

strong that President Reagan asked him to stay on. He served in that role for 11 years—from the longest serving Senate leader to the longest serving Japanese Ambassador.

Mansfield's decades of work in Asia could fill a separate speech. But it is worth noting one time where his approach to the job of leader directly shaped his work in the region.

I mentioned how some historians see Mansfield's aggressive emphasis on Vietnam during the Eisenhower period a key tipping point toward eventual war. But as early as 1962, Mansfield's learned perspective had him deeply worried about the direction of our involvement in Vietnam. Where he had spent the fifties lobbying for more and faster aid, he spent the sixties sounding alarms.

But while there were some public statements, Mansfield remained measured and discreet and reserved his sharpest warnings for a long string of private memorandums that he sent down to the White House.

Some historians feel Mansfield should have engineered a more public, more dramatic break with the Johnson administration if he was so certain we were marching into a quagmire.

Some Democratic Senators were publicly assailing Johnson's Vietnam policies. But Majority Leader Mansfield decided against making a high-profile public break with a President of his own party on foreign policy.

Clearly, Mike Mansfield was a complex and fascinating Senate leader for reasons far beyond his longevity. This scholarly Montanan was not an exciting idealist who transformed our national discourse, nor was he a policy entrepreneur who brought to the leader's role his own sweeping wish list of Federal programs.

Mansfield made a huge impact through a different road: by viewing the role of leader as serving others—well, that and the fact that he always enjoyed big, stable majorities on his side, often well in excess of 60 votes, helped as well.

In the Mansfield model, serving his caucus meant listening to his Members, supporting them in their goals, and helping facilitate the victories his party wanted out of the spotlight.

And he also sought to serve the Senate as a whole. He got things done without blowing up bedrock. He mostly defended the Senate's idiosyncrasies, traditions, and pace rather than try to tear them down. He erred on the side of empowering his colleagues rather than trying to dominate them; prudence over performativity; suggestion over dictatorship; and a winning record on his party's key priorities without attacking the institution to do it—a quintessentially Senate record from one of the quintessential Senate characters in our history. What a path, from mucking in the Butte copper mines to serving 16 years as Senate leader and advising nine consecutive Presidents as a seasoned statesman.

And what a testament to our great country that such a path was possible. It has been my honor to remember my distinguished predecessor this afternoon.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SINEMA). The Senator from Texas.

118TH CONGRESS

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, this week we start a brandnew year, a new Congress, and turn the page on a new chapter here in Washington, DC.

After 2 years with a single party—the Democratic Party—controlling all levers of government, the American people voted for a change for divided government.

Sometimes you will hear that divided government is actually the best time to do hard things, and I think that is true. And I hope we will rise to the challenge with the divided government that the voters in the midterm elections gave us. But, of course, now Republicans hold the majority—albeit slim—in the House of Representatives, where they will serve as a much-needed check on some of the governing strategy of our friends across the aisle.

With a Republican House, Democrats will no longer be able to use budget reconciliation to circumvent the normal legislative process and, with it, the reckless spending that has helped to fuel inflation over the last 2 years. Instead, they will have to work in earnest. They will have to work with Republicans to find common ground and move legislation using the regular order.

That is what the American people want. That is the verdict of the voters in the midterm elections. I am hopeful that we will embrace this new era of divided government to provide the opportunity to govern in a more responsible way.

The start of a new Congress is always bittersweet because you are saying good-bye to old friends, but you are also saying welcome to new friends.

While we have had to say farewell to some truly top-notch colleagues who have retired at the end of the year, we are happy to welcome those new colleagues to the Senate.

The Republican Conference officially welcomes five new Members in our ranks today: KATIE BRITT from Alabama, TED BUDD from North Carolina, MARKWAYNE MULLIN from Oklahoma, ERIC SCHMITT from Missouri, and JD VANCE from Ohio. They have now gone from Senators-elect to full-fledged U.S. Senators. And I know how excited they are to get to work.

Each of these new Senators has run the gauntlet of a primary and general election campaign and has come to Washington with a fresh perspective and a long list of ideas about how to improve the lives of their constituents in their States.

I have gotten to know each of these new colleagues over the past few

months, and I am eager to work with them here in the Senate.

On the other side of the Capitol, there are new faces joining the Texas delegation. Given the explosive population growth in the State of Texas—now we have just reached the 30 million mark of people calling Texas home—we have added two new House seats this cycle, bringing the total House of Representatives to 38 from the State of Texas.

Today, we officially welcome five new Texas Republicans to the House, and I am, likewise, eager to work with each of them.

During my time in this Chamber, I have consistently fought to protect the right of Texans and create more opportunities for every family to achieve the American dream. Despite the partisanship that has often gripped this Chamber last Congress, we have managed to actually accomplish quite a bit on behalf of the American people.

We have funded the CHIPS for America Act, which made an investment in our national security and economic competitiveness. We gave States and local government the flexibility to use excess COVID-19 relief funds on important infrastructure and disaster relief projects. And in the wake of the devastating shooting in Uvalde, we have passed bipartisan legislation to strengthen mental health resources, improve school safety, and strengthen the background check system without impacting Second Amendment rights. And it is already producing well by saving lives, I believe. We will hear more about that as time goes by.

We sent more support to local law enforcement for mental health courts and crisis intervention teams, as well as critical deescalation training.

We made major strides in combating the scourge of human trafficking and other heinous crimes and helped improve our support for crime victim survivors.

These are just a few examples of bills that I introduced or cosponsored that are now the law of the land.

While I am proud of everything that we have been able to accomplish on a bipartisan basis last Congress, we regrettably failed to address some of the biggest problems facing our country, starting with the border.

Since President Biden took office, the southern border has been overwhelmed by unprecedented levels of migration. In the last 12 months alone, Border Patrol has encountered more than 2½ million migrants along the U.S.-Mexico border.

It used to be considered a crisis when the Border Patrol encountered more than 100,000 migrants in a single month, but over the last year, we have averaged more than double that every single month.

It is a gross understatement to say that frontline officers and agents are overwhelmed. They can't keep up in terms of staffing, so Border Patrol has to leave the front lines to process asylum seekers, unaccompanied minors,

and others. Meanwhile, the drug cartels move the drugs across the border that took the lives of 108,000 Americans last year alone. And 71,000 of those 108,000 were from fentanyl or synthetic opioids, the precursors originating from Asia, principally China.

Morale is at an alltime low, and it is no surprise. If you are a law enforcement officer sworn to enforce the laws of the land and you are told by your superiors you cannot because of poor policy choices, how would you expect morale to be anything else but low?

These law enforcement officers, principally the Border Patrol, are frustrated that the administration is actively working to make their jobs harder, not easier.

As we know, the Biden administration is trying to remove one of the tools needed for the Border Patrol to control the border, since they have yet to come up with a comprehensive plan; and that would be title 42, the public health title that the Border Patrol is able to use to prevent this crisis from turning into a full-blown catastrophe.

I know I sound like a broken record, but Congress must do something. Inaction is not an option. I have said over and over again that I am willing to work with anyone—Republican, Democrat, or Independent—who is serious about solving this border crisis.

The Presiding Officer, the Senator from Arizona, has been a great partner in this effort. Back in 2021, we introduced the Bipartisan Border Solutions Act to address some of the biggest strains on Border Patrol and our immigration court system. It is admittedly a modest bill, but I was naive enough to think that if things got bad enough, the Biden administration would be looking for a lifeline.

We had a bicameral, bipartisan bill that at least got the conversation started and would make things better if it was embraced and enacted into law. But despite the fact that the bill had bipartisan, bicameral support, the Senate Judiciary Committee refused to even hold a hearing. Let me say that again: bipartisan, bicameral legislation, with the border on fire, an unprecedented humanitarian and public security crisis, and the Senate Judiciary Committee chairman refused to even hold a hearing on the bill.

In the meantime, the Biden administration has weakened or completely jettisoned policies that have checked the flow of irregular migration, and the crisis has grown even worse. And why wouldn't it?

Border Patrol, which are the experts who have taught me about what happens at the border in terms of the flow of migrants coming across, have educated me to the fact that there are both push factors and pull factors. The push factors are violence and poverty. We all understand that. The pull factors are the perception that there will be no consequences associated with illegally immigrating into the United States.

