Act, the largest manufacturing, science, and jobs bill we have seen in decades, bringing jobs back to America in high-end manufacturing and in research, to keep us No. 1 on into the 21st century as the leading economy, free and democratic, in the world.

Our efforts, of course, culminated in the crowning jewel of them all, the Inflation Reduction Act—a groundbreaking bill that will lower prescription drug costs, lower the price of insulin for seniors on Medicare, and help Americans save on energy costs with the largest clean energy investments in American history.

I am so proud that my caucus stuck together in getting this important bill done. We needed every vote, and we got it—and that is only what we have done since June.

Over the past year, we have enacted the first infrastructure law in decades—the largest, biggest infrastructure law in decades. We revamped our post office, finally, and put it on a good track. We reinstated VAWA, the Violence Against Women Act, after years of trying. We finally declared lynching a Federal hate crime after a century of delay, and we unanimously ended forced arbitration for sexual harassment and assault in the workplace.

Then, of course, we have confirmed over 80 qualified nominees to the Federal bench, including Ketanji Brown Jackson as the first Black woman ever to sit on the Supreme Court. Roughly three-quarters of the President's nominees have been women and two-thirds people of color. With one nominee at a time, we are making our Federal bench a better reflection of our great country.

All of these accomplishments will echo for years in the lives of the American people. They were hard to get done, especially in a 50-50 Senate. While we have gotten so much done, there is a lot, certainly more, we have to do.

I have always said, from my first days as majority leader, that Democrats would be willing to work in a bipartisan way to get things done whenever we could, but of course, on such

important issues like climate, when we are unable to find common ground, Democrats will hold firm in the defense of our values and show the American people the choice before them in the coming election, as we did in the IRA. Sadly, since the overturning of Roe, that contrast has come into sharper focus than we have seen in years.

One example is in Arizona. For decades, overturning Roe and eliminating the right to choose had been the North Star for many in the Republican Party—for most, it seems—in orienting much of their legislation, their candidates, and their nominees they elevate to the judiciary. All too often, Republican Senators and legislators—even when they might not agree with the extreme MAGA position on abortion—go along because they are afraid of the consequences in a primary.

Well, we saw another horrifying consequence of this late last week when a judge in Arizona upheld a radical abortion ban that dates back to the time of the Civil War—even before Arizona became a State. In the blink of an eye, the right to choose has been practically eliminated in Arizona, a devastating blow to the freedoms of millions of Arizonan women.

The law held in Arizona is as cruel and radical as it comes. It dates all the way back to the 1860s—the 1860s, not the 1960s—and provides no exceptions for rape and incest. It tells young women who are raped or who are subject to incest: You have to carry the baby all the way to term. You have to carry the fetus all the way to term.

That is terrible. That is terrible.

It allows for the prosecution of doctors and, even worse, of those who assist women in accessing abortion.

In response, the MAGA state attorney general released a statement, saying: We applaud the court for upholding the will of the legislature.

The 1860s. The 1860s.

MAGA Republicans are making it clear as day exactly where they stand on the right to choose. They want to make freedom of choice extinct across the country—period.

The Arizona ruling is hardly the only example of Republican State legislatures, as we see in places like Indiana, South Carolina, and many others, that have already introduced or enacted restrictions with few exceptions for rape and incest.

Look, at the end of the day, this isn't about States' rights despite what Republicans have claimed. This is about getting rid of the right to choose in its entirety. If anyone has any doubts, look no further than the national ban that was introduced right here in the Senate not 3 weeks ago.

And while Republicans will try to deflect, distort, or mainly distract from their record—they don't like talking about this because they know the American people are not on their side, but their hard-right, MAGA core is—they are stuck. The fact is that every

Senate Republican—every Senate Republican—is already on record as voting in favor of a national ban—sometimes more than once—here on the floor.

So the contrast has become clear—clear, clear as could be: While Democrats want to protect a woman's freedom to choose, MAGA Republicans want to take away that right with proposals to ban freedom of choice in its entirety and to punish women and doctors for carrying out abortions, even past bans, with no exceptions for rape or incest. We are seeing it play out across the country, and it is chilling to the bone.

Democrats will keep fighting these MAGA abortion bans—these radical MAGA abortion bans—and make clear to all that we are the party fighting to protect people's freedoms over their own bodies.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

HURRICANE IAN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, first, this morning, the Senate and the entire country are watching the news and praying for the people of the great State of Florida, where a seemingly massive, massive hurricane is poised to make landfall soon. I understand the current forecast suggests that Hurricane Ian may be both extremely powerful and unusually slow-moving, a terrible combination for the citizens and communities in its path.

Our colleague the senior Senator from Florida reported this morning that State officials and the relevant Federal Agencies have been working well together and that, thus far, every request Florida has made of the Federal Government has been approved. The bipartisan government funding bill the Senate is on track to pass this week will ensure that the Federal Disaster Relief Fund is fully resourced at this critical moment.

We are all keeping the people of Florida at the forefront of our thoughts and will stand ready to help our colleagues from Florida, the Governor, and local officials however we can.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Now, Mr. President, on a completely different matter, the path to keeping the government open and funded has been clear for weeks now. The solution was always going to be a clean, bipartisan continuing resolution, negotiated by Senators SHELBY and LEAHY, without any unrelated, partisan language jammed in. Our Democratic colleagues tried to complicate things by jamming in a phony, partisan figleaf on the subject of permitting reform.

Republicans strongly support real, substantive permitting reform. We are actually leading that charge. Senator CAPITO has an outstanding bill that would make significant changes to make it easier to build things in our

country, create jobs in our country, and unleash domestic energy in our country.

The problem was that the Schumer-Manchin language was not actual permitting reform by any stretch. It was a phony figleaf. It was designed to create the illusion of progress while sapping the political will to tackle the issue in any meaningful way. The Democrats carefully tailored the bill to avoid making any—any—impactful changes to permitting laws. In fact, we had panicked State-level elected officials from around the country writing the Senate to explain how the Democrats' bill would actually make the existing problems even worse. Fortunately, the Senate saw through the political game, and the phony figleaf didn't have the votes.

So I am glad that our colleagues capitulated and abandoned their phony figleaf. I look forward to a bipartisan funding bill coming to the floor this week, and I hope our Democratic colleagues will push the liberal special interests aside and let actual, robust permitting reform become law someday soon.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. President, on another matter, 2 years ago, the American people elected a President who claimed he would govern as a uniting moderate. In underscoring that mandate, voters gave him unusually small coattails—the slimmest possible majority—in Congress.

The all-Democratic government inherited an economy that was, by every account, already primed and ready for economic recovery. Vaccines were already flooding the country. A major bipartisan stimulus had just passed, literally, days earlier. And remember, before the temporary COVID shot, years of Republican policies had our economic fundamentals humming along with low inflation, low unemployment, and robust growth, an outstanding trifecta for working families. To put it as plainly as possible, the Democrats had one job: Just don't mess things up.

But, alas, fast-forward to today.

Overall inflation is a staggering 13.2 percent since President Biden and his party came into power; consumer prices—through the roof; supply chain chaos left and right; the worst single year for both grocery inflation and electricity inflation since the fallout back in the Jimmy Carter era. The stock market has plummeted below where it was when President Biden took office, cutting the value of Americans' retirement savings just as the cost of living has soared. America's real wages—our citizens' buying power after inflation—is lower today than it was the moment President Biden put his hand on the Bible.

The Democrats asked for total control. They got total control, and they created a total disaster. The net effect of this far-left policy experiment has been the equivalent of all-out economic warfare against the American middle class. But alas, Democrats hardly seem to even much less care.

The same day the latest sky-high monthly inflation report came out, our colleagues literally headed down Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House for a folk music concert—folk music concert—celebrating additional hundreds of billions they had just dumped—dumped—into "green" energy subsidies.

Do you know who isn't partying? Working families in Wisconsin who are paying a "Democratic Inflation Tax" averaging \$673 every single month just to tread water. In Georgia, that is \$681 every month and in Colorado, \$953 every month.

