

Texans in Fort Worth. And it will ensure the United States can replenish our defense stockpile and remain the arsenal of democracy for the rest of the world, particularly Ukraine.

As Ukrainian forces continue to defend their country, this legislation will provide additional resources to help them keep up the fight. Now, this assistance is not a handout or a charity. As much as we want to see Ukraine win this war, our financial support is not entirely altruistic.

The United States is not just investing in a Ukrainian victory. We are also putting our resources toward a Russian defeat. We are trying to snuff out the fire before it spreads even further west.

Ukrainian forces have shown tremendous courage and stamina in the face of Russian attacks, and they deserve our unequivocal support. And I am gratified, as the Presiding Officer knows, that that support has been bipartisan and overwhelming. For the last 10 months, the United States has supplied Ukraine with critical military assistance, and there is no question that our support has been vital to Ukraine's success so far. But the one thing we can't supply that Ukraine has supplied in abundance is a will to fight, and they have done so in a magnificent way.

But the unavoidable fact is that, when we provide weapons to Ukraine to defend their sovereignty, we take them out of our own defense stockpile. The transfer of weapons to Ukraine combined with the production challenges in the defense industrial base has made it challenging to quickly replenish our own stockpiles; but this legislation, when it is passed, will help that. It provides \$2.7 billion for new munitions, which will help backfill our stockpiles and expand production capacity. We need to be ready not just to deal with the current challenges in Europe; we need to be ready for any challenge, no matter where it arises, especially including in Asia.

It also provides \$1 billion to more than double the size of the national defense stockpile, which will help safeguard against future supply chain disruptions. This will ensure that our support for Ukraine does not come at the cost of our own military readiness.

Well, in all the last-minute political jockeying before this bill was released, we were at least able to keep unrelated matters out of the bill. There is no marijuana banking provision, for example—hardly something that has anything to do with providing support for our brave men and women in the military.

That is how it should be. We need to eliminate those extraneous matters. This isn't the place for political horse trading. A well-funded and modern defense is not a Republican priority; it is not a Democratic priority; it is a national priority. We shouldn't use our troops as a bargaining chip for woke priorities.

In order to protect the American people and our democracy, our service-

members and military commanders need a strong and on-time National Defense Authorization Act. We are too late for on-time, but this is ultimately a strong bill that will deliver certainty and stability to our Armed Forces.

There is no such thing as a perfect bill, of course, but this legislation will go a long way to support our troops and strengthen our national security, and I look forward to finally getting a chance to vote for it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### KIDS ONLINE SAFETY ACT

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, this year, those of us at the Consumer Protection, Public Safety, and Data Security Subcommittee have spent hours working through how we deal with social media and hold them to account. And it has been a heartbreaking task of investigating thousands of pages of reporting testimony and other evidence that really has proven to us there is a devastating impact from social media on our Nation's children and teens.

This past February, Senator BLUMENTHAL and I introduced the Kids Online Safety Act after a series of hearings that exposed Big Tech's disregard for the safety of their underage users.

The bill provides kids and parents with the tools and transparency that they need to stay safe and requires social media companies to make those platforms safer in the default settings. It also requires independent audits to ensure that these companies are, indeed, addressing the risk to underage users.

I am appalled that this is necessary, but the committee has a mountain of proof to show it is time for Congress to do something to hold these platforms to account. And we can't wait. We really cannot afford to wait any longer because as bad as things are here in Washington, they are really worse for the kids and teens who have been pulled into these platforms.

Depression, self-harm, and suicide in teens increased at an alarming rate between 2010 and 2020. There are a limited number of plausible explanations for why this has happened, but I would remind my colleagues that the 2010s ushered in the golden age of social media. This is when social media transformed from a novelty into an almost mandatory activity, especially for teens. So it is no coincidence that it was a good decade for Silicon Valley but a very dark decade for our Nation's children.

