

SEC. ____ . EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER PROGRAM REORGANIZATION.

(a) EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER PROGRAM NATIONAL BOARD.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 301 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11331) is amended—

(A) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

“(b) MEMBERS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The National Board shall consist of—

“(A) the Director;

“(B) 2 members appointed by the Director in accordance with paragraph (2);

“(C) 1 member appointed by the Secretary of Homeland Security;

“(D) 1 member appointed by the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development;

“(E) 1 member appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture; and

“(F) 1 member appointed by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

“(2) APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In appointing the members described in paragraph (1)(B), the Director shall select from applications of individuals seeking to serve as a member on the National Board.

“(B) CRITERIA.—In selecting applications of individuals under subparagraph (A), the Director shall select the 2 most qualified individuals who—

“(i) have not less than 10 years of experience working on public policy relating to housing and homelessness; and

“(ii) are not from the same geographic region of the United States.

“(3) CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.—An individual may not serve as a member of the National Board if, during the 5-year period preceding the first day of service on the National Board, the individual was an employee of an organization, or an affiliate of an organization, that, during the preceding 5 fiscal years, received funding under this title.

“(4) REVOLVING DOOR.—During the 2-year period following the final day of service of an individual as a member of the National Board, the individual may not serve as an employee of an organization, or an affiliate of an organization, that, during a fiscal year during which the individual served as a member of the National Board, received funding under this title.

“(5) TERM LIMIT.—An individual may not serve as a member of the National Board for a period of more than 2 years.”; and

(B) by striking subsection (e).

(2) CURRENT NATIONAL BOARD MEMBERS.—With respect to an individual serving as a member of the Emergency Food and Shelter Program National Board established under section 301 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11331) as of the date of enactment of this Act, for the purpose of section 301(b) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of that Act, as amended by this Act, the individual shall be deemed to have begun service on the Board on the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) LOCAL BOARDS.—Section 302 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11332) is amended by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following:

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Each locality designated by the National Board shall constitute a local board for the purpose of determining how program funds allotted to the locality will be distributed. The local board shall consist, to the extent practicable, of—

“(A) agencies of State and local governments that serve functions similar to the functions of the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Agri-

culture, and the Office of Management and Budget;

“(B) the mayor or other appropriate heads of government; and

“(C) representatives of nonprofit organizations that aid individuals and families who are experiencing, or are at risk of experiencing, hunger or homelessness.

“(2) PROGRAM FUNDS FOR RESERVATIONS.—Each local board administering program funds for a locality within which is located a reservation (as such term is defined in section 3 of the Indian Financing Act of 1974 (25 U.S.C. 1452), or a portion thereof, shall include a board member who is a member of an Indian tribe (as such term is defined in section 102(a) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5302(a)). The chairperson of the local board shall be elected by a majority of the members of the local board. Local boards are encouraged to expand participation of other private nonprofit organizations on the local board.”.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There are now 2 minutes of debate, equally divided.

Mr. HAGERTY. Mr. President, in the last fiscal year alone, appropriations to FEMA's Emergency Food and Shelter Program have increased by more than 5 times, totaling approximately \$1 billion in the last 2 years alone. Currently, hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars appropriated to this program are doled out annually by a national board comprised of the very same organizations that receive those funds. This amendment in no way impugns the integrity of the organizations involved. Rather, it helps them avoid the reputational risks that can occur when the pitcher is also the umpire.

My amendment is simple and common sense. It will restructure the Emergency Food and Shelter Program to ensure that the individuals sitting on that board do not have this obvious conflict of interest. Instead, the national board composition would be shifted to include qualified individuals who do not work for the organizations that seek funding from the board.

At a minimum, Congress must resolve this blatant conflict of interest within the Emergency Food and Shelter Program, especially given its dramatic increase in funding in recent years. That is what this amendment does.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, this amendment is intended to make changes to an entirely unrelated program that is completely outside of the scope of this bill. The Emergency Food and Shelter Program is an important resource that provides aid to those who are at risk of experiencing hunger. And any changes certainly must be thoroughly considered. And I look forward to having an opportunity to work with a sponsor on this amendment in some other manner. However, the bill before us extends programs that firefighters are counting on to purchase lifesaving equipment or receive important cancer screenings. We should not jeopardize

the enactment of this incredibly important bill by putting in completely unrelated matters.