None of this had to happen. It didn't have to happen. Democrats were literally warned in advance that their plans for far-left reckless spending would send inflation through the roof and crush normal Americans.

So what did our colleagues do? One gigantic party-line spending bill in 2021, another huge, reckless taxing and spending spree just this past summer, and student loan socialism that has cashiers and carpenters eating the graduate school debt of doctors and lawyers. It adds up to nearly \$3 trillion of party-line waste—\$3 trillion of party-line waste. And it adds up to 13.2 percent inflation and counting.

So Democrats wanted one-party control of Washington; they got it. They promptly used that power to create a literal nightmare for American families.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN CALIPARI

Mr. President, now one final matter, in my home State of Kentucky, college basketball ranks up there with horseracing as one of our signature pastimes. Our greatest players have become local heroes. Our greatest seasons have become local legends. So it is no surprise, then, that our basketball coaches are larger-than-life figures.

Plenty of notable ones have passed through the halls of our universities. But the University of Kentucky's John Calipari—Coach Cal to most of us—is already one for the history books.

Of course, there is his record with the program: 365 wins, 4 Final Four appearances, and a National Championship.

There is also his record of public service. During the past 13 years with UK, Coach Cal has leveraged his position in the public eye to transform the face of charitable giving in Kentucky. In recognition of his work, the organization Multiplying Good presented Coach Cal with their Jefferson Award for public service this year. Previous recipients of this prestigious award include Oprah Winfrey, Steve Jobs, Colin Powell. Coach Cal is the first men's college basketball coach to receive the honor.

Sometimes Coach Cal's efforts are local. Every Thanksgiving, he helps folks around Lexington enjoy the family meal they deserve. Every Christmas, he gathers presents for children in need. But sometimes, Coach Cal's efforts touch every corner of the Commonwealth. As Kentucky reeled from

multiple crises in the past few years, his assistance has proved invaluable.

During the pandemic, he helped Fayette County students access the resources they needed to continue their schooling from home.

When tornadoes hit Western Kentucky last winter, he rallied Kentuckians to raise money through a telethon. And when heavy rainfall and floods damaged communities in Eastern Kentucky this summer, he did the same, pulling our State together to help victims rebuild. In total—in total—Coach Cal's telethons have raised more than \$12 million for charitable ventures in Kentucky and across the world.

So thank you. Thank you, Coach Cal, for your service to our State. And congratulations on receiving this distinguished award.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada.

FIVE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF LAS VEGAS,
NEVADA SHOOTING

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the memories of the lives we lost and all who were injured or impacted in Las Vegas on October 1, 2017.

Five years ago, Nevada experienced tragedy on an unprecedented scale. In just 10 minutes—10 minutes—58 innocent lives were taken, hundreds of people were injured by gunfire, and hundreds more were injured in the chaos that followed.

Sadly, in the years since, two more victims of that night's attacks died because of the injuries they received during that shooting, bringing the death toll to 60.

During the attack, scores of heroic first responders—police officers, firefighters, paramedics, and others—arrived at the scene in an attempt to neutralize the threat and provide aid to the victims. Then hundreds of doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals—well, they worked nonstop to save the lives of those on the scene.

That day, the attack on the Route 91 Harvest Festival became the deadliest mass shooting in American history. Let me repeat that: the deadliest mass shooting in American history.

And to this day—sadly, even with all of the mass shootings we have endured over the past few years since then—1 October—1 October—still remains the single deadliest mass shooting in American history.

All it took—all it took—was just 10 minutes—10 minutes—for dozens of lives to be cut short, hundreds more injured and traumatized, with emotional and physical scars they will carry with them for the rest of their lives.

These were our friends. These were our neighbors. For some, they were their family. And now there are 60 families who will never be the same, 60 families who will forever have an empty chair every night at their kitchen table.

One October changed our community and the history of our State forever. It left a hole that can never be filled.

We are united in our grief for those we lost and also in our gratitude and admiration for the heroes that day who worked to rescue and aid those in danger. This dark day put on full display the tight-knit community of southern Nevada that we all know and love.

We came together to celebrate and thank the heroism for those who helped: our law enforcement officers, our first responders, our medical professionals, and so many everyday people. They just ran toward danger. They ran toward danger to help to get people to safety.

Hundreds lined up for blocks to donate blood. They offered their cars for people who were displaced by the chaos. Our community—well, it rallied together not just in the immediate aftermath but in the days, weeks, months, and now years after. I know why—because we are Vegas Strong, we are Nevada Strong.

Today, as we reflect on the 5-year anniversary since this horrific event, I stand here to honor the 60 individuals who lost their lives, the hundreds of survivors, and all of those—all of those—who experienced that traumatic event.

I stand here today to honor the heroes—our first responders, our community members—those who risked their lives to help others.

In Nevada, the Vegas Strong Resiliency Center that supports those affected by the 1 October tragedy, well, they launched a wide array of efforts to help people heal from and cope with the trauma and take action to honor the victims.

I have a floor chart here. I know it is a little hard to see, but one of the projects the Resiliency Center is organizing on this fifth anniversary is creating a lantern. This is a picture of a lantern. It has an outline of the Las Vegas skyline.

This lantern is going to serve as a sign of solidarity and respect for victims, survivors, and responders to the tragic shooting as it lights up the night with hope, because the lanterns are a symbol, representing the fact that out of the darkness of that night came the strongest light shining on countless examples of heroism—big and small—displayed by Nevadans.

But as we remember this fifth anniversary, we must also recommit ourselves to action.

In the nearly 5 years since 1 October, the epidemic of gun violence has impacted even more communities and broke more families' hearts all across our great Nation.

Finally, after the recent mass shooting at an elementary school in Uvalde, TX, Congress was able to finally come together and act.

We passed the most significant gun safety legislation in almost 30 years. This was a breakthrough, and we know it will help save lives, keeping guns out of the hands of dangerous people. But it cannot be an end point.

We can and we must do more to prevent these shootings. I know we can do

this while also respecting people's constitutional rights. We can take commonsense, bipartisan action, like permanently banning bump stocks and high-capacity magazines which allowed the 1 October shooter to fire so many rounds and cause so much carnage. Bump stocks, in particular, are modifications that only make guns more deadly.

The previous administration took regulatory action to address this issue, but the move to ban bump stocks now faces a wave of troubling legal challenges that threaten to reverse that progress.

That is why I call on this Chamber to finally pass legislation that will permanently ban bump stocks—permanently ban bump stocks—and cut off access to these deadly and unnecessary weapons devices.

Remember—remember this—with these devices, a shooter can fire hundreds of rounds to end or damage lives in mere minutes; 1 October, just 10 minutes.

Inaction is not an option. We owe it to those who experienced the pain of gun violence to do more. We owe it to the future generations to keep up our efforts.

At the end of the day, this is all about keeping communities safe. We must continue working to prevent more tragedies like the one that brought so much heartbreak to my hometown.

I ask all of my colleagues in this Chamber to remember and honor the memory of the 60 victims of 1 October as we mark this 5-year anniversary.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican whip.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, we are coming up now on 2 years of Democratic governance here in Washington, 2 years in which Democrats have controlled Congress and the White House, and the result of their 2 years in power is not encouraging. Economic insecurity is rampant; our energy security situation has worsened; and on the national security front, we are facing a raging crisis at our southern border, plus a disturbing increase in violent crime across the country.

If there has been one defining feature of Democrat governance over the past 20 months, it is inflation. When President Biden took office, inflation was at 1.4 percent—well within the target inflation rate of 2 percent—but then Democrats decided to pass a massive \$1.9 trillion spending spree, the so-called American Rescue Plan Act. The legislation flooded the economy with unnecessary government money, and the economy overheated as a result. Inflation quickly began climbing and then climbing some more and then some more after that.