Between 2011 and 2016, as social media became popular, sleep deprivation among U.S. teens increased by 17

percent. We also know that teens who are heavy users of social media sleep about an hour less per night than their friends who are not using social media. And as I am sure many of my colleagues know, sleep deprivation is a significant risk factor for depression among adolescents. Between 2011 and 2018, the rates of teen depression increased by more than 60 percent. Between 2011 and 2015, emergency room admissions for children and teens for depression, anxiety, and other psychiatric issues rose by 28 percent.

Before 2010, suicide by young people had stabilized and declined for decades; but, over the next decade, the teen suicide death rate increased by 62 percent. And now, suicide is the second leading cause of death for Americans between the ages of 10 and 24, only behind unintentional injuries like auto accidents.

Think about that. This is what is happening to our children. It is not my stats. It is not your stats. These are stats that are coming from research, from surveys, from medical research on our children—anxiety, depression, suicide. All of this is coming, and, when you look at the growth rate, what does it parallel? The use of social media.

Many of these platforms are robbing our children of their childhood. They are ripping it from them. American teens are succumbing to despair, and we know that social media is a big part of this reason.

In 2018, Pew released a survey revealing that close to 60 percent of youth have experienced some form of abusive online behavior. I have spent years examining what that behavior looks like, and I can tell you that calling it "abusive" is a gross understatement.

And as the years have gone by, the stories have gotten worse. And over the past few weeks, I have worked with dozens of parents and friends of young people who died because of what and whom they encountered on social media.

Today, with permission of their parents, I am going to share a few of the stories of these children because it is imperative that we realize what children are being exposed to online.

I had one mom tell me this. She said: You know, when you see these things and you hear these things, you cannot unsee it; you cannot unhear it.

I had another mom tell me: You know, MARSHA, I once felt that, when I had my kids home and we had locked the doors, we were safe—that we were safe from the outside world. But the pandemic happened, and I realized we were not, that the enemy, the evil, the harm that was wrecking my child's life—the drug traffickers, the sex traffickers, the pedophiles—they were right in there with us.

This is what our children are being exposed to—and the extent of the damage, the severity of the harassment, the bad behavior that takes place. And parents call it out to Big Tech, and too often these platforms do nothing—nothing. They hardly even respond.

They take it down for a day, and the children are suffering from this.

Grace McComas: Now, Grace endured the torture of a man who had drugged and assaulted her. He used social media to make Grace feel isolated and afraid and worthless. From the summer of 2011, when she was subpoenaed to testify against him, until she died by suicide on Easter Sunday 2012, Grace's parents fought to save her, but there was nothing they could do to force those digital platforms to ban this evil monster who was her tormenter.

On June 23, 2020, 16-year-old Carson Bride quietly ended his life while his family slept. The night before, the whole family had celebrated Carson's first summer job. But what they didn't know is that he had been receiving hundreds of harassing, threatening, and sexually explicit messages from his classmates who were using anonymous apps to hide their identities. Carson asked his tormentors to identify themselves so that they could talk things out in person, but nobody ever did. Social media lets you be anonymous. The very last search on Carson's phone was for hacks to find out who was tormenting him.

David Molak: He was an Eagle Scout, a fantasy football aficionado, a hunter, a fisher, and, by all accounts, a truly great friend. But in the last few months of his life, he became overwhelmed with hopelessness over the barrage of threats, harassment, and abuse he experienced through text messages and on social media. On January 4, 2016, he took his own life. He was 16 years old.

There are hundreds more stories just like these, just like them. Senator BLUMENTHAL and I have talked with these parents and these kids.

Children are using social media platforms to torment other children to the point of death. But we also know that adults are leveraging the power these platforms have over underage users so that they can—do what?—make a profit. Overdose deaths involving synthetic opioids increased over 56 percent from 2019 to 2020, with prescription pill abuse highest among people ages 18 to 25. They are starting younger, and drug dealers are finding them—where?—on social media platforms.

When she was 15, Becca Schmill was assaulted by a boy she and her friends met on the social media party chat. The cyber bullying and harassment that followed destroyed Becca's sense of self, and, eventually, she started using drugs to cope. In a sane world, she never would have been able to get her hands on the pills that eventually killed her, but social media made it easy. On September 16, 2020, Becca died from fentanyl poisoning.