I urge my colleagues to oppose the amendment.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 72, AS MODIFIED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Time has expired.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. HAGERTY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 45, nays 54, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 89 Leg.]

YEAS—45

Barrasso	Fischer	Paul
Blackburn	Graham	Ricketts
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Braun	Hagerty	Romney
Britt	Hoeben	Rubio
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cramer	Lummis	Tillis
Crapo	Marshall	Tuberville
Cruz	McConnell	Vance
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Mullin	Young

NAYS—54

Baldwin	Heinrich	Reed
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rounds
Booker	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	Kelly	Schatz
Cantwell	King	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Lujan	Sinema
Casey	Manchin	Smith
Collins	Markey	Stabenow
Coons	Menendez	Tester
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warnock
Fetterman	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Welch
Hassan	Padilla	Whitehouse
Hawley	Peters	Wyden

NOT VOTING—1

Feinstein

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). On this vote, the yeas are 45, the nays are 54.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 72) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RELATING TO “REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES”—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 35, S.J. Res. 10.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the joint resolution.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 35, S.J. Res. 10, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Veterans Affairs relating to "Reproductive Health Services".

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 4:15 p.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Delaware.

RECYCLING

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, happy Earth Week.

I rise today, along with a couple of my colleagues—one from West Virginia and another from Arkansas—to speak on the Recycling Infrastructure and Accessibility Act of 2023 and on the Recycling and Composting Accountability Act, which is bipartisan legislation that would improve our Nation's recycling and composting systems.

As a number of our colleagues know, my wife and I are both avid recyclers and composters and have been for some time. I have long believed in environmental stewardship. That is the way my parents raised my sister and me, and I suspect it is the way a lot of parents of Members of this body raised their sons and daughters. They raised us to leave behind a cleaner, healthier planet for future generations, and that is a belief I know is shared not just by elected officials here in Washington but by many people across this country.

I am also a strong believer that bipartisan solutions are lasting solutions. Whenever possible, we ought to work to find common ground and put forward bipartisan solutions that can stand the test of time. To that end, I am pleased to have found great partners—not just good partners but great partners—in developing these bipartisan recycling bills: Senator CAPITO, our ranking member on the Environment and Public Works Committee, with whom I am privileged to serve and to chair, along with Senator JOHN BOOZMAN, cochair of the Senate's Recycling Caucus, our colleague from Arkansas. All three of us recognize that we have to do our part to continue to improve our Nation's recycling and composting efforts. In doing so, it not only benefits our environment but also creates economic opportunity and jobs—a lot of jobs.

The legislation we are here to discuss today would address several of the challenges that America's recycling efforts currently face and what we might do about them. One of these challenges is the availability of good data.

In November of 2021, with input from many stakeholders, the Environmental Protection Agency released its first-ever national recycling strategy. When that strategy was released, I was delighted to learn that many of the comments I had submitted to the EPA on

behalf of our committee had been incorporated into the final version. It was a happy day when we learned that. This document offered a transformative vision for strengthening our Nation's waste management efforts. It also highlighted the need for greater standardization around data collection.

To address this challenge around data collection, Senator BOOZMAN and I, along with our staffs, developed the Recycling and Composting Accountability Act. Our bill would improve the EPA's ability to gather data on our Nation's recycling systems and explore opportunities for implementing a national composting strategy.

The EPA has also set a goal of increasing the U.S. recycling rate to 50 percent by 2030. With a current recycling rate of only 32 percent, it is clear we have a long way to go. That is why we must also focus on increasing access to recycling opportunities throughout our Nation—not just in urban areas or suburban areas but in rural areas as well. Many Americans in disadvantaged communities want to recycle and compost, too, but they are unable to do so because they, in many cases, live in communities that lack curbside pickup, that lack bottle return, and that lack other necessary recycling infrastructure.

Senator CAPITO's Recycling Infrastructure and Accessibility Act of 2023 would address this challenge by creating a pilot program with EPA to help expand recycling services in underserved areas. The Recycling Infrastructure and Accessibility Act that she has written would bring many communities, including those in rural areas, into the recycling world while also better protecting our environment.

I commend Senator CAPITO for her work and her leadership in developing this legislation. I also want to continue working with her to ensure that her bill helps to jump-start recycling in communities with the greatest need, especially in disadvantaged and historically underserved communities.

Both of the bills that I have referred to from members of our committee are a result of a true collaboration, and they reflect a substantial amount of bipartisan effort dedicated to exploring and addressing our Nation's recycling and composting challenges.

The adoption of these bills this week is fitting and timely, as Saturday marks the 53rd anniversary of the very first Earth Day. This day is personal to me. Some 53 years ago this Saturday, I stood side by side with tens of thousands of people in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park. I was a naval flight officer. I had completed my training and was about to deploy out of Moffett Field, CA, to head for Southeast Asia, but I had an opportunity to join tens of thousands of people in Golden Gate Park that day to celebrate our country's first-ever Earth Day.

That same year, Democrats and Republicans worked together with then-President Richard Nixon to create a

Federal Agency dedicated to protecting our environment. The name of that Agency? The Environmental Protection Agency.

Decades later, I can still vividly remember—I can; I can close my eyes and remember it now—that first Earth Day and the urgency we felt to save our planet. Today, a younger generation also shares that sense of urgency.

While I believe we ought to live every day like it is Earth Day, on April 22 of each year, I especially welcome the opportunity to reflect and give thanks for all of the incredible natural resources and natural beauty that God has given us on this planet of ours.

Earth Day is also a time for all of us to reflect on our actions individually and as a whole, to think about what more we can do and should be doing to protect our planet and its inhabitants. Like many people, I try to live my life by the golden rule of always treating people the way I want to be treated. I also believe that principle extends to the way we treat and care for our planet and those with whom we share it.

A couple of years ago—and some of my colleagues may remember—we had a visitor on the other side of the Capitol, in the House Chamber. He was a fellow from France named Macron, the Prime Minister of France. He came to address a joint session of Congress that day, and he did a great job. He was very well received, I think, by everybody.

On that day, he spoke of the importance of protecting our environment from the threats of climate change, hazardous waste, and toxic pollution. At the end of his speech, he said something I will never forget. He was talking about our planet, and these were his words:

There is no planet B. There is no planet B. This is the only one we are going to have.

I sat there that day, thinking, boy, he has gotten it right; there is no planet B. That means we only have one chance to get it right when it comes to protecting and caring for this planet of ours.

As I said earlier, I am committed to leaving behind a cleaner, healthier planet for future generations. I welcome all of our colleagues to join Senator CAPITO and myself in that effort. Fortunately, we have made remarkable progress over the past five decades following that very first Earth Day. From enacting comprehensive laws to protect our environment and support good-paying, clean energy jobs to ratifying the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol and phasing down the use of superpolluting chemicals like HFCs, which are 1,000 times more potent as a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide, there is much to be proud of. Still, our work is not finished. We have a long way to go. I think it was Robert Frost who said we have miles to go before we sleep—miles to go before we sleep.

So, today, we celebrate the opportunity to build on this progress and leave behind a livable planet with our

bipartisan recycling legislation. We also acknowledge that there is more to be done. In the spirit of Earth Day, I am prepared to roll up my sleeves and keep marching forward in my effort to do the right thing by our planet and the people who call it home just as I did some 53 years ago this Saturday. I invite Americans from all walks of life to join the Senator from West Virginia, Senator CAPITO; Senator BOOZMAN from Arkansas; and myself in this effort. It is the right thing to do, and it will make you feel good all over. I promise. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, it is a pleasure to be on the floor today with the chair of our EPW Committee and with my friend from Arkansas, Senator BOOZMAN.

I am going to speak again about another example of the bipartisan work of our EPW Committee, where we have had accomplishments that are real, practical, and positive and result in good change for our country. On the EPW Committee, we have a history of working together, of crafting legislation together, and of getting good policy going. Sometimes it is not easy, but we have been able to do it.

The cornerstone of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which made needed investments in our Nation's core infrastructure, was written and passed out of EPW. With the Water Resources Development Act, it was the same thing. It supports the work of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on projects across this country. It was passed out of our EPW Committee unanimously, and it eventually became law.

Today, Chairman CARPER, Senator BOOZMAN, and I are reintroducing two pieces of legislation that had been previously approved by EPW and the Senate unanimously—both the committee and the full Senate—to tackle another issue in a bipartisan way, which is access to recycling in America.

Not only is recycling something that we have found people really want to do, but it is great for the environment, and it is good for business. It supports over 1 million jobs and generates billions of dollars in economic output every year. But in order to grow these numbers, we need to ensure people who want to participate really can, particularly those in rural and underserved areas, such as areas of my State, so that they can do so.

Mr. President, the first bill we are reintroducing today, the Recycling Infrastructure and Accessibility Act, addresses challenges when it comes to recycling for many of our smaller cities and towns.

In the one I live in, we have sort of stopped and started on recycling. Recycling services, including curbside recycling, are just simply not available. These rural areas share common barriers to accessibility: location and proximity to material recovery facilities

and the size and density of the population. This is just not available. This has led to low processing yields and high costs in collection and transportation costs, making it difficult for material recovery facilities to operate at a profit.

Our legislation would establish a pilot recycling program to ensure places like West Virginia, Arkansas, Wyoming, or Alaska aren't being left behind. The pilot program would award grants on a competitive basis to eligible entities for improving recycling accessibility in a community or communities within the same geographic area.

Along with improving access to recycling, it is important to fix important data gaps, as the chairman spoke about, when it comes to recycling in America. That is the intent of the Recycling and Composting Accountability Act, which is the other piece of legislation we are introducing today. It would improve data collection on our Nation's recycling systems and explore the potential of a national composting strategy. Not only would this give us a better idea of how well States are doing through recycling and composting rates, but it would also help us identify those areas that may be struggling to sustain and grow proper recycling programs.

These are simple steps we can take, supported by both Republicans and Democrats, to improve and expand recycling in this country. Americans in every community—rural and urban, on the coasts or in the heartland—share a desire to protect our environment. These pieces of legislation will help make it easier for them to recycle, to contribute to a healthier planet, and to create jobs along the way.

With Earth Day coming up, it is fitting that we continue our efforts to expand recycling by reintroducing these bills today, alongside Chairman CARPER and Senator BOOZMAN, and I thank them both for their work.

DRUG CRISIS

Mr. President, I informed the Senator from Arkansas, but I need to inform Senator CARPER that I am having back-to-back speeches, so I am going to totally change the topic here real quick before Senator BOOZMAN talks about recycling. Thank you for letting me move ahead here.

Mr. President, I rise today to talk about an issue that is impacting every State in our Nation, an issue that has the potential to impact every community, every family, and every person in the Chamber today, and that is the drug and substance abuse crisis.

My home State of West Virginia knows all too well about the scars that this crisis has created and the devastating toll that it takes. West Virginia, unfortunately, continues to lead the Nation in overdose deaths per capita. It is a sad statistic for us, and although these deaths have been declining, every single overdose death is one too many.

In 2020, we lost 1,197 West Virginians to overdoses. Data from our State

health department indicates that over 80 percent of these deaths included an opioid.

Our State's EMS teams responded to over 9,000 suspected overdose calls, and there were 6,916 emergency room visits related to overdoses. These numbers are just staggering and clearly show the continued and urgent need to address this crisis and the many forms that it comes in.

This is certainly an issue that requires immediate attention from every level of government and deserves more than just four mentions in the President's most recent budget proposal.

While I feel the President and his administration lack that sense of urgency, ending the addiction crisis and taking action to save countless lives remains one of my top priorities.

Each time I meet with our northern or our southern U.S. attorneys in West Virginia, the drug crisis is by far the largest topic of discussion. Their offices see firsthand the amount of illicit drugs that are entering our State and work around the clock to remove the threat that these substances create in our communities.

Like I have said in this Chamber before, last October our U.S. Attorney's Office of the Northern District of West Virginia recovered approximately 75 pounds of cocaine, 19 pounds of methamphetamine, and nearly 5 pounds of fentanyl in Wheeling, WV, on one bust.

Investigators found that traffickers had these drugs shipped from the U.S.-Mexican border to Ohio via tractor-trailer and used cash payments to people who flew from California to Pittsburgh to move the cash back and forth. The connection between the crisis at our southern border and the drug epidemic we are seeing at home does not get any clearer than that.

In December of last year, the DEA announced nationwide seizures of over 50.6 million fentanyl pills and more than 10,500 pounds of fentanyl powder. The DEA estimates that these seizures could represent 379 million potentially deadly overdoses of fentanyl. That is enough fentanyl to kill every single American. And these are just the drugs that they found.

With the Border Patrol stretched unfathomably thin, there is no telling the amount of drugs that are getting through undetected. We know that these drugs are entering our country through the southern border, making their way into each and every State and wreaking havoc.

If President Biden would get a little more serious about stopping this, I think he has to get serious about border security. In a crisis this urgent, it is time to act.

I have spoken with the DEA administrator about the support they need and the challenges that they are facing. I have introduced legislation, led letters, and pushed for initiatives that informed the public of the dangers of fentanyl getting in the hands of our youth, that strengthen our investigations on fentanyl trafficking, and that

prevent fentanyl and synthetic drug shipments from being smuggled into the United States through the mail.

Currently, we are working on efforts to crack down on and schedule the illicit drug xylazine, which I understand is also known as “tranq.” If you didn’t know by now, xylazine is an easily accessible veterinarian tranquilizer that is being mixed with opioids, including fentanyl, increasing the number of fatal overdoses nationwide.

This crisis is ever-changing, which means our approach needs to be multifaceted as well.

I encourage the President, his administration, and all of our colleagues right here in the Congress to stay on this effort and stop the latest modifications before it is too late.

Even in the midst of devastating losses in our State, I have always been inspired, encouraged, and moved by the efforts of people in West Virginia to end the drug crisis and help those in our State during the times when they need it the most. West Virginians continue to be responsible for the most innovative recovery solutions and prevention efforts that we have seen.

The opioid crisis has made a personal targeted impact on communities all across our State, and in turn we have seen success through these community-based solutions.

I have seen in Martinsburg, WV, with a program that is a police-school-community-health-and-education partnership working to prevent substance use disorders from ever happening to our youth. By building strong families and empowering the community, we build resiliency in children and families to help them overcome this horrible addiction.

I have seen this in Kearneysville, WV, where they are building a recovery village so that individuals who are struggling with addiction receive access to family and community they definitely need.

The detailed focus is on housing and workforce development, aspects of recovery that are absolutely critical.

I have seen drug court programs all across our State, where West Virginians are building each other up, holding each other accountable, and giving those who struggle with addiction the chance for a life of recovery.

You know, West Virginians take care of West Virginians, and there is no other issue that requires each and every one of us to work together quite like this one.

So, President Biden, the drug crisis has created a dire situation in communities not just across my State but across the country. We have no time to waste. Every day of inaction results in turmoil and devastation for so many families and loved ones.

We need to secure the southern border; we need to crack down on illicit drug trafficking and new tactics that criminals are implementing; and we need to deliver the tools our communities need to implement Federal pro-

grams and develop those community-based solutions that we know work best. We must do this together. We must do it now. Countless lives depend on us.

With that, I yield the floor to my colleague from Arkansas, my fellow recycler, Senator BOOZMAN.

RECYCLING

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, it is great to be here with Senator CARPER and Senator CAPITO—two dear friends but also two leaders in the recycling effort, not only recycling in general but the Recycling Caucus—to raise the visibility of the importance of recycling from an environmental standpoint as well as the important role the industry has in our economy.

Of the many caucuses that I am a member of, the Senate Recycling Caucus is one of the most active.

The attention to recycling in Congress is night and day compared to what it was a couple of years ago, in large part because of Chairman CARPER’s leadership. So I want to thank him so much for his commitment not only in word but in deed.

When China implemented its “National Sword” policy in 2018, that halted the import of plastics and other materials destined for its recycling processors. As a result, we really began to see how crippled our domestic recycling abilities were. But through a lot of hard work, we are beginning to help the policymakers and the public and private sectors understand how recycling is common sense.

This is not a red or a blue State issue. Recycling is good for the economy, it creates jobs, and helps the environment. Everyone should be able to get on board with those incentives.

Recycling is a critical part of the United States, with it being a \$200 billion industry that has created over 680,000 jobs. However, with the recycling rate in the United States currently sitting at around 32 percent, there is certainly room for improvement.

It will take a team effort to get where we want to be. Corporations, manufacturers, and leaders from across the spectrum all have a role to play in developing the best ways our country can be a global leader in this important industry.

One of the bills we are introducing today is the Recycling and Composting Accountability Act. This is a data collection bill at its core.

As it stands, there is no standardized data for our national recycling system, since there are upward of 10,000 individual recycling systems in the United States at local and State levels. It is hard to fix a recycling problem—it is hard to fix any problem—if you don’t have a baseline data point to work with. That is what this bill is all about.

The other bill that we are championing is the Recycling Infrastructure and Accessibility Act. This pilot program will award grants, on a competitive basis, to eligible entities to im-

prove recycling accessibility in a community or communities within the same geographic area.

While these bills will not completely fix our Nation’s recycling system, we know it is progress. If we keep building on commonsense wins, I am confident the United States can become the leader globally in recycling, as it should be.

I look forward to further working with Senator CARPER and Senator CAPITO and, again, thank them for their leadership and their efforts as we champion sustainable and economically beneficial policies that recycling is all about. We must continue to develop meaningful, long-term solutions that address the challenges facing the recycling industry today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The Senator from North Carolina.

SOUTHERN BORDER

Mr. BUDD. Madam President, our country is in the midst of the worst border crisis in our history. Since President Biden took office, there has been more than 5 million illegal crossings at the southern border.

I have been to the border multiple times, and I have seen this crisis firsthand. In fact, the last time I was there, I was touring a heavily trafficked sector with off-duty Border Patrol officers. As we were driving along, the officers spotted a couple of cartel members. One of the officers turned to me, and he apologized. He said: I am sorry, but I am going to have to go on duty now. He went over and he apprehended and he arrested the cartel members there, right on the spot.

This is just a small taste of what they have to face each and every day. We have to keep these men and these women in our prayers, and we must give them all the tools that they need to keep our homeland safe.

Beyond the rampant lawlessness, the crime, the human trafficking, one of the worst aspects of this crisis is the devastating amount of drugs that are pouring into our country.

The last annual numbers showed that over 100,000 Americans died just last year from drug-related overdose, and about 90 percent of those were related to fentanyl.

This crisis has gotten so bad that fentanyl-driven overdose deaths are now the leading cause of deaths for those who are between 18 and 45 years old. And this is perhaps the worst statistic: Children under 14 years old are dying of fentanyl poisoning faster than any other age group.

The drugs that come through the border cause unspeakable harm back in communities in North Carolina. To many, they are only one or two degrees away from a personal tragedy with a name having to do with illegal drugs.

I routinely talk to sheriffs all over the State. I recently went to all 100 counties, and I talked to a lot of those sheriffs. Many of them told me that every single county in North Carolina

is now a border county because of President Biden's policies.

In fact, a recent drug bust in Iredell County, just north of Charlotte, uncovered enough fentanyl to kill 250,000 individuals. That is poison from just one traffic stop in North Carolina.

It begs the questions: How did we get here, and what can be done?

We got here at precisely the moment that President Biden stopped enforcing the law at the southern border. President Biden stopped building the border wall on his first day in office. He has reversed policies to quickly deport criminal illegal aliens. He refused to get tough on sanctuary cities that don't obey Federal law. He ended the "Remain in Mexico" policy. And next month, he will end title 42 with no plan on how to manage the impending surge.

The story of President Biden's border crisis is one of preventable tragedies compounding day in and day out. And if the White House won't act to stop it, then Congress should.

The very first bill I introduced as a U.S. Senator is called the Build the Wall Now Act. It requires border wall construction to restart immediately, it removes all legal roadblocks to construction, and it unlocks \$2.1 billion in unspent funding.

I have seen for myself the idle heavy equipment just sitting there, the concrete and the steel that have sat unused since January 20 of 2021. My bill simply orders the Biden administration to use those supplies and finish the job.

When I spoke to those border agents, they told me that they really need a wall and, yeah, they need funding but that what they really need is an administration that has their back. And right now, they don't have that.

Securing the border used to be a bipartisan issue. So I would call on President Biden to stop ignoring the border crisis, suspend any partisanship that is stopping him from doing what we know would stop this suffering, and for the sake of our law enforcement, for our parents, for our children, we need this administration to change course so that we can save lives.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. RICKETTS. Madam President, I rise today to join my colleagues who are continuing to sound the alarm about the ongoing drug crisis we have here in our country.

I will reiterate what my colleague said with regard to the fact that the leading cause of death of Americans age 18 to 45 today is fentanyl. In 2021, 106,000 Americans died of a drug overdose, 70,000 because of fentanyl. Now, let's think about if a terrorist attacked our country and killed 106,000 Americans. We would be up in arms. We would be mobilizing the country. Yet we do not see that response out of the Biden administration.

Fentanyl is a drug that is coming to us from across the border. The precursors

of it are manufactured in China and shipped to Mexico, where the cartels then, in illegal labs, create the fentanyl that they ship across the border. When it comes across the border, it does not stay there; it goes all across our country.

The last 2 years I was Governor—the first 2 years of the Biden administration—we saw the increase in the drugs the Nebraska State Patrol was confiscating go up dramatically. We saw twice the amount of methamphetamine confiscated, 3 times the amount of fentanyl, and 10 times the amount of cocaine. In 2019, Nebraska law enforcement confiscated 46 pills—46. In the first 6 months of 2021, that number had grown to 151,000 pills confiscated—unbelievable.

It is killing people in my State, as it is across the country. I have talked on this floor before about Taryn Lee Griffith, a 24-year-old mom of two. She was out with friends when she took a pill she thought was Percocet, but it was laced with a lethal dose of fentanyl. She died that night. Now, her two little girls are going to have to learn about their mom through pictures and stories from family.

This is shameful, and it must end. It is impacting people all across this country. As I have said before on this floor, if this is not our job, to fix this, I don't know what is. So what more can we do? Well, first of all, we can address the southern border.

I have had the opportunity to go to the southern border several times, and when I talk to Customs and Border Protection officials, they tell us they need three things: They need infrastructure—wall, build a wall; they need more technology, like better drones; and they need more personnel. This Congress needs to provide Customs and Border Protection the resources they need to be able to stop the flow of drugs coming into this country.

Another thing we can do—unbelievably, if you distribute fentanyl and it kills somebody, that is not a murder charge. However, I am proud to cosign on Senator MARCO RUBIO's bill, the Felony Murder for Deadly Fentanyl Distribution Act, which would make it a Federal felony murder charge to distribute fentanyl and then have somebody die from it. This is a very serious crime that is going on. It needs serious consequences. We need to make this a felony murder charge. And let me tell you, the families are asking for this.

One of the other things we periodically do here is we put fentanyl on the schedule I drug list, but it is temporary. We need to make that permanent. We know fentanyl and the analogues are dangerous and need to be schedule I drugs that have no medical purpose. So let's do that. And that is why I have cosponsored Senator JOHNSON's Stopping Overdoses of Fentanyl Analogues Act, otherwise known as SOFA.

This is a drug crisis. It is killing our young people in this Nation. I call on

my colleagues to act, to take these steps to combat this crisis. Too many Americans are dying because of what is going on. We need to act.

With that, Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

(The remarks of Mr. HAGERTY pertaining to the introduction of S. 1192 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. HAGERTY. Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

FENTANYL

Mr. LEE. Madam President, I would like to talk about fentanyl. It is cheap, it is highly addictive, and it is deadly. It is responsible for more overdose deaths in America than any other drug. Last year alone, 110,000 Americans died from fentanyl poisoning in America.

I recently joined a U.S. delegation to Mexico focused on stopping illicit drug trafficking, curbing illegal immigration at the U.S.-Mexico border, and addressing China's role in providing precursor chemicals for fentanyl production and laundering money for the cartels.

I can say that the drug crisis spilling into our country is apparent to anyone willing to travel to the border and witness it for themselves. It is becoming more and more apparent every day. In fact, it is becoming more apparent even within Mexico.

During my recent visit with President Lopez Obrador in Mexico, I heard him talk about the fact that, although in many instances, with many other drugs, drug production in Mexico has often been sending drugs just to the United States, at least far more than it has to Mexico, but with fentanyl, we are seeing something different. We are seeing that fentanyl is now spilling into the Mexican market, and many Mexican citizens are starting to die from fentanyl poisoning.

So he, too, is concerned about it and is looking for ways he can make sure that China keeps closer track of the precursor chemicals and that the Government of Mexico is notified when those shipments of large-scale containers of these precursor chemicals arrive in Mexico, presumably for the production of fentanyl inside of Mexico.

Yet, notwithstanding all these developments and 110,000 Americans dying in the last year alone from fentanyl, the Biden administration has utterly failed to stop this massive influx of fentanyl flowing across our southern border. In fact, fentanyl is one of the only commodities to see a price decrease since Biden took office. We have seen rampant inflation everywhere else but not with fentanyl. So despite this historic inflation that we have been experiencing ever since January 21, 2021, street prices for this deadly drug have fallen, indicating supply is meeting demand without significant impediment,

bringing down the price. For example, in Arizona, users were paying \$20 per pill in early 2021, but by early 2022, the price had plummeted to \$5. In Ohio, the cost of fentanyl went from \$75,000 per kilogram in 2017 to \$50,000 in 2019 and then to \$36,000 in 2021.

This is the last of the places where we want to see the opposite of inflation. We wish that our consumer products at grocery stores and everywhere else were going down, not the price of illegal, deadly fentanyl.

To put these numbers in perspective, we have been talking about the price per kilo—\$75,000 per kilo a few years ago; and then 50,000 in 2019; and then 36,000 in 2021. To put it in perspective, each of those kilos—just 1 kilo of fentanyl contains half a million lethal doses. That is to say, 1 kilogram could wipe out the entire city of Atlanta, GA; and 1 kilo could essentially wipe out the entire population of the State of Wyoming. And 2 kilos could kill the entire State of Delaware.

The DEA recently announced the seizure of more than 50 million fentanyl-laced pills and more than 10,000 pounds of fentanyl powder, just in 2022 alone. These seizures—that no doubt just represent a fraction of all fentanyl that made its way into the United States without detection and seizure—represented a staggering 379 million lethal doses, far more than enough to kill every man, every woman, and every child in the United States.

Fentanyl is a killer. It is more powerful than morphine and has a potency that is measured in micrograms. Even a tiny amount can be lethal. Just 2 milligrams can kill an adult. That is why, when you measure this out, 2 milligrams—or 2,000 micrograms—going into a kilogram is going to get you to half a million lethal doses in 1 kilo.

It is just unconscionable for this administration to turn a blind eye to the problem of fentanyl trafficking across the border. In the face of such a lethal threat, we need to have bold and decisive action, not empty rhetoric, because the drug cartels really don't care about party politics. They only care about making money. And that money is coming from the pockets of our fellow Americans suffering from addiction.

This isn't just a problem for border States like Texas and Arizona. It is a threat to every community in America. It is sold on street corners in small towns and in big cities. It is killing our friends, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

We must secure our borders to disrupt the drug cartels. We cannot tacitly allow fentanyl and other deadly drugs to continue flowing into our communities and destroying the lives of our everyday citizens.

Now, yes, it is true, they are working to seize the stuff; and our law enforcement agents have seized a lot of it. But with millions of people crossing into our border—our southern border—over the last slightly more than 2 years—

millions of people pouring in—it is making it worse, especially when you consider those same people are being trafficked into the United States, earning billions of dollars—the extortionate rates that they charge—to smuggle human traffic into the United States. It would be folly to assume, as the Secretary of Homeland Security recently suggested at a hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee, that that doesn't play a very significant role in fentanyl making its way into the United States. He insisted that nearly all of the fentanyl comes in by way of vehicles—trucks and passenger vehicles—at points of entry. I don't know how he can possibly know that. In fact, it is impossible he could know that, because when you have 5 million people coming into the United States illegally through our southern border in slightly more than 2 years, it would be folly to assume that those people being trafficked by the drug traffickers wouldn't also be used to carry fentanyl.

In short, every pill of fentanyl is a potential killer. Every shipment of fentanyl is a ticking time bomb, if not a weapon of mass destruction. And every life lost to fentanyl is a tragedy.

We owe it to ourselves, our families, and our communities to tackle this problem and to do everything in our power to stamp out the scourge of this drug in American communities.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, when most people talk about the fentanyl crisis crippling our communities today, they talk the numbers. And the numbers are very powerful.

In 2022, synthetic opioids like deadly fentanyl claimed over 75,000 lives in our country. In fact, it is estimated that over 150 people die every day from overdoses related to the synthetic opioids, the most common one being fentanyl.

But today, what I really want to tell you about is one person. I want to tell you about Reilly Schrapps from Butte, MT. Reilly was born November 6, 1997. We have four children. Our youngest of four was born in 1996. This all hits way too close to home.

You see, Reilly loved his mother and his father, Tom. Incidentally, Tom was my guest at the State of the Union Address earlier this year. His stepmother, his brother, his stepsiblings, their family's two dogs, were all loved by Tom. In fact, according to those who knew him best, Reilly was an avid fisherