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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JACKY ROSEN, a Senator from the State of Nevada.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Spirit of Life, who soars upon the wings of the wind, breathe Your Grace in us. Remind us to be thankful for the people who bless our lives.

Thank You for the people who live exemplary lives and show us what productive living should be. Thank You for the people who inspire us to strive for noble things. Thank You for the people who comfort us, who help ease life's hurts. Thank You for the people who strengthen us, who give us courage to tackle the difficult. Thank You for the people who enlighten us through the written word. Lord, thank You for our Senators, who strive to protect and defend our freedom.

We pray in Your great 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, November 17, 2022.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable JACKY ROSEN, a Senator from the State of Nevada, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Ms. ROSEN 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

RESPECT FOR MARRIAGE 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. 8404, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to H.R. 8404, a bill to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act and ensure respect for State regulation of marriage, and for other purposes.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

RESPECT FOR MARRIAGE ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, what took place here on the floor yesterday was nothing short of the Senate working at its very best. The Senate took a bold step toward securing greater justice for millions of Americans by advancing the Respect for Marriage Act with a resounding bipartisan vote.

Standing here on the floor yesterday, you could feel the sense of relief, of

joy, within the Chamber. After the vote, I got on the phone with my daughter and daughter-in-law and told them the good news, that marriage equality is now on the march toward final passage—thank goodness.

Passing the Respect for Marriage Act is no longer a matter of if but only of when. Later this afternoon, the Senate will take the next step in the process by formally adopting the motion to proceed. After that, both sides will have to work together to reach an agreement for voting on final passage as soon as we can.

Yesterday's vote was a vindication that it was well worth the wait. While nothing was inevitable about the result, I never lost faith that deep down enough of our colleagues would understand how important it was to get this bill done. I am glad that that faith has now been justified.

While some may want to delay this process, make no mistake, there is no stopping this bill from final passage. As I said a moment ago, the question of passage is not about if but when. I hope my Republican colleagues will work with us to move forward with this bill sooner rather than later.

I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who spearheaded this legislation: Senators Sinema, Baldwin, Collins, Portman, and Tillis. They did terrific work. We wouldn't be here without them.

Finally, I hope this bipartisan legislation, and all others we have passed this Congress, will continue to show how the Senate can function in the upcoming 118th Congress. I have always said I have a hierarchy: First, try to get things done in a bipartisan way whenever possible. It is far better to get things done for the American people than to hold show votes that bring political reckoning but have no hopes of passing. Our job, after all, is to get things passed and make lives better here in the Senate. And when the new Congress begins next year, that will

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



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continue to be my guiding star and No. 1 focus.

MIDTERM ELECTIONS

Madam President, now on MAGA, last week's midterm elections revealed a basic but often unappreciated truth about politics: When elected leaders prioritize getting things done—getting things done—and when candidates can run on accomplishments, the American people respond positively. That shouldn't be some remarkable insight, but, unfortunately, too many seem to forget it. Indeed, too many of my Republican colleagues seem to have forgotten it over the last couple of years.

Look at what happened on Tuesday. The Republican side ran many flawed candidates who embraced MAGA radicalism, and they lost. They spread the Big Lie, sowed doubt and division and nastiness, and they ignored the issues that mattered most to Americans. As a result, voters ran in the other direction.

But don't take my word for it. Here is what Leader MCCONNELL himself said earlier this week, and I want to quote him in full. This is Leader MCCONNELL:

We underperformed among independents and moderates because their impression of many of the people in our party and leadership roles is that they're engulfed in chaos, negativity and excessive attacks, and it frightened independent and moderate Republican voters.

Listen to that part again:

[I]t frightened independent and moderate Republican voters.

That is exactly what I have been saying. MAGA Republicans did, in fact, scare a lot of Americans who might have otherwise given the GOP a closer look. All that talk about stolen elections, threatening poll workers, it frightened people—and thank God. Americans said this is not for us. Americans believe deeply in democracy, despite the rightwing radical MAGA news media throwing all kinds of lies and incendiary statements at them every day. The roots of democracy are deep and a shield against that kind of activity.

Republicans have a choice to make when the 118th Congress begins next year. If they continue embracing the MAGA approach of chaos and gridlock and division, they are going to keep losing. I earnestly hope that Republicans realize it is better for them and, of course, for the country to cure themselves of this MAGA sickness as quickly as they can.

I know that it won't happen overnight, and I know that some on the other side would prefer to double down on MAGA, but it is critical for our Nation's health, and, in fact, their party's health that they learn this lesson.

Americans don't want government to be an endless circus of MAGA insanity. They want leaders who will take their job seriously and work across the aisle to solve our Nation's problems. They know we are not going to succeed at everything, but they want good, earnest efforts at trying. And when we

try—when both sides try in good faith—we often get a lot done, as this past Congress has shown.

If Republicans fail to accept this wisdom, they will only invite further defeat in the future.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

LEADERSHIP ELECTIONS AND REPUBLICAN POLICY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, yesterday, the Republican conference met and selected its leadership team for the 118th Congress. I am deeply honored that my remarkable colleagues on this side of the aisle decided to rehire me for another term as Republican leader. I am proud of Senators THUNE, BARRASSO, ERNST, CAPITO, and DAINES, who were also elected to take on critical roles for the next 2 years.

We have impressive new Senators-elect. We have outstanding returning Members. Our conference is brimming with energy, ideas, and enthusiasm to fight for the millions and millions of Americans who elected Republican Senators to be their champions and their voice in this Chamber.

Republicans are a big-tent party that unites around commonsense, conservative principles and policies to make our Nation stronger and make American families' lives better. We stand for fiscal sanity instead of the reckless liberal spending that created jaw-dropping inflation. We stand for the pro-worker, pro-family, pro-growth ideas that built the best economy for working people in a generation, before COVID-19. Republican policies have fueled low inflation, low unemployment, and robust growth, all at the very same time.

We stand for a strong, modern military that can deter and defeat America's enemies and confident American leadership in the world instead of this administration's deeply botched retreat from Afghanistan and desperate cozying up to the murderous regime in Tehran.

We stand for American energy dominance instead of cutting off our own supplies and canceling out our own pipelines while begging foreign dictators to produce more.

We stand for real energy independence, not making China rich by buying solar panel components that make American energy more expensive and less reliable.

We stand for safer streets, and we understand that real compassion means ensuring safety and security for innocent people, not giving shorter sen-

tences to the violent convicts who hurt them.

We stand for securing our border and enforcing our laws instead of letting unvetted people and illegal drugs pour into our country 24/7.

We stand for putting parents' rights and parents' involvement back into our Nation's schools and getting radical indoctrination out.

We stand for the quaint notion that judges need to follow our laws and the Constitution as they are written, not act like a third legislative branch that our citizens can't vote out.

We stand for free speech, religious liberty, and the freedom of worship instead of using the courts and the government to prosecute men and women of faith.

This is where we stand, Madam President, and it just so happens that the American people stand with us. Last week's exit poll showed that Republicans are more trusted on the kitchen-table issues that keep American families awake at night. When the American people got a clear, unclouded look at our commonsense, conservative approach to the issues, they liked what they saw. We have 49 outstanding Members on this side of the aisle who are living proof of that fact, and in just a few more weeks, we will have 50.

It is the honor of a lifetime to serve alongside my distinguished colleagues and to serve our conference in this leadership role.

Now on a related matter, yesterday evening brought confirmation of some great news for the future of our country. Republicans have secured the majority in the House of Representatives for the next 2 years. It will be Senate Republicans' great pleasure to partner closely with and serve alongside the new Republican House. I want to congratulate soon-to-be Speaker MCCARTHY and all of the new and returning Members of Congress across the Capitol whose elections will be transforming the people's House from a reckless rubberstamp into a sorely needed check and balance.

The composition of the new House demonstrates that fatigue and exhaustion with reckless and radical far-left policies are not just limited to so-called red or purple States. New Republican Congress men and women have been hired by their neighbors even in deep-blue States like New York and California—even further evidence that when the American people get an unclouded look at our commonsense, conservative vision on the issues, they like what they see. So I look forward to working with our House Republican colleagues, new and returning, in the years to come.

INFLATION

Madam President, now on a related matter, the Capitol may be preparing for the next Congress, but hard-working Americans are still being hurt every day by the reckless, radical, party-line spending that the Democrats rammed through during this Congress.

Since President Biden took office and his all-Democratic government fired up the printing presses, our Nation has been hit with 13.9 percent inflation. In the State of Georgia, inflation is even worse; it is closer to 15 percent since January of 2021. Families are having to pay hundreds of dollars extra every month just to maintain their standard of living from before the Democrats got power, let alone trying to get ahead. The many Georgia families who can't afford it are falling farther and farther behind.

Housing inflation alone is costing the average Georgia household an extra \$137 every month. Overall energy costs are up more than 9 percent in the Atlanta area just in the last 12 months alone. As we head into winter, nearly 4 in 10 households in Georgia use natural gas as their main heating fuel. Residential natural gas prices have skyrocketed more than 200 percent on President Biden's watch. The State's natural gas prices are way, way higher than the national average, and that is before you even get to the brandnew natural gas tax that both of Georgia's Senators voted to pass into law just a few months ago.

The Democrats have passed radical policy on top of radical policy, and it has brought hard-working Americans like the people of Georgia pain on top of pain. But Washington Democrats still aren't finished.

A month ago, the Biden administration decided to insult working Americans by unleashing yet another reckless giveaway that would actually transfer even more wealth toward highly educated people who already tend to be more well off.

As one study found, "Upper-income households account for a disproportionate share of student loan debt." That makes sense. They borrowed money to obtain a credential that tends to push up people's salaries in the future. But President Biden decided that working people who worked their way through college or who already paid off their debt or who planned entirely different careers to avoid student loans altogether—President Biden says all those people will now be picking up the tab for doctors' and lawyers' graduate studies.

Oh, and by the way, our colleague from West Virginia Senator MANCHIN has himself admitted this one reckless move would more than eclipse the supposed deficit reduction that Democrats claimed they bought with their so-called Inflation Reduction Act. Even according to the generous estimates of that bill's savings that Democrats actually liked, this student loan socialism cannibalizes it all. All the supposed savings that the senior Senator from West Virginia was promised are gone in the blink of an eye. Apparently, the White House was planning the bait-and-switch all along.

Now, not surprisingly, President Biden's attempt to circumvent Congress and implement student loan so-

cialism on his own has created some legal trouble. After all, it was Speaker PELOSI herself who admitted just months before the administration rolled out this plan that they actually lacked the proper legal authority to do what they did.

Earlier this week, a panel of the Eighth Circuit issued an injunction preventing the Biden administration from going forward with its plan, but, reportedly, President Biden's team is so desperate to make inflation even worse in this fashion, they are planning to extend student loan socialism anyway by extending their endless moratorium on payments. Washington Democrats' top priority is making sure that California doctors and Manhattan lawyers don't have to pay their debts, even if it causes even more inflation, while working people in Georgia keep getting burned.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican whip.

NATIONAL VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES
MONTH

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, on Sunday, I had the privilege of attending a welcome home ceremony for the 235th Military Police Company of the South Dakota National Guard after their 10-month deployment to Guantanamo Bay. It was a fitting activity for Veterans Day weekend.

The ceremonies are always joyful occasions: seeing couples and families reunited and celebrating together after a long absence, welcoming soldiers back to the familiarity of home. But in the midst of the joy and celebration, these ceremonies are also a powerful reminder of all that our servicemembers and their families give up to serve our country.

The joy of reunification points to the months of loneliness in which spouses and loved ones have had to live without their husband or wife, mom or dad, son or daughter. It highlights the long months in which moms and dads have had to shoulder all the burdens of child-rearing alone. The soccer games, the football games, the doctors' visits, the emergency car repairs, the visit from the plumber—all the daily challenges and responsibilities that couples usually share fall solely on the shoulders of the spouse holding down the fort at home.

And on top of the responsibility is the anxiety—the constant worry about the loved one halfway around the world and maybe in danger. These moments of joyful reunion also point to all that our military men and women sacrifice while stationed far from their families and loved ones; the months of separation from spouses and children, with Zooms and phone calls and emails being a poor substitute for bedtime stories read together on the couch and holding hands on an afterdinner walk; the loneliness, the worry about a pregnant wife or an ailing parent or a child having a tough year in school—all while far away from the comforts of home that the rest of us take for granted.

And, of course, while reunions are joyful, the challenges don't end after deployment. It takes time for the stress of a tough posting to dissipate; for soldiers to get reacclimated to the civilian world or to their stateside base; for families to readjust to living together and not apart, only to have to do it all over again when the next deployment comes around.

Some servicemembers bear the invisible wounds of war for the long term, not to mention those who are wounded in combat sometimes requiring loved ones to become caretakers. And yet despite all of the hardships and the challenges, men and women still rise up and answer the call—for families to readjust to living together and not apart, only to have to do it all over again when their deployment comes around.

Servicemembers and their families spend years and decades serving our country. They willingly shoulder the burdens and the challenges of this life. Animated by love of country and of their fellow man, they choose a life that asks them to forget their own needs and focus only on what they can do for others. That asks them to forgo comfort and sacrifice, up to and including the sacrifice of their own lives. Their sacrifice, their willingness to serve, is what enables us to go about our lives in peace and freedom.

We owe our men and women in uniform—and the families who support them—a debt we can never repay. But we can at least—at the very least—remember. As we go about our daily business, as we travel to our jobs in security and come home again at night the same way, we can remember that we live in peace and safety because of the sacrifice of the men and women of the U.S. military who stand on watch for us.

I am profoundly grateful for the honor of representing some of the men and women of the U.S. military here in the U.S. Senate as well as our many South Dakota veterans. And I will continue to do everything I can to ensure that our military and our veterans have the resources they need and the resources that they are owed.

I have successfully fought for over a decade to prevent closures of service reductions at VA facilities in South Dakota to ensure that veterans can continue receiving the healthcare they need close to home. And I will continue to work to make sure our State's VA facilities remain open and available to our veterans and that community care is equally accessible, if they so choose.

I will continue to work to ensure that our military members have everything that they need to deter threats and to protect America. And, as always, Ellsworth Air Force Base is at the top of my priority list. I am currently working to ensure that we continue to make the needed investments in the facilities and other infrastructure that Ellsworth will need to host the future of B-21 bomber mission as well as to ensure the influx of military

families who will move to the area to have adequate school capacity in housing access.

As we celebrate Veterans and Military Families Month, I want to express my gratitude to the citizen-soldiers of the South Dakota National Guard, the airmen at Ellsworth Air Force Base, and our South Dakota veterans and their families.

May God bless you all and all of your brothers and sisters in arms. And may God continue to bless America.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I would like to echo the words of our Senator from South Dakota about Veterans Day. We weren't here. In my State of Alabama, we have 400,000 veterans who have served our country and served our country well. A lot of them put their life on the line. We have a lot of injuries. And I just want to thank them for what they have done, being that we weren't here in the Chamber on Veterans Day. And I want to again thank them for their service. And, hopefully, in the future we can talk more about our veterans here in this Chamber because there is not a more special group than that.