We have now spent 6 straight months with inflation above 8 percent—6 straight months. The last time inflation was this bad, "E.T." was about to

hit theaters, and we still had more than a year to wait for “Return of the Jedi.” For those who weren’t around then, that was 40 years ago, in 1982.

Inflation, of course, has meant tremendous economic pain for the American people: huge grocery store bills, big utility bills, high prices at the pump. Americans are dipping into their savings to make ends meet. They are cutting back on essentials or putting basic living expenses on their credit cards.

In the month of August alone, inflation cost the average American household a staggering \$715—\$715, 1 month. Even if prices stopped increasing tomorrow, the inflation that we have already experienced will cost the average American household more than \$8,500 over the next year—\$8,500. That is a lot of money—a lot. That is a kid’s braces, essential car repairs, essential home repairs. It is the difference between putting something away for the kids’ college or leaving the education savings account empty. It is the difference between putting money away for retirement or spending every penny on necessities. And for too many families, that is the difference between breaking even or finding themselves in debt or worse.

Americans’ economic security has taken a serious hit under Democrat control in Washington, and there is little evidence to suggest that things are going to get any better anytime soon. Our economy is weakening. We have posted negative economic growth for each of the past two quarters, and estimates for third-quarter growth are not promising. Major companies have announced job cuts, and the nonpartisan Conference Board is projecting a recession in the coming months.

Unfortunately, the bad news is not confined to inflation or slowdowns in economic growth, neither of which, I should note, will be helped by Democrats’ misleadingly named Inflation Reduction Act or by President Biden’s massive student loan giveaway, which the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget notes will “meaningfully boost inflation.”

One major driver of inflation is high energy prices, and we are facing a concerning situation on the energy front. As every American who has paid an electricity bill or filled up his or her car is well aware, energy has gotten much more expensive in Joe Biden’s America. Gas prices are up 57 percent since President Biden took office, and, after a temporary decline, they are on the rise again. Electricity prices were up 15.8 percent in August—the biggest year-over-year increase since August of 1981. Utility gas service is up 33 percent. And Americans are facing high prices to heat their homes this winter.

While there are multiple reasons for high oil and gas prices, Democrats’ hostility to conventional energy production is contributing to this energy price crisis. I am a big supporter of alternative energy, and I have been

working for years in Congress to advance renewable energy technology, but the fact of the matter is that we are still a long way from being able to rely exclusively on alternative energy technologies.

But that isn’t something that Democrats seem able to accept. They want their Green New Deal future, and they want it now. So despite our continued need for oil and gas resources, President Biden has adopted an energy agenda that is hostile to conventional energy production: canceling the Keystone XL Pipeline—an environmentally responsible pipeline project that would have reinforced our energy infrastructure; discouraging investment in conventional energy; limiting oil and gas leasing. The list goes on. And I haven’t even mentioned Democrats’ latest measure: a round of tax hikes on oil and gas companies that will drive up Americans’ energy bills and continue to discourage conventional energy production here at home.

The result of all this, the result of Democrats’ attempt to force an alternative energy future before that future is fully ready, will be reducing our energy security and prolonging the high energy prices that are hitting families and businesses.

Our Nation’s energy security has declined under the Biden administration, and so has our national security. I came to the floor last week to talk yet again about another raging crisis at our southern border—a crisis the President and Democrats are apparently content to continue to ignore. The flow of illegal immigration across our southern border has reached record levels. The Border Patrol and border facilities are overwhelmed, and border communities are struggling. The President and the Democrats, it would appear, could not care less.

Border security is an essential part of national security. It is not just individuals hoping for a better life who are attempting to make their way illegally across our southern border; all sorts of dangerous individuals are attempting to make their way across as well, from gang members, to human smugglers, to possible terrorists. So far this fiscal year, the Border Patrol has encountered 78 individuals on the terror watchlist attempting to cross our southern border illegally—78. And that is the number of individuals the Border Patrol has managed to apprehend. Given the incredible strain that Customs and Border Protection is under, it is entirely possible that other individuals on the watchlist have entered the country without our knowledge.

One thing we do know is that illegal drugs are flowing across our southern border and contributing to violent crime. My State is almost as far from the southern border as it is possible to get, but the flow of illegal drugs across the southern border has a direct impact on crime in our communities in South Dakota. The sheriff in my home county in South Dakota recently stat-

ed that there is a “direct connection between the high percentage of our violent crimes [in Minnehaha County] to the use and distribution of illegal drugs, in particular the drugs that are poisoning our community.” A substantial part of those drugs, he went on to note, are coming from Mexican cartels across the southern border.

Mr. President, there is a lot more to say about the way our Nation’s security has declined over the past 2 years. There is the increase in violent crime—an increase undoubtedly driven in part by woke Democrat prosecutors’ lax attitude toward serious crimes and Democrats’ willingness to accommodate the “defund the police” movement. There is our botched withdrawal from Afghanistan—a national security debacle that weakened our standing internationally and emboldened terrorists and the Taliban. And there are the President’s ill-conceived plans for a nuclear deal with Iran.

But I will stop here. Suffice it to say that it has been a rough couple of years under Democrat governance on both the economic and the security fronts, and if Democrats get a chance to continue with their policies, I expect the situation will continue to get worse.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, interesting time we have here in the U.S. Senate. When the Democrats took over this body, we were coming out of a pandemic and not even close to being fully out of the pandemic yet. If you think back then, people didn’t have shots in their arms, the economy was in tough shape, and Democrats responded in a way that helped turn this economy around and helped put us on firm footing as a leading economic driver in this world.

It is interesting as I hear some of my folks on the other side of the aisle talk about things like inflation as it applies to food. I happen to have a couple of bills that will deal with that issue, and hopefully we can take it up in the lameduck. I don’t think we are going to have time to take it up before the election. But that will help not only our cow-calf producers but also consumers when it comes to meat prices. I would hope that we get a large number of folks from across the aisle to support us on that.

When we talk about the southern border and we talk about national security—and I am going to approach national security in a little different vein here with this CR—I think it is important to note that folks bring up a lot of things wrong, with few solutions.

The bottom line is that we need more manpower and we need more technology on the southern border. I have been down there, and I have seen how these folks bring drugs across the line. They don’t put it in backpacks—some, but very little. Most come across in cars and trucks and equipment. If we have the technology to be able to, for

lack of a better term, x-ray these vehicles, we can make a big inroad on what is going on from a drug standpoint. If we have the manpower—which, by the way, we are very undermanned as far as Border Patrol and border protection—we could make inroads into illegal border crossings also.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. President, I am not here to talk about any of that stuff, per se. What I do want to talk about is a thing called a continuing resolution because that is what we are going to vote on hopefully today or tomorrow. Without this continuing resolution, we will be shutting down the government, so I would encourage all my fellow Senators to vote for this continuing resolution.

I am going to approach it from my position as chairman of the Appropriations Defense Subcommittee, the committee that funds our military. Our Armed Forces need this funding, this continuing resolution, for their paychecks, along with the thousands of civilian employees whom the Department of Defense employs.

The fact that we are debating a continuing resolution instead of a full government funding bill is truly disappointing. It is disappointing because Federal Government funding is Congress's primary job. People of Montana did not send me to the U.S. Senate to play politics and put off work that needs to be done to another day; they sent me here to get the job done. Failing to pass this CR would harm families, businesses, agriculture all across our great Nation. So step 1 is passing this continuing resolution, not kicking the can further down the road.

But let's do ourselves a favor. Let's make sure that this is the last CR before we agree to fiscal year 2023's funding package. I can tell you that after working for the last nearly 2 years as chair of the Appropriations Defense Subcommittee, that this bill shouldn't be about politics or partisanship; it should be about national security, keeping our Nation safe. But by continuing to pass CRs, our military will be operating on outdated budgets, our troops will not have the resources that they need to operate at the highest level, and it will waste taxpayer money.

Make no mistake about it, there are countries out there that wish to do us harm. With every continuing resolution, we are giving our enemies—and I don't need to bring them up per list—the ability to take a second breath and come after us: Russia in Ukraine; China, which is rapidly modernizing their military and threatening our technological edge. This is happening, along with a bunch of other stuff, while we are limiting our military's ability to assess emerging threats around the globe.

Without a full appropriations package, our Armed Forces lack certainty needed to operate to their fullest potential—certainty that is so important for everything. It is important for busi-

ness, it is important for families, and it is important for our armed services.

I know what it takes to craft these bills because, quite honestly, we worked on a pretty darned good appropriations bill, but we weren't allowed to bring it up. For the sake of our national security and for our men and women in uniform, we need to work in a bipartisan way.

If you want to talk about what is wrong with this country, the main thing that is wrong with this country is we point to the different issues and areas that we could do better on. The main thing that is wrong with this country right now is dysfunction in Washington, DC, and the fact that this place is totally divided, and everything is about politics first and policy second.

We need to find common ground. Failure to find common ground puts our troops and our Nation and, quite frankly, the whole world in danger.

I will close by saying that my colleagues need to pass this resolution, and we need to make sure that this is the last continuing resolution that we pass; that, in fact, we have full appropriations bills done in the proper timeline, which is at the end of the fiscal year, which is the end of September. Anything less should be considered a failure.

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.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. 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.

HURRICANE IAN AND TYPHOON MERBOK

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, we are all watching the news this morning, as a very, very threatening and ferocious hurricane is bearing down on Florida, a storm that is causing great anxiety. Hopefully, people are as prepared as they can be, but the consequences of these storms, these disasters that we are seeing, are ravaging in ways that are seemingly more ferocious than before.

We saw that last week in Puerto Rico, and, just about 10 days ago, we felt the effects of Typhoon Merbok on the western coast of Alaska. I would like to take just a few minutes here this afternoon because, as I was watching the news as this Hurricane Ian is approaching the coast of Florida, I can't help but think about what the folks back home are facing as they have lived through a very terrifying disaster like the typhoon and then what happens next, because, unfortunately—and you know in your State very well with the fires that ravaged New Mexico—disasters come through and the attention of the country is focused on that, and we all want to be there to be of help and of assistance.

We have FEMA and we have the Red Cross, and we have everybody that is there, and it is all very important and very well intended. But then the next disaster comes. So maybe—I don't know—maybe, the people in New Mexico are thinking that we have forgotten them. I don't want the people of Alaska to think that we have forgotten what happened in their communities.

Typhoon Merbok came up from Japan, came across the gulf, up into the Bering Sea, and impacted an area of land on the coast of Alaska in excess of 1,000 miles.

To put it into context, it is as if the entire west coast of the United States—from the Canadian border all the way down to Mexico—were impacted and inundated by one massive storm. That is the size and the scope of what we experienced: hurricane-force winds and, in the Bering Sea, waves as high as 50 feet.

The impact to the land was extraordinary, with the strength of the wind, but it was this massive storm surge that came. We get tough storms in the Bering Sea. We get really tough storms in the Gulf of Alaska. But what we saw this year was a storm that was earlier in its intensity than we have seen in previous years.

Oftentimes, people think about Alaska and think, man, it must be tough when the ice is formed out over the whole sea and everything is locked in. Actually, that is when we have safety, because when there is ice, it takes you all the way up to the shoreline, and these massive storms with the wind can't build the waves to that level to eat away at the shore, to cause the destruction that we are seeing with, again, the intensity of the impact of this storm.

We in Alaska are lucky. There were no people who were killed or injured. Really, it is astonishing, given all that the area sustained. I think part of that was just due to being prepared, knowing that everybody had to hunker down. But when your community then is, literally, separated in two, as they were in Hooper Bay, where on the old side of town you are cut off from your evacuation center, which is the school, because the waters have risen to the point where it is no longer accessible, there is no way to get to safety, and it is blowing 80 miles an hour in the middle of the night, the only place that you can go to is the next house up, hoping it is going to be a little bit higher above the water.

And so it is a recognition that preparation is going to be key to saving lives, but it is also making sure that our coastal communities that are so exposed, as the many in Western Alaska are, that they are able to push back or hold back to the extent possible.

For some of the erosion, the threat that comes their way, we have seawalls that are nothing more than boulders that are built up, dunes and berms that have been built over the years. But, again, we recognize how minimal that

is in terms of a protective barrier when you have the extent and intensity of these storms.

This is where many Alaskans are feeling very exposed and very vulnerable, knowing we made it through this storm, but what happens with the next one, because now that berm in Shaktoolik is completely eroded away. For a good portion of the seawall in Nome, the rocks are just jumbled and scattered. What we saw in Elim, around their front street there, they had a seawall of sorts. It was like a giant had come in and just picked up those boulders and sprinkled them, threw them all around. The front street there that had just been asphalted a couple of years ago—the pieces of asphalt almost lifted up, peeled back like a piece of taffy, just curled over the beach there. You look at that and you cannot comprehend the strength of that storm surge, the strength of what had caused that to just buckle and heave and, literally, melt.

I had a chance over this weekend to go and visit the area. I flew up to Nome, and we were able to go out to Golovin and Elim on the first day. Elim is a community of about 125 people—pretty small. It is pretty small but pretty important in terms of what they do. They are trying to build a little subsistence harbor there. They are resilient people. But some of what we saw with the erosion and what that will mean to them and their community—what it is going to mean to them and their water supply.

Golovin is a little bit bigger of a community, several hundred people. Golovin was impacted in a way and a manner that was just almost mind-boggling. The surge from the storm came up over this isthmus there, literally lifting homes up off their foundation, floating them and depositing them in different locations.

We went down a couple of different streets, and you come around and there is a house literally in the middle of the road, and people are moving their four-wheelers on either side of it because the house is in the middle of the road. Another one on another corner that had been floated across was just kind of catawampus. These homes will never be habitable again.

Sand—you look at it from the air, and it is lovely golden sand, not something you would expect to see on the coast of Western Alaska. But this sand now has inundated the entire lower part of the community, making it a thick, spongy, soft—interesting, but it is really very, very impractical in terms of how we move this wet, soggy sand out of everything that has come into the community here.

The areas underneath the homes—the homes in most of these western communities are elevated on stilts, not very high but they are all elevated. They are elevated because you do have instances of flooding. But the flooding was so high that it came up underneath

the belly board of these homes and saturated the insulation underneath with water. But worse to the point is that water was mixed with the diesel, the diesel that had come from people's home heating fuel, their stove oil, the fuel they may have had for their snow machines or their four-wheelers. You could smell, going into the homes, the diesel that was below. What everyone was doing was literally ripping the insulation out from underneath their homes and buckets full of—dozer loads full of wet, soggy, contaminated insulation was being hauled off to the dump.

So that is all the activity that is going on now, and it is fast and it is frenetic. And it needs to be because on the day that I was there in Golovin and Elim, then 2 days later when I was in Hooper Bay and Chevak, the weather was kind of nice. It was decent. But in about 2 weeks—in about maybe 3 weeks—winter comes. Winter is on its way.

When winter comes, you can't move around. When the ice comes down out of the north, you don't have fuel barges that return to the area until the spring. That fuel barge comes in maybe May; in the upper river regions, June. Think about that. If you lost your fuel and the last fuel barge has come and gone and you weren't filled up, it is a long wait. What do you do? If you can't barge it in, you fly it in. Imagine what it means to fly in your fuel into these villages.

Construction materials. How do we get the construction materials up there, whether it is the sheetrock or the plywood or the insulation? You put it on the barge. Well, the last barges are like the fuel trucks. Barges won't be back until the spring. Right now, people are planning on: I need to fix up my home, but I am not going to be able to get the materials until June. What happens in the meantime? What happens in the meantime as winter comes? If you don't have any insulation under your home, if you haven't been able to get your home situated, you are going to be pretty vulnerable.

You may have made it through the storm, but it may be a very, very difficult and cold winter. It may be that your family of eight is now going to have to move in with another family that is already in an overcrowded situation. We don't have extra housing. There is no extra housing.

Everybody is moving as quickly as they possibly can to try to bring relief. We have the National Guard that are doing amazing things. Red Cross was out there analyzing. We were out there with the FEMA administrator. I took her to Nome, was able to take her to Golovin. She was able to see the destruction that came to the fish camps right outside of Nome. Fish camps are not where people go for a holiday. Fish camp is where people work. This is where they harvest and they process and they prepare their food, whether it is the salmon nets to catch the salmon,

the Beluga nets, the gear that they have for their fishing. If they are able to get caribou or moose, this is where they come and they process. They harvested their berries. Everything kind of comes together at fish camp. Then you are ready for winter.

What happens when you have harvested and gathered and fished and you put it all in your freezer and then the power goes out, as it did for multiple days, and you lose everything in your freezer? The power went out here in Washington, DC, when I was back in Alaska in August, and I lost the stuff in my freezer. You know what? I am just fine. I can go down to the grocery store here. Folks in Elim don't have that opportunity.

The people in Golovin and Chevak and Hooper Bay and Shaktoolik and all the other places that have been impacted—the outdoors is their grocery store and the outdoor grocery store is now shut down because salmon season is over, fishing is pretty much over, berries are gone, moose and caribou—maybe they will be able to get a little bit of game, maybe not.

Think about what that means when your food source is now gone. You lost your boat because that was swept away or demolished. You have lost your motor. This is not a recreational boat. This is how you feed your family; this is how you live. The four-wheelers are just thrown up and crumbled and crushed. That is not recreation; that is how people move around. When you think about the ability then to—what do you do now? What do you do now?

I am sharing this with people because this is what has been keeping me up at night and getting me up really early in the morning to figure out what more we can do—what more we can do to help the people in these small communities that lived through a very scary natural disaster but who have looming in front of them perhaps a very frightening winter—a cold winter, one where their food resource is gone, where the expense of living has always been high, but now—we don't even know how to account for how high it is.

I was talking about this with a guy in Chevak who said he had ordered a little bit of lumber. He was working on something. He didn't even say what it was. It was \$1,500 worth of lumber, but it cost him \$2,200 to get it there, to freight it up.

I went into the grocery store, as I do in as many of the small towns and villages as I can. I always price things like, What is a box of Tide? I know what it is in Anchorage, I know what it is in Fairbanks, but in Chevak, it is \$45 before the tax is added on to it.

But I had heard—I had heard this crazy story that water, bottled water, was more expensive than fuel. That can't possibly be. Fuel is \$7 a gallon out there in Nome and probably more than that in Chevak. A 24-pack of bottled water—I don't know what the label was, it was like generic bottled water you probably get at Costco—\$91.

That did include tax. It was \$91 for bottled water. And this is in a community where they were still on a boil water notice because they were just still checking out their water systems.

We are working hard. Nobody is sitting back and waiting for the Federal Government to come in and help them because they don't have time. They are cleaning things up.

The FEMA administrator saw in Nome—in fairness compared to where she was in Puerto Rico, it probably didn't look that bad. But when you peel it back and you look at the damage and you realize the vulnerability going forward into this winter, that is where it looks scary.

So we are using every resource that we have—every volunteer, every agency. People are there and they are putting their muscle into it. We have asked for the same support that President Biden has given to Puerto Rico with a 100 percent cost-share waiver for the first 30 days to get things cleaned up. I am hopeful—I am desperately hopeful—that the administration hears us on that.

For us, right now, it is this immediacy of time to get things pulled back together as fully as we possibly can because we cannot—they cannot—be in a situation where, in the middle of winter, when resources may be there but they are a long way away and they are very expensive, that we then realize that we have to provide additional support and additional relief.

There is a resilience in Alaska and, certainly, a resilience in Western Alaska. These people have lived in these villages for thousands of years—maybe not exactly the same place, but they are not going anywhere. They are not going anywhere.

And what I feel compelled to do is everything in my power to make sure that they are not forgotten and that they and their families are able to move forward in these next months.

With that, I just share that my thoughts and my prayers are not just limited to those in Alaska, but we think about all those who have suffered due to disasters, whether in New Mexico, in Puerto Rico, or those who are very, very fearful in Florida right now.

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. 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.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, despite the gridlock that occasionally grips this Chamber, the Senate has managed to advance some great bipartisan bills since the beginning of this Congress.

All of the attention seems to focus on our disagreements, not where we agree,

and there is no question that there are big disagreements here and for good reasons. But the media seems to miss the smaller but no less important bills that earn bipartisan support every day.

Over the last couple of years, the Senate has unanimously—unanimously—approved bills that I have introduced to support victims of child abuse, provide tax relief to survivors of human trafficking, strengthening our trade relationships with Canada and Mexico, and building safer and healthier communities.

It is no secret that our country is in the midst of a mental health crisis. We do not have a mental health delivery system in America. We made some great strides recently with the Mental Health and Safe Communities Act that made an unprecedented investment in community-based mental health care.

We all know that the mental health crisis does not discriminate. It affects people of all ages, from all walks of life, and it is creating serious challenges for law enforcement who are often the first to respond when someone is experiencing a mental health crisis. Police officers will tell you that they don't have the training or expertise, ordinarily, to assist these individuals in the most effective way possible because they are not mental health professionals. We can't expect the police to solve every problem that they face on the streets of our country, whether it has to do with mental health, drug overdoses, homelessness, or the like. They have simply been asked to do too much without the resources or support they need, and that needs to change.

That is where the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program comes in. For nearly two decades, this program has provided critical grants to help law enforcement assist individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. That includes mental health courts, crisis intervention teams, and other programs that promote public safety and improve mental health outcomes and reduce recidivism.

Communities across my State of Texas are working to bridge the gap between criminal justice and mental health, and I was able to hear about some of that work during the August recess.

In the city of Pharr, in the Rio Grande Valley, for example, I sat down with local law enforcement officers and mental health professionals, as well as local civic leaders, to talk about the city's innovative mental health unit.

The Pharr Police Department launched this unit in 2020 to improve the quality of outcomes for individuals in crisis and the community as a whole. Mental health officers are trained to respond to these crises in the most effective and compassionate way possible, and the city of Pharr has experienced great results over the last couple of years. The program has even been recognized as the "Organization of the Year" at the Texas Crisis Inter-

vention Team Association annual conference.

It is a shining success story, and the Pharr Police Department is eager to do more. That is why the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Grant Program is important—because it provides additional resources.

In the past, the mental health unit in the city of Pharr received a \$550,000 grant, which will be used to expand the reach and impact of the program in the community, and I introduced a bill with Senator KLOBUCHAR, our colleague from Minnesota, to ensure that these grants can deliver even bigger benefits.

Our bill would allow grants to be used for mental health courts and veterans treatment programs—two incredible resources to provide individuals who are struggling with the treatment they need.

Grant recipients could also use these funds to improve officer training. As I said, most police officers aren't trained to deal with people in a mental health crisis, and things like deescalation training are really important for the safety of the person experiencing the crisis as well as the law enforcement officer.

But these grants can also enhance services for substance use disorders and suicide prevention programs, and they would be able to invest in 24/7, 365-day crisis response capabilities.

All of these recommendations in this legislation came from the men and women on the frontlines. They come face-to-face with America's mental health crisis every day, and these are the changes that they have suggested and asked for.

But, obviously, I am not alone in supporting the program. As I said, this bill was introduced with Senator KLOBUCHAR, and it has more than a dozen bipartisan cosponsors, including the chairman and the ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee. And the bill passed the U.S. Senate last summer with unanimous support.

So that is just one example of the bipartisan work we have done here that doesn't get a lot of attention but will go a long way to improve our criminal justice system and how it deals with people who are struggling.

Last year, the Senate approved legislation that I introduced with Senator WHITEHOUSE, the Senator from Rhode Island, to help incarcerated individuals break the cycle of addiction. This legislation updates the Residential Substance Abuse Treatment Program and expands it to treatment in jails and prisons across the country. The program has already provided incarcerated individuals with access to treatment for substance use disorders. That treatment is coupled with programs to prepare these men and women for reentry and to provide community-based treatment once they are released, hopefully, to help them lead productive, law-abiding lives.

Our legislation opens up even more opportunities for successful rehabilitation and continued recovery, and it

gives providers more options when it comes to treating substance use disorders. It requires program staff to be trained on the science of addiction, evidence-based therapies, and strategies for continuity of care. And it ensures programs are affiliated with providers who can continue treatment after incarceration.

We have done a lot of good work, if I can say so myself, on a bipartisan basis, to try to deal with things like addiction, things like mental health crises because typically what happens in the absence of these programs is law enforcement ends up getting a 9-1-1 call, and they have nowhere to take the person other than to the local jail.

Not that long ago, I met with a group of major city police chiefs, and I was asked by a friend of mine—one of the police chiefs—who said: Would you like to meet the largest mental health provider in the country? He is the police chief of the Los Angeles Police Department.

So in the absence of these kinds of programs, these innovative programs, what you are seeing is people warehoused in jails or prisons, only to repeat their offenses again because the core problems that they are experiencing aren't being addressed. That is true in addiction. That is true with mental health.

So these changes that I am talking about were not drafted in a vacuum. We consulted with law enforcement, criminal justice specialists, and behavioral health experts. And, once again, this bill passed unanimously in the Senate.

Despite the fact that these two bills that I have talked about got support of 100 Senators, both have hit a brick wall in the House. The House has yet to schedule a vote on either one of those pieces of legislation. It is not clear to me why the House won't take up and pass these obviously nonpartisan, important pieces of legislation.

These are two bills to improve the way our criminal justice system supports people who are struggling and gives them the best possible shot at healthy and productive lives.

They were drafted here, as I said, on a bipartisan basis, based on feedback and input of the people who know this topic best, and they will improve public safety and individual outcomes.

So I hope the House will take up and pass these bills without further delay. I hope there isn't a resistance to these bills because some of this money goes to fund police departments.

As we have seen over the last couple of years, some of our Democratic colleagues reflexively oppose any effort to send funding to police departments. We all remember the "defund the police" movement.

When this became a major political liability, though, obviously, those who had advocated for defunding the police tried to run for cover.

Last week, the House passed a partisan police funding bill that is loaded

down with so many poison pills that it stands no chance of becoming law here in the Senate. In short, they can now say they voted for a police funding bill, even though they know it is guaranteed to go nowhere.

Meanwhile, there are great bipartisan bills that do support the police that are just one vote and a signature away from becoming law. The difference is, these aren't messaging bills. These aren't designed to provide people with political cover or mistaken positions that they have taken in the past. The goal was never to make a point or force a tough vote on our colleagues across the aisle.

Bipartisan, good policy—these bills give law enforcement the tools they need in order to succeed at the very difficult job we know they have, and both of them passed the Senate without a single dissenting vote.

So given the fact that America is facing a mental health crisis and an overdose epidemic, there could not be a more important time to take up and pass these bills.

So I hope if anybody in the House is listening in the leadership, they will consider the fact that by one vote they can get these bills on the President's desk, and we can't let antipolice rhetoric stand in the way of good policy or helping those who deserve and need our help.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

IRAN

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, the human spirit abhors tyranny.

Since February, the world has witnessed examples of extraordinary courage. In Ukraine, we have watched ordinary men and women mount a defense of their homes and their homeland against overwhelming odds—people never having handled firearms before who are getting training, getting arms, getting munitions, and joining together in the cause of defending their homes and their homeland. We know what it has cost them. Across the border, we have seen thousands and thousands of ordinary Russians challenge the suicidal thuggery of Vladimir Putin. We know what it has cost them too.

Today, I want to call our attention to the courage on display in a different part of the world. I want to look to Iran.

Two weeks ago yesterday, on September 13, Iran's so-called morality police arrested a young woman named Mahsa Amini. They detained her on the grounds that she was wearing her hijab improperly. She was bundled into a

van, where eyewitnesses could hear the police beating her. A few hours later, she was delivered to a local hospital, where she was declared brain dead. The police shamelessly claimed that she had had a spontaneous heart attack.

Thousands upon thousands of Iranians have poured into the streets since. Protesters are calling for an end to the savagery that has made absurd arrests and vicious beatings a regular part of the rhythm of life in Tehran. They are demanding dignity for the millions and millions of people who have lost it under Tehran's maniac theocracy. This is no small thing, what they have done—the courage that is on display as they pour into the streets. Protests have erupted now in more than 80 cities and in all 31 of Iran's provinces. This is not a minor demonstration.

The mullahs are facing one of the most significant challenges to their rule since they seized it 43 years ago, in 1979. How has the regime responded? As expected—with more brutality, with more repression, and with more savagery. Human rights groups estimate that 76 people have been killed so far by the authorities.

Meanwhile, the crackdown has also included a shutting off of social media and the internet. They hope that a country and a world that can't see their thuggery won't notice it, will pretend it doesn't exist, won't know. Well, they know, and we know. The Iranians know how this regime operates. We know that these pathetic cowards have no regard for human dignity.

Who are they?

These bloodthirsty men are the goons who hang homosexuals from gallows, who protect child rapists, who deny women education. The regime is rotten to the core. The people who are suffering under it know, and we know. These men have told the world exactly who they are again and again and again.

In 2009, Iranians erupted at the grotesque human rights abuses perpetrated by then-President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. In an election riddled with fraud, the world saw who he was again. During the Green Revolution, thousands of protesters, including key opposition leaders, were arrested and thrown in Iran's dungeon prisons. Many were tortured, and several dozen were killed. A 26-year-old woman, a student, was shot from a nearby rooftop by pro-government militia men. Her dying moments were recorded by cell phone video and were broadcast around the world.

We know who they are.

Ten years later—3 years ago, in 2019—massive nationwide protests erupted again. This time, it was following an announcement of massive, unsustainable hikes on gas prices. The protests and the violence that followed were the worst since 1979.

Hundreds of people took to the streets, and the government responded with a campaign of systemic savagery,

hoping to drive people back into their homes in order to hide the truth and to not admit to what this regime was and the ways that they failed. Protesters were shot from rooftops and helicopters by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard. Their troops opened fire on unarmed protesters who were attempting to block roadways and entrances. In one southwestern city, IRGC forces pursued several dozen, mostly young, unarmed protesters into a march outside the city and then began massacring them. Most reliable outside observers believe that about 1,500 protesters were killed.

In 2019, Tehran also conducted a near-total internet shutdown, plunging the country's 83 million people into information darkness for about 6 days. That practice, as we are seeing again right now, as we see this month, has become one more regular instrument of terror. These guys are scared of sunlight. They are scared of information. They are scared of the truth.

We know that the despots in Iran who brutalize their own people also export their terror tactics. Look at the last 2 months alone.

In July of last summer, 2021, a group of Iranian spies tried to kidnap Masih Alinejad—an Iranian-American journalist and human rights activist—at her home in New York. In July of this year, she was the target of an assassination attempt again at her home in our country.

We learned in August that a member of the IRGC had plotted to assassinate former National Security Advisor John Bolton on American soil.

Former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and former Iran Envoy Brian Hook still require personal security details everywhere they go because Iran has put targets on their backs in our country.

It was also just last month that, inspired by the Ayatollah Khomeini's 1989 fatwa, an American man attacked and nearly killed novelist Salman Rushdie during an appearance in New York.

Then, in August, Vladimir Putin received his first shipment of Iranian drones—birds of a feather.

Inside its borders and beyond them, the regime in Tehran thinks nothing but bloody thoughts. They think no one has dignity who doesn't subscribe exactly to their theocratic views. It is long past time that American policy and the policies of our friends and allies recognize these blunt facts. We should tell the truth.

In 2009 and again in 2019, we had the opportunity to support and encourage protesters who were agitating against a regime that is their enemy and is ours, and in both cases, under administrations Democratic and Republican, we failed the test.

Last week, President Biden told the U.N. General Assembly:

Today, we stand with the brave citizens and the brave women of Iran, who right now are demonstrating to secure their basic rights.

It is a good start, but it is far from sufficient. It is far from the end.

Right now, America's policy toward Iran is hopelessly schizophrenic. We cannot stand on the side of Iranian protesters at the same time that we are trying to re-sign a nuclear deal with the same mullahs who would release billions of dollars back into their hands, help them shore up their power, and do nothing to prevent putting a catastrophic weapon into their genocidal hands. President Obama chased a flawed nuclear deal with Iran's terror state instead of more aggressively standing with the Iranian people. Today, the same hodgepodge of national security advisers is at it again.

Newly announced sanctions against the leaders of the Ministry of Intelligence and Security, the Army Ground Forces, and the pro-government militias are good, but we cannot stand on the side of the men and women of Iran who are in the streets at the same time we refuse to sanction the leaders who matter most. Ayatollah Khomeini and the circle of elites around him continue to escape serious consequence.

We shouldn't trick ourselves and should not delude ourselves into thinking that economic sanctions are a magic wand or that the mullahs themselves care very much about the economic pain that the people under their regime are suffering. We should not think that the mullahs care about elite opinion in Paris. We have to have a serious top-to-bottom evaluation of our Iran strategy, and a coherent policy must begin by telling the truth over and over and over again.

We cannot stand on the side of the people on the streets demanding dignity at the same time that we welcome Iran's President—someone personally responsible for show trials and mass executions and assassination attempts on our soil, in our country. We can't allow him to spout lies and propaganda on our same American soil as we did last week at the U.N. General Assembly in New York.

Now is the time for a serious, coordinated policy that admits the threat that Iran poses, not just to its people and its neighbors but also to America, and to take seriously our commitment to the rights and freedoms of all 7.8 billion people across this globe created in God's image.

We can start by helping illuminate the government-imposed blackout so that Iranians can see what their government and its blackshirts are doing—more light, more information. We can expand and intensify the sanctions regime that has pushed Iran to the brink in the past, before we lost our nerve. We can amplify the voices of the Iranian protesters and stop providing platforms to the regime's propagandists. We can make sure that the voices of the Iranian people are heard by keeping the internet on while Tehran works to put the country back into the black box of despotism.

The courage of men and women on the streets of Iran today has not gone

unnoticed. They have imagined the possibility of an Iranian future no longer under the thumb of Tehran's bloodthirsty dictators. We should be able to imagine that future too and to do more to make that a reality.

The Iranian people hate Tehran's blood-soaked tyrants. This is not a regime that has the consent of the governed. The American people are on freedom's side. The administration should drop the fantasy of another nuclear deal, walk away from the table, and turn the screws on these monsters by, first, telling the truth again and again.

We ought to do everything we can to celebrate the heroism of the Iranians in the streets and to expose Tehran's human rights abuses around the watching world. And the best way to do that is by making sure that the internet stays on in Iran—more light, more truth, more information.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator MENENDEZ and I be permitted to complete our remarks prior to the scheduled recess.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 4914

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, I rise in support of our legislation to formally designate the major Mexican drug cartels as foreign terrorist organizations under Federal law.

It would also require the State Department to issue a report to Congress on additional cartels that meet the criteria for foreign terrorist organizations designation and require the Department to designate them as such within 30 days of the report. This bill would give us greater tools to push back against the cartels fueling the White House's deadly open border crisis.

This past March, I was honored and proud to lead five Kansas sheriffs to the border to meet with Border Patrol officers and survey the ongoing immigration crisis at our border. With our own eyes, we saw the activities of the major Mexican drug cartels that qualify them for designation as a foreign terrorist organization, as they are transnational entities that engage in textbook terrorist activity, such as kidnapping, assassination, and endangering lives with explosives and firearms.

Additionally, these cartels are responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Americans, especially young Americans in their prime.

Fentanyl has quickly become the leading cause of death among adults ages 18 to 45. Last year, the number of drug overdose deaths in the United States topped 100,000, with fentanyl being the cause of more than two-thirds of them.

The vast majority of fentanyl precursors, as we all know now, are manufactured in China and then chemically

turned into lethal fentanyl by the cartels. Next, the cartels smuggle the poison into the United States via the southwest border. In fact, the DEA reports that an astounding 80 percent of the fentanyl in America comes into our country through the U.S.-Mexico open border.

Last week, we introduced the Cooper Davis Act, a bill named after Cooper Davis, a Johnston County, KS, teen who tragically lost his life to fentanyl poisoning last summer after just taking one-half of one pill of fake Percocet that contained, unfortunately, a lethal dose of fentanyl.

Sadly, Cooper Davis is not the only victim in Kansas from the actions of the Mexican cartels, as most every day, we lose a young person in Kansas due to the actions of these terrorist cartel operations. And I know every single one of my Senate colleagues have victims from their States who have been poisoned and murdered from this same illicit fentanyl.

That is right. Americans are dead, hundreds being murdered every day because of this administration's open border policies and zero respect for border security.

Last year, the Border Patrol seized at the southern border 11,000 pounds of fentanyl. That is over 5 tons of this poison. They seized over 5,000 pounds of heroin, nearly a ton of meth, and almost a thousand pounds of cocaine, and, finally, 10,000 pounds of ketamine.

Of course, this is a fraction of how much of this poison actually crossed the border and was transported into our communities undetected, making every State a border State.

Regardless, this represents many, many multiples of amounts needed to kill every man, woman, and child in the United States. Indeed, this sounds like a weapon of mass destruction.

Joe Biden's open border policies are responsible for the deaths of thousands of young American men, women, and children.

To anyone who knows the brutal tactics and extensive operations that cartels use on both sides of our southern border every single day, there is no question that they should be described, designated, and treated as terrorists.

These are people who hang, behead, and burn people alive to threaten and control government officials in Mexico, and now with cartel members in most likely every State of the Union—yes, even in Kansas—they actively engage in these same dangerous, murderous tactics here domestically.

For more than 10 years, Texas Republicans have been trying to label Mexican cartels terrorists in an effort to try and cripple their empires.

This week, Texas Governor Greg Abbott made a declaration establishing a Mexican cartel division within the Texas Fusion Center at the Texas Department of Public Safety, which his office said will conduct multijurisdictional investigations with local law enforcement and other States.

The unsustainable crisis at the border has impacted not only Americans but the migrants themselves, who have often traveled hundreds of miles on foot and can be exploited by these terrorist organizations.

Just yesterday, the Washington Examiner reported those being brought across the border by coyotes are paying an average of \$8,600 in total smuggling fees this year, mimicking what Mafias do who charge a fee—literally a tax—to enter their territory and pass through.

The Biden open border surge has enriched these terrorist organizations, and we must step up our defenses against them as they continue to wreak havoc on communities all across the country. It cannot go on any longer.

Listen, designating Mexican drug cartels as foreign terrorist organizations will give our Federal Government new ways to fight back; that is, if the White House will allow them to.

A foreign terrorist organization designation provides additional tools for law enforcement and national security authorities to take action, including by providing additional investigation and intelligence resources and sanction capabilities.

For example, a foreign terrorist organization designation would, No. 1, make it unlawful for any person who knowingly provides "material support or resources" to the cartel to enter the United States. Next, it prevents any member of the designated cartel from legally entering the United States. And, finally, it would allow the Secretary of the Treasury to block all assets possessed or controlled by the cartels.

The cartels are playing a massive role in the ongoing crisis at the border. By exploiting Joe Biden's open border policies, the cartels have increased their power and wealth at the expense of innocent lives that get in their way.

I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation to formally designate the major Mexican drug cartels as foreign terrorist organizations under Federal law and help stem the tide of dangerous drugs and other illicit goods pouring across our open southern border.

Surely, this is an effort we can all get behind, as every Senator in this body affirmed by oath that they would support and defend the Constitution upon their swearing in. This, importantly, includes providing for the common defense of our people.

Personally, I will not rest until we stop this war on the youth of young Americans.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration of S. 4914 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, reserving the right to object—and I appreciate my friend—I do consider him my friend—and colleague and his concern, which we mutually share on this issue. But this legislation was introduced 7 days ago—7 days ago. Most of our colleagues have not even had a chance to read it.

The Foreign Relations Committee, which I have the privilege of chairing, has not reviewed or marked up this bill since it just got referred to us. And to my knowledge, my colleague has not made any effort to engage the committee.

Especially in light of its sweeping and mandatory nature and the lack of any waiver—even if a waiver were in our national interest—members with expertise in foreign affairs need to have the opportunity to scrutinize the bill.

Regular order allows us to refine legislation. It ensures we avoid unintended consequences, and that is needed here.

As chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, I take the threat of Mexican drug trafficking organizations seriously. During my 30 years in Congress, I have made significant efforts to combat drug trafficking in Mexico, Latin America, the Caribbean, and around the world.

Given the potential impact of this legislation, I would just ask my colleague the following questions for his consideration—these are the questions I ask myself as I am looking at his request: The U.S. Congress has developed a framework of sanctions specifically to target drug traffickers. It is called the Kingpin Act. There is substantial overlap between the Kingpin Act and what is being proposed today. Is this redundancy helpful, or is it hurtful? Why is it needed?

S. 4914 provides no new funding for the management of our sanctions program targeting foreign terrorist organizations, and we are deeply engaged in our whole-sanctions operation as it relates to Russia and Ukraine. This would be additional, but it has no additional resources. Do we want to stretch the U.S. Government's personnel and resources that target foreign terrorist organizations? That is what the legislation would do.

Does my colleague want to explain to the American people why we should have less personnel and funding dedicated to countering Hezbollah, ISIS, al-Qaida, because, as it is, that is what the legislation would do.

The members of the Foreign Relations Committee take the threat posed by Mexican cartels very seriously. We know that the cartels are deeply involved in the production and trafficking of fentanyl. We know that this is a substance so lethal it kills tens of thousands of American citizens every year.

That is why in June, the committee approved the FENTANYL Results Act, legislation designed to strengthen the United States response to fentanyl trafficking—legislation that received unanimous, bipartisan backing of all members of the Foreign Relations Committee, legislation that we hope can be enacted into law before the end of this Congress. That is a serious legislative effort conducted through normal order of the Senate.

I would just say to my friend, if you really want to address the impact that Mexican cartels and drug trafficking have on the American people, I urge you, respectfully, to work through the Foreign Relations Committee and join us in a meaningful legislative effort.

Finally, before I object, I would just say, I know that my colleague keeps talking about the Biden open borders. Well, it is a little incongruous when you self-designate and made in your comments that it is the U.S. Customs and Border large catches of fentanyl and other drugs under the direction of this administration that is making those catches. It is either that we have an open border and anything comes in, or it is that the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol that is actively engaged is stopping the flow of significant amounts of drugs.

For all of those reasons, at this point in time, I will have to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, I certainly do respect the comments of the chairman.

I would ask him a question: What would you tell the mother of Cooper Davis? What would you tell the mother of the hundreds of Americans who are going to die today from fentanyl poisoning?

Whatever we are doing now is not working. This is a war. Just yesterday morning, at 1 a.m., we were given 250 pages of legislation that we were asked to vote on that evening. This is a 3- or 4-page bill.

I have declared war on fentanyl. Every day in Kansas someone is dying from fentanyl. Every day in the State of New Jersey probably several people are dying from fentanyl poisoning.

I would ask the chairman: Whatever we are doing, it is not working. What more can we do? What do I tell Cooper Davis's mom? What do I tell these people out there whose babies are dying?

They are young adults being taken from the prime of their lives. Whatever we have done is not working. This stuff is coming over by the tons. What we have captured is a fraction of what is reaching America. That is why Kansas is no longer safe. It is not safe for any of our young adults. This is why this Halloween we are going to have to put our kids on special watches as this candied fentanyl comes across the border. I don't see how anyone who cares about our youth and young adults could object to this.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENEDEZ. Mr. President, I can't let the question rhetorically hang there.

I would say to my colleague, first of all, for all of us who have been fighting this issue on a bipartisan basis—I think his bill has only got Republican sponsors on it, a few—that we have been fighting this, and this is a continuous fight. And, yes, every life that is lost is a life that we mourn. But what would I say to them?

I would say, well, if we get the Fentanyl Results Act legislation passed, which passed the committee on a bipartisan basis, we would have a bipartisan approach toward dealing with this.

I appreciate that my colleague has declared war on fentanyl, but just because he has declared war doesn't mean that his view as to how you meet the challenge is the ultimate result, is the ultimate solution.

So in good faith, I offer our colleague to work with us. But you can't end up making the Senate the Committee of the Whole. If we want to do that, good, let's abolish all of our committees, and let's all sit here and we can bring up legislation after legislation that was just introduced, where nobody has a chance to read it and nobody has a chance to understand the unintended consequences, as noble as the intent might be. But that is what my colleague has done on more than one occasion now. He introduces a piece of legislation and, days after, comes to the floor to seek its approval. Well, that bypasses the entire system that is meant as a check and balance to get the best legislation to accomplish a common goal.

So that is what I would say. We need to work on this together. We are committed to it. That is why we passed legislation in the past. That is why we just passed legislation recently. I hope my colleague will join us, and maybe we can get it in the NDAA together.

With that, I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:48 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. ROSEN).

AFFORDABLE INSULIN NOW ACT— MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

UKRAINE

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, it has been a little more than 7 months since Russia launched its illegal invasion of Ukraine, and the destruction that has followed is unbelievable. We

have all had a chance to bear witness to the brutal reality of Russia's invasion as Ukrainian forces have recaptured territories like the city of Izyum.

Soon after the city was liberated, Ukrainian forces discovered mass graves filled with hundreds of bodies, including children. Some of the bodies had their hands tied behind their backs and their skulls crushed, and many showed signs of torture. The images that have emerged from Izyum prove what we have suspected for some time: The mountain of evidence of Russian war crimes is sky high.

These photos illustrate what the Ukrainians are finding in recaptured territory. They are sending out people to redig mass graves to find out just what happened to members of their family and neighbors and their friends.

The same thing is illustrated by this photo as well. In the shadow of this beautiful church, they are finding mass graves left behind by the Russians.

Today, I had the honor of presiding over a hearing of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, focusing on the role we must play in the United States in holding Putin and his thugs accountable for these heinous war crimes. The message was clear: Our Nation must continue the legacy we began with the Nuremberg trials by ensuring that Russian war criminals are brought to justice. And a critical step in doing that is to make sure that the perpetrators of these atrocities find no safe haven anywhere in the world, let alone in the United States.

That is why I have introduced the Justice for Victims of War Crimes Act with the ranking Republican Member, Senator GRASSLEY. It closes a shameful loophole in American law that has allowed war criminals to escape justice. Our legislation updates the War Crimes Act so foreign war criminals who try to flee to America can be prosecuted, even years after their crimes were committed. It is only a starting point, but I hope we can build on it to finally enact the law in this country prohibiting crimes against humanity. This is an opportunity to send a clear signal to war criminals, like those in Russia today who systemically attack civilians, that America is going to hold you accountable for your crimes.

IMMIGRATION

Madam President, on a related topic, at our brightest moments, America has not only held war criminals and tyrants accountable; we have also provided refuge to their victims. Many of us in Congress can attest to that fact.

In fact, it is exactly how my family arrived in this country. Back in 1911, my grandmother left Lithuania in search of freedom. She boarded a ship carrying two things in her arms: a bag with her Catholic prayer book, published a year before the Czars outlawed its printing in Lithuania, and her 2-year-old daughter, my mother, Ona.

The moment my grandmother stepped foot on American soil, her life changed. From that moment on, she