Olivia Green was 15 years old, a freshman in high school. She dreamed of becoming a marine biologist, but then she met an adult stranger on a social media platform. When she saw him in person, this man gave her a pill that he said was Percocet. It was actually

fentanyl. So when she took it, she laid down and died from an overdose.

Alexander Neville's mom describes him as someone who competed with himself to be successful with everything he did. He pushed himself to succeed in Boy Scouts, at fencing, skateboarding, and as a person and a dear, dear friend. At 14, Alexander bought pills online that he thought were pain relievers, but it actually was fentanyl, and that is how Alexander became another victim of fentanyl poisoning.

Big Tech executives would like us to write these deaths off as tragedies and just move on, which is exactly the attitude you would expect from people who have treated our congressional hearings like they are on some kind of PR tour.

I think that as they point to their glossy white papers laying out steps that parents and teens can take to protect themselves and they think they provide a little bit more information about the steps and they talk about what the company is going to do to try to get this under control, they think we are going to move on. But we are not. We are talking about our children and our grandchildren, and, no, we are not moving on.

The enduring refrain of my discussions with the parents and the teens who have seen this firsthand is that trying to address the problem with the platform is like talking to a brick wall. When they received a response at all, there was no concern for the danger.

Over the past 2 years, this body has passed several pieces of legislation to address "emergencies." But what about this emergency? What about the emergency that is taking the lives of our children? What about this emergency that is causing death by fentanyl?

Now, when we talk about Big Tech and we talk about social media, there is one point they have made clear time and time again, and it is that they are fully incapable and unwilling to regulate themselves because they are more interested in attracting eyeballs and keeping those eyeballs on their site longer and longer and mining that data because it is dollars in the bank to them. To me, it is absolutely sickening.

And their bad behavior—getting any change in that behavior—it is too late for Grace and Carson and the other young people I talked about today, but it is not too late to save the children and the teens who are suffering right now because these tech platforms refuse to protect them.

In July, the Commerce Committee passed the Kids Online Safety Act. Senator BLUMENTHAL and I have worked diligently on this, and it came out of committee on a 28-to-0 vote. That is pretty overwhelming bipartisan support for a piece of legislation. And right now, this bill is waiting for a vote on the Senate floor.

I would implore Leader SCHUMER and I would implore my colleagues from

each side of the aisle: Listen to these stories; talk to these parents and these young people who are activists for changing what is happening on social media. Listen to them. Listen to these stories. Recognize the danger that exists on social media, and let's get this bill passed and to the President's desk. I yield floor.

NOMINATION OF TAMIKA R. MONTGOMERY-REEVES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Tamika Montgomery-Reeves to a Delaware seat on the Third Circuit Court of Appeals.

Justice Montgomery-Reeves has significant experience as both a litigator and a judge.

She received degrees from the University of Mississippi and the University of Georgia School of Law before clerking on the Delaware Court of Chancery. Following this role, she worked as a litigator with two national law firms, where she focused on complex commercial matters.

In 2015, Justice Montgomery-Reeves was appointed to serve on Delaware's Chancery Court. There, she presided over cases involving corporate issues, trusts, estates, real property, and other contractual matters. In 2019, she was appointed to serve as a justice on the Delaware Supreme Court. She is both the youngest person ever to serve on that court and the first African-American supreme court justice in Delaware history.

During her time on the bench, Justice Montgomery-Reeves has demonstrated a fair judicial temperament and a deep commitment to evenhanded decisionmaking. In recognition of her exceptional legal acumen, the committee has received many letters of support from her colleagues in both private practice and on the bench.

Justice Montgomery-Reeves has been rated unanimously "well qualified" by the American Bar Association, and she has strong support from her home State Senators, Mr. CARPER and Mr. COONS.

I strongly support her nomination and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Today, it is my honor to rise in support of the Honorable Justice Tamika Montgomery-Reeves to be confirmed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit.

Just a few months ago, in September of this year, I had the privilege to introduce Justice Montgomery-Reeves at her Senate Judiciary Committee confirmation hearing, where she was