The Biden administration is simply waving the white flag when it comes to any consequences associated with illegal immigration into the United States. Given the growing strain on frontline personnel and our immigration system as a whole, not to mention public safety, I hope the willful ignorance of this administration will come to an end.

Hopefully, with the new Congress, President Biden will reconsider, maybe even travel to the border and talk to the same experts that I have learned from when it comes to how we might do a better job to control the flow not only of migrants but also drugs across the border. But, so far, the President has shown zero interest, as has the Vice President, whom he had named the border czar previously.

They want to talk about root causes of illegal immigration as if that just emanated from Central America and Mexico. But the Border Patrol in Arizona and Texas will tell you that they are detaining people from as many as 150 different countries, which tells me that there are international human smuggling networks and it is just a matter of money whether you can get here from the Middle East, whether you can get here from Ukraine, or whether you can get here from the People's Republic of China. People of all those different nationalities and more have shown up at the border, which shows me it is not just about "root causes" in Central America or South America—or Mexico, for that reason.

It won't surprise you that the border is one of the top concerns of the folks I represent in Texas. Because we have a 1,200-mile common border with Mexico, we are ground zero of this border crisis.

Meanwhile, the Biden administration, this last year, ushered through trillions of dollars in unnecessary partisan spending, adding to the inflation rates that are crushing middle-class families who are struggling to keep up with high prices, particularly at the grocery store.

My constituents are also worried about crime in their communities and the ability to keep their families safe. Of course, businesses that employ—particularly, small businesses that employ—the vast majority of Americans are facing the same inflation headwinds, compounded by supply chain struggles and an ongoing labor shortage.

These are some of the biggest challenges our country is facing, and I hope the Senate will take these problems seriously in this new Congress. Of course, these aren't Republican or Democrat issues. These aren't issues just facing red States or blue States alone. These are problems that are being faced by people across the country, and it is time for the new Congress to act with the seriousness and urgency that is required.

I am proud of the fact that I have consistently ranked as one of the most bipartisan Senators because I am will-

ing to work with anyone who wants to deliver change. That has been the case throughout my time here in the Senate, and it is not going to change now. So I am eager to work together where we can, but I also will never hesitate to fight back against ill-conceived or downright dangerous proposals from some of our friends across the aisle.

Calvin Coolidge, the former President of the United States, has said that one of the most important things a Member of Congress can do is to stop bad legislation, and that remains true today. But that doesn't detract from the fact that, where we can, where we can find common ground, we should work together in order to craft lasting, enduring bipartisan legislation, not by abusing the rules of the Senate but by working together to come up with good ideas that can command the vote of at least 60 Senators, a majority of the House, and a Presidential signature.

So, yes, we will continue to oppose radical policies that the American people overwhelmingly oppose. We won't allow the imposition of government mandates that will kill energy jobs or harm our energy security in an effort to reach unrealistic zero emissions deadlines. We won't let them hamstring our police officers with broad funding cuts or one-size-fits-all policies. And we won't allow the packing of the Supreme Court or the creation of two new States out of Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico so that Democrats get a permanent majority in the U.S. Senate by getting two Senators each from each of those would-be new States. And we won't let our colleagues on the other side impose crippling tax hikes that will make it more difficult for hard-working Texans to put food on the table.

So I trust that our colleagues got some good rest over the holidays, some time with friends and family, and we all look ahead to the need to do more work for the American people. We have big opportunities ahead of us, and I am glad to be back and eager to get to work.

TRIBUTE TO MITCH McCONNELL

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, on one final note, today marks more than the beginning of a new Congress. It also marks a major milestone for our colleague, Kentucky's senior Senator.

Today, Senator McCONNELL becomes the longest serving Senate leader in American history. That is a big deal. No Senator from either side has led their party as long as Leader McCONNELL. This milestone is no accident. As our colleagues on both sides of the aisle know, Senator McCONNELL has the most valuable combination of skills and temperament that you need to succeed in this Chamber: an encyclopedic knowledge of the Senate and an infinite work ethic.

For 16 years, he has put these skills to great use leading our conference through every storm and opportunity