TRIBUTE TO STEPHEN BOYD

Madam President, also, I want to start today by taking time to honor my departing chief of staff, Stephen Boyd, and thank him for his service to the State of Alabama and to our country.

For the past 2 years, Stephen has been at the center of every decision and every action we have taken on behalf of the State of Alabama in my office. And after nearly two decades of public service, we say goodbye to this integral part of our team.

When you run for Congress, you learn that people are quick to give you advice, especially when you have had a lifelong career in something outside of politics. One tip I heard over and over was hire a great chief of staff. But when I thought about what would make a good chief of staff, I decided I needed someone with three main qualifications: One, someone who knew the Federal Government; two, someone who knew the great State of Alabama; and, No. 3, someone who would lead with integrity. And that someone was Stephen Boyd.

Stephen brought a wealth of knowledge to my office from his time working in the House, in the Senate, and as a Senate-confirmed Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legislative Affairs. Stephen has been quietly working in the background to help improve the lives of the people in Alabama. And I have no doubt that he will continue with that sense of service and succeed in his next endeavors.

So, Stephen, thank you for your service to our office; thank you for your service to the great State of Alabama; and thank you for your continued long service to the great country that we live in.

MIDTERM ELECTIONS

Madam President, meanwhile, our work here in Washington continues. Moving forward, Congress has a lot to do to get our country back on track, with a lot of division. Last week, millions and millions of Americans across the country took part in one of the most sacred traditions that we have here. It is called voting.

The right to vote in free and fair elections is the cornerstone of our democracy. I was proud to see so many Alabamians exercise that right and also people across our country. Voting is the best way for the American people to tell the government how they feel about our performance. That is how we are evaluated.

As expected, the people used that opportunity last week to send a message to us here in DC: No more one-party rule in this building. For too long, this Congress has been controlled by the Democrats and has ignored a lot of the issues facing the American people as inflation has skyrocketed.

My Democratic colleagues continue to spend trillions of dollars on partisan bills that have made the problem worse. My Democratic colleagues passed the so-called Inflation Reduction Act a few months ago. You know, the name of the bill, which was intentionally misleading—it really has nothing to do with contents. There is a lot of content in that bill, a lot of money being spent, a lot of money going to the so-called climate change. Is that going to help inflation? Is that going to help the American people as we speak? No, it is not.

My Democratic colleagues need to know that the legislation will do nothing—absolutely nothing—and has done nothing at the present time to help inflation. But it does spend nearly 750 billion—with a “b”—more dollars on radical leftwing priorities, many of them focused on green energy policies that have accelerated our economy's slide toward recession.

You know, we are all environmentalists. We all love our environment. But we also love the people in this country from top to bottom. And the people come first. The lives of the people in this country come first. As gas prices hit record highs and home utility bills are expected to go through the roof this winter—and they have already started—this administration has done nothing—absolutely nothing—to ease the pain. Our President last week said, after the election—What do you plan on doing to help in the future—to the American citizens—What do you want to change?—he said: “Nothing.”

So we can take him at his word. This looming energy crisis has been obvious—very obvious—to all of us for months. Yet President Biden and his allies have nothing to stop it from happening. Prices will continue to go up. We have no answers. And that is why we are here. We are here to have answers for the American people. In fact, this administration has done the oppo-

site: siding with climate activists and begging for foreign adversaries for oil instead of promoting and unleashing energy production right here at home.

Just a couple of weeks ago, President Biden promised a group of climate protesters that there would be no new drilling while speaking at a campaign rally. There are no answers in that statement for the American people whom we represent.

In addition to inflation, painful high gas prices, leadership in DC has done nothing to address the rising crime ravaging our communities. The wide-open borders—it is a magnet for cartels and deadly, deadly, deadly drugs.

I recently visited the southern border to see the madness taking place just a few weeks ago and what it is costing the American taxpayers. I visited Eagle Pass, TX. At Eagle Pass, which is the Del Rio Sector, they control 200 miles of the border. That is basically just a third of the border on our southern tip of the United States—only one-third. We were spending \$15 million a month just processing the illegal immigrants coming across the border. That is only the cost of processing. They come across, and they are released into our country no less than 72 hours after they are brought across our border. And they go to no-telling where—all over our country. It is a taxpayer's nightmare. We are talking about 14- to \$15 million per month for just 200 miles. You could imagine what the rest of the border is having to pay out of the taxpayers' pocket.

One thing I want everybody to understand, I keep hearing about how our border is secure. Folks, our border is not secure. I was almost run over by the herd of people coming across the line early one morning, standing there. People are excited about being in the USA. We don't know who they are. Most can tell us where they are coming from, but they have no identification. As of today, we have taken people from 180 different countries. A lot of them are here doing no good.

I will tell you this: Just talking to the Border Patrol, we have a lot of people coming across maybe for a better life, but the ones coming across running from our Border Patrol which we do not catch, we do not see, which is 15 percent to 20 percent, when you are running—running—from the Border Patrol at the border, when we are letting you come across no matter who you are and come into our country, if you are running from Border Patrol, you have something to hide. That something to hide usually is not going to be very good for our country.

In addition to the tens of millions of illegal immigrants already in the United States, we already had 5 million come across that we know of. So you can probably add, as the Border Patrol said, another million to that list—another million people here that include people selling drugs, human trafficking, terrorists. It is a scary situation. We will pay the price in the near future for this.

Right now, the American taxpayer is paying a financial price, but in the near future, we will pay a price that we will have to overcome. We don't know what that is yet, but we will pay the price. The fact that this administration has ignored the border is a difficult reality for me to accept, and it should be a difficult reality for all of us to accept.

We love people in this country. We are an immigrant country. We all come from immigrants. When you are born in this country, you hit the lottery. We live in, no doubt, the best country on the face of the Earth. We are very fortunate. A lot of people weren't born in this country, but we take a lot of people into our country from all different places. But they should come in the right way, the proper way, where we can recognize them, identify them, and understand that they are coming here for the reasons of having a better life where we can help them.

But right now, our border is overrun, and we better get control of this because it is going to be a sad day when something happens in our country and we are going to be on this floor apologizing to the American people of something terrible happening again.

I am going to continue to push back on the radical spending in these next 2 years in this Congress, our open borders, counterproductive energy proposals, and the policies that take place.

And we make our criminals victims in this country. We have to stop that. We have to make sure we put criminals in jail and don't make them the victim. When my new Republican colleagues come to Washington in January, our party will be united. We have had our problems. We work out our problems, and we hope to be more united than ever before.

We want to deliver lower costs, safer communities, and a secure border. We need to continue to talk about that. I would love to hear my Democratic colleagues get up and talk about what they see when they go to the border because it is one of the most important things that has ever happened in this country—one of the most important. And we have to have an answer to that. We can do this by cutting spending and unnecessary resolutions.

We can help the American people. People ask: What are the Republicans going to do? We want to cut spending, we want to cut regulations, and we want to lower taxes, put more money in American people's pockets to where they can live a better life.

Our Federal Government, the Fed now is raising interest rates. Their job is try to keep inflation down. I understand that. Why do they do that? They raise interest rates to slow down housing.

Folks, we have ruined housing in this country in the last 3 months. We have achieved our goal. We have achieved our goal of people not building homes. We have gone to almost zero in the State of Alabama. We have put thou-

sands of people out of jobs. We accomplished our goal of putting housing on the back burner. I am for slowing down interest rate increases. Let's see what has happened in the Fed. Let's make sure they are working. We tend to raise them every couple of months now. Let's see what has happened. Let's help the American people. Let's don't keep kicking them to the back burner. We have slowed housing down. Let's put people back to work now. Let's put them back to work and give them an opportunity to live a better life.

We are in a tough time. It is going to get tougher. We will see a deep recession in 2023. It is coming. There is no way around it. We need to start making plans to help the American people overcome this recession that is going to hit us all right between the eyes in the next few months. We live in a great country, and this body needs to help the people that live in this great country.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). The Senator from California.

RESPECT FOR MARRIAGE ACT

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the Respect for Marriage Act.

I was proud to introduce this bill earlier this summer with Senators BALDWIN, COLLINS, and PORTMAN. I am greatly encouraged by yesterday's bipartisan vote of 62 to 37 to advance the bill and continue moving this important legislation forward.

The Respect for Marriage Act would guarantee legal protections for millions of marriages in the United States by repealing the discriminatory Defense of Marriage Act and ensuring that marriages entered into legally are given full faith and credit by every State and the Federal Government.

Simply put, Americans should be free to marry the person they love, regardless of sexual orientation or race, without fear of discrimination or fear that their marriages will be invalidated. This is a straightforward bill. It merely codifies the existing requirement that the Federal Government and every State recognize legal marriages.

In 2015, the Supreme Court ruled in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that the U.S. Constitution guarantees the right to marry for same-sex couples. And 55 years ago, in *Loving v. Virginia*, the Supreme Court ruled that "the freedom to marry . . . a person of another race resides with the individual, and cannot be infringed by the State."

These decisions also reflect the will of the American people. Over the past few decades, public support for same-sex marriage and interracial marriage has grown exponentially. In fact, recent polls have found that 71 percent of Americans support same-sex marriage and 94 percent approve of interracial marriages. This bill has been endorsed by hundreds of organizations, including nonprofits, corporations, and religious organizations that span the ideological spectrum.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a list of endorsing organizations be printed in the RECORD.

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

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING THE RESPECT FOR MARRIAGE ACT—NOVEMBER 17, 2022

ABB, Abercrombie & Fitch Co., Accenture, ACLU, ADL (Anti-Defamation League), ADL Austin Region, ADL Florida, ADL New England, ADL New York/New Jersey, ADL San Diego, ADL Southeast, ADL Southwest, ADL Texoma, Adobe Inc., AEO, Inc., AFL-CIO, Airbnb, Alaska Airlines, ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal, AllianceBernstein.

Altria Group, Amalgamated Bank, Amazon.com, Inc., Ameinu, American Airlines, American Bar Association, American Conference of Cantors, American Federation of Teachers, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, American Honda, Motor Co., Inc., American Humanist Association, American Jewish World Service, American Psychological Association, Apple, Applied Materials, Inc., Asana, Inc., Ascena (Lane, Bryant, Ann Taylor, and, LOFT), Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists, AT&T, Inc.

Auburn Seminary, Autodesk, Inc., Avana, Avodah, Aytzim, B'nai B'rith Connect, Bain & Company, Bank of America, BASF Corporation, Bayer U.S. LLC, BCW, Believe Out Loud, Bend the Arc: Jewish Action, Berkshire Bank, Best Buy Co., Inc., Beth Chayim Chadashim, Bloomberg LP, Boehringer Ingelheim USA, Boston Beer Company, Boston Consulting Group.

Boston Scientific Corp., BP, Braze, Inc., Bridgestone Americas, California Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC-CA), Capital One, Carbon Health, Cardinal Health, Cargo Transporters, Inc., Carlyle, Carolina Jews for Justice, Catholics for Choice, Celanese Corporation, Center for American, Progress, Center for Faith, Justice, and Reconciliation, Central Conference of American Rabbis, Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies, Chobani, LLC, City of Oakland, California, Coastal Roots Farm.

Cohesity, Columbia Jewish, Congregation, Comcast NBCUniversal, Congregation Agudas Achim, Austin Texas, Congregation Har HaShem, Boulder, CO, Congregation Rodeph Shalom, Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, Constellation Energy Corporation, Corvea Agriscience, Cox Enterprises, Creative Artists Agency, CSAA Insurance Group, CVS Health, Daniel J. Edelman, Inc., Danone North America, Deckers Brands (UGG, HOKA, Teva, Sanuk and Koolaburra by UGG), Dell Technologies, Deloitte, Delta Air Lines, Deutsche Bank USA Corp.

DignityUSA, DoorDash, Dow, Drobbox, DTCC, DuPont de Nemours, Inc., DWS Group, Ecolab, Edison International, EMD Serono, MilliporeSigma and EMD Electronics, Equality Federation, Equinix, Equitable, Ernst & Young, LLP, Essence, Etsy, Eventbrite, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Exelon, Faith in Public Life.

Faithful America, Family Equality, Florida Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC-FL), Ford Motor Company, Freedom BLOC, Freedom for All Americans, General Mills, General Motors, Gilead Sciences, Inc., GitHub, GLAAD, GLAD, Google, Greater Miami Jewish Federation, GroupM, H&R Block, Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Harley-Davidson Motor Company, Havurat Shalom, Andover MA, Hewlett Packard Enterprise.

Hexion Inc., Hilton, Hindus for Human Rights, HP, Human Rights Campaign, Hyatt, IAC, IBM, IFF, IHG Hotels & Resorts, IKAR,

IKEA Retail US, Illinois Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC-IL), Intel, Interfaith Alliance, IRI (Information Resources, Inc.), J Street, Jackson Family Wines.

Jacobs, Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action, Jewish Community Action, Jewish Community Center of Asheville, Jewish Community Federation and Endowment Fund, Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia, Jewish Community Relations Council of Broward County, Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston, Jewish Community Relations Council of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, Sonoma, Alameda, and Contra Costa Counties, Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA).

Jewish Council on Urban Affairs, Jewish Emergent Network, Jewish Family Service Houston, Jewish Family Service of Greater New Orleans, Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles, Jewish Family Service of San Diego, Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, Jewish Federations of North America, Jewish Labor Committee, Jewish Teen Education and Engagement Network, LLC (JTEEN), Jewish Women International, Jewish Youth Climate Movement, Jews for a Secular Democracy, Jews United for Justice (JUFJ), Jewtina y Co., Johnson & Johnson, JPMorgan Chase.

JQY (Jewish Queer Youth), Judaism (RAC-MA), JYCA (Jewish Youth for Community Action), Kane Street Synagogue, Kearney, Kellogg Company, Keshet, KIND LLC, Kohl's, KPMG LLP, Lab/Shul, Lambda Legal, Landor & Fitch, Latter-day Saint Democrats of America, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, League of United Latin American Citizens, Levi Strauss & Co., Liberty Mutual Insurance, Link Logistics.

LinkedIn, Logitech, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Lowenstein Sandler, Lush Cosmetics—North America, Lyft, Inc., Macy's, Inc., Makom Shelanu, Malkhut: progressive Jewish spirituality in Queens, Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals, Many Voices, Maranatha, Marriott International, Mars, Incorporated, Marsh McLennan, Massachusetts Religious Action Center of Reform, MassMutual, Match Group, MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger.

McKesson, MediaCom, Medtronic, Men of Reform Judaism, Meta Platforms, Inc., MGM Resorts International, Michael Page International, Micron Technology, Inc., Microsoft Corporation, Milwaukee Jewish Federation, Mindshare, Mishkan Chicago, Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams, Molson Coors Beverage Company, Momentive, MomsRising, Mondelez International, Morgan Stanley, Motive.

Moving Traditions, Muslim Advocates, Muslims for Progressive Values, National Association of Social Workers, National Black Justice Coalition, National Center for Lesbian Rights, National Council of Jewish Women, National Council of Jewish Women New York, National Council of Nonprofits, National Education Association, National Grid, National League of Cities, National Wildlife Federation, National Women's Law Center, Nestlé USA, NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies, New Belgium Brewing, New Israel Fund.

New Jersey Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC-NJ), New Ways Ministry, New York Life, New York Public Health Association, New York Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC-NY), Nextdoor, NIKE, Inc., Nordstrom, Inc., Ogilvy, Ohio Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC-OH), Okta, Omnicom

Group, Oracle, Owens Corning, Parity, Patagonia, PayPal, Peloton, Peninsula Jewish Community Center, Pennsylvania Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC-PA).

PepsiCo, Petco, Pfizer, PFLAG, Pinterest, Porter, Wright, Morris & Arthur LLP, Power Home Remodeling, Presbyterian Church (USA) Office of Public Witness, Prudential Financial, PVH Corp., PwC, Rabbinical Assembly, Ralph Lauren Corporation, Raymond James Financial, Reconstructing Judaism, Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association, Recorded Future, Red Hat, Inc., Redfin, REI Co-op.

Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, Rockwell Automation, Romemu, Royal Bank of Canada, SACReD (Spiritual Alliance of Communities for Reproductive Dignity), SAJ—Judaism that Stands for All, Salesforce, Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, SAP America, Inc., Saul Ewing Arnstein & Lehr LLP, Saul Mirowitz Jewish Community School, Service Employees International Union, Seyfarth Shaw LLP, Shalom Austin, Shipt, Shutterstock, Siemens Healthineers, Siemens USA, Signet Jewelers.

Sixth Circle Consulting, Slalom, Society for Humanistic Judaism, Sojourners, Sony Corporation of America, Sony Electronics Inc., Sony Music Group, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Southwest Airlines Co., St. Paul Jewish Federation, Standard Chartered Bank, Stanley Black & Decker, Starbucks, State Street, Sunrun, Inc., Sustainable Food Policy Alliance, Synchrony, Sysco, Takeda Pharmaceuticals, Talbots.

Target, TBE, TechNet, Temple Beth Ahm Yisrael, Temple Beth El (Tacoma), Temple Beth El of Boca Raton, Tiffany & Co., Tivnu: Building Justice, T-Mobile, Toyota North America, TPG, Tribe 12, Tripadvisor, Truuh: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights, Twitter, Tzedek Georgia, Temple Emanuel of Westfield, Temple Kol Emeth, Temple Ohabei Shalom, Temple Shir Tikva.

Tesla, Inc., Texas Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC-TX), The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, The Clorox Company, The Episcopal Church, The Freedom BLOC, U.S. Bank, Uber Technologies, Inc., UKG, Unilever United States, Union for Reform Judaism, Unitarian Universalist Association, United Airlines, The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., The J.M. Smucker Co., The Knot Worldwide, The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc., The Shalom Center, The Temple—Atlanta GA, The Walt Disney Company.

The Workers Circle, Thermo Fisher Scientific, TIAA, United Church of Christ, United States Conference of Mayors, Universal Music Group, Upwork, USY, Vail Resorts, Verizon, Vertex Pharmaceuticals, VF Corporation, Via Transportation, VMLY&R, VMware, VP Corporation, Walgreens Boots Alliance, Walmart, Inc., Warner Brothers Discovery.

Warner Music Group, Wells Fargo & Co., Women of Reform Judaism, WPP, Wunderman Thompson, Xperi Holding Corporation, Ziff Davis, Zillow.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I would like to applaud the House for passing the Respect for Marriage Act with significant bipartisan support earlier this summer. It is now the time for the Senate to do the same.

I would like to take a moment to speak to my Republican colleagues who have said marriage equality is “a nonissue” right now. Some of my Senate colleagues have said things like: It's the law of the land, so passing legislation is not a good use of Congress's time.

As we saw this summer with the Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, hard-fought rights are still always vulnerable to repeal. We must also remember that in a concurring opinion to the *Roe v. Wade* repeal, one Supreme Court Justice explicitly called for the Court to reconsider and overturn *Obergefell*. We must act now so that no matter what happens in the courts, married same-sex and interracial couples are protected.

Overturing *Obergefell* and *Loving* would return the country to a patchwork of State laws where couples could be subject to State-sanctioned discrimination. Many States still have bans on same-sex marriages on the books that would immediately take effect if marriage equality were overturned.

I would also like to touch on how far-reaching the legal ramifications of overturning *Obergefell* and *Loving* would be. Without the Respect for Marriage Act, if a married same-sex or interracial couple lived in a State that decided to ban their union, their marriage could be invalidated. Even if a couple lived in a State that permitted same-sex or interracial marriage, that marriage could be deemed invalid if they were able to travel to a State that did not have marriage equality.

Invalidated marriages would also give rise to a host of legal concerns for couples who relied on the ability to marry when making major life and family planning decisions. For example, spouses may no longer be able to make important healthcare decisions or even visit their partners in the hospital. Nonbirthing parents may no longer have parental rights over their children. There would be some serious confusion about Federal and State tax violations and tax laws could be arbitrarily and discriminatorily applied.

The Respect for Marriage Act will ensure that all legally married couples are afforded the same protections, regardless of where they live, providing security and peace of mind to millions of families.

I spent decades advocating for equality. As a supervisor and mayor of San Francisco during the height of the gay rights movement, I witnessed the terrible pain and trauma that resulted from hateful discrimination. I watched firsthand as the LGBT community fought for legal recommendation of their lives, their relationships, and their personal dignity. We cannot return to a system that allows bigotry and hate. Bigotry and discrimination have no place in this society. No one should have to live not knowing whether their marriage will suddenly become invalid.

This bill will give families the peace of mind and security that comes with knowing that their valid marriages will remain legally protected under Federal law.

I want to thank Senators BALDWIN, COLLINS, PORTMAN, SINEMA, and TILLIS for their leadership on this important

issue. I encourage the rest of my colleagues to please join us in supporting the passage of the bill.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NOMINATION OF RHEANNE WIRKKALA

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to ask unanimous consent for the confirmation of a highly qualified nominee standing ready to lead the greatest military the world has ever known.

As we speak, it is no secret that Vladimir Putin's unprovoked and deadly war is raging in Ukraine. Russia, along with China, Iran, North Korea, and other adversaries, is actively working to erode our national security and undermine democratic principles across the world.

Just last month, I had the opportunity to visit our troops stationed in Eastern Europe. I could not have been prouder of these brave American servicemembers who are at the tip of the spear protecting our democracy. They have literally dedicated their lives to defending our freedoms and the freedoms of our allies. These men and women need our support, and they are depending on us to do our part and confirm quality candidates to serve in strategic leadership roles.

With that in mind, I would ask to confirm Rheanne Wirkkala of Maryland as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs. This nominee's years of service at the Defense Intelligence Agency, as a senior staffer in the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and as a special assistant to the Secretary of Defense make her immensely qualified to serve in this position.

Our national security is critically important. It is a fundamental responsibility of this body, and we must take action to make sure we have the best people in the positions to defend our democracy and our national security.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 993; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; and that the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Rheanne Wirkkala, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Wirkkala nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, since the real President, President Biden, was elected to office, the southern border—my State shares a 1,200-mile common border with Mexico—has been absolutely overwhelmed by the number of migrants entering the United States.

The United States is the most generous country in the world when it comes to legal immigration. We naturalize almost a million people a year, which is, I think, part of the secret to our economic success. We see the best and the brightest from all around the world who want to come to America, who want to enjoy the kind of prosperity that Americans enjoy and the freedom and opportunity to pursue their dreams. Legal immigration, I think, has been part of the secret sauce that has helped to make our country great, and we need to protect that.

Illegal immigration is a disaster. What is happening now on the border and what has happened in the last 2 years under the Biden administration has been nothing short of a humanitarian and public safety crisis.

It is a little bit of a disappointment—it is more than a little bit of a disappointment—when President Biden campaigned on the promise of policies that were sure to lead to this exact situation. On the one hand, he said: I want to be a uniter. I want to work together to solve our Nation's problems.

But then to see him completely abdicate the Federal Government's responsibility to control uncontrolled migration across the border is inexcusable. Once President Biden took office, his administration continued to send a clear message to the cartels, to the human smugglers, and to the migrants that our border was open. Oh, and don't forget the drug cartels, who depend on an open border to sell their poison all across our country, taking the lives, last year, of 108,000 Americans alone.

Some people have said: Well, apparently, every State is now a border State.

I think that is true, particularly when you see the epidemic of fentanyl being so pervasive in all of our communities. We are losing students in our high schools on a regular basis who think they are taking something like, let's say, Xanax or Percocet or something else, but it is laced with fentanyl, and it kills them because only a very small piece of fentanyl can take your life. It is that powerful.

Unfortunately, the administration is now trying to play catchup to its failures and abdication to provide security across our southern border. In the last fiscal year, for the first time on record, annual border encounters reached nearly 2.4 million. When I say border encounters, that does not count the so-called getaways, which is what the Border Patrol calls them—the hundreds and thousands of people who don't turn themselves in and claim asylum. These are people who want to evade law enforcement. They are very likely involved in either criminal activity or have a criminal record themselves or, perhaps, they are just smuggling drugs into the United States. Those are the getaways. So the 2.4 million is a low number for the number of people to have come across the border in the last 2 years, and there is no indication that things are slowing down.

I know Vice President HARRIS—named the border czar for President Biden's administration—when she talks about immigration, she says: Well, we need to get back to the root causes.

She talks to the President of Guatemala or Honduras or El Salvador and says, well, we need to make life better for people there so they don't come here, which is totally ignoring the scope and the gravity of the human smuggling networks that operate internationally.

I mentioned this morning, in the Judiciary Committee, where the Presiding Officer was, too, that the Border Patrol regularly encounters people from as many as 150 different countries. So the fact is the criminal organizations that make money on human smuggling will smuggle you from anywhere in the world, including from countries of particular concern to us when it comes to terrorism, for a price. So, where coming from Central America or Mexico may cost you \$5,000 or \$10,000, if you are coming from Pakistan, Iraq, or Iran, it may cost you \$15,000, and it goes on and on and on and on.

So Vice President HARRIS, apparently, doesn't understand what we are up against when she talks about root causes. People want to come here, and they will pay to come here and to evade a lawful system of controlled legal immigration, which, as I said, has been a good thing for our country, in favor of transnational criminal organizations getting richer by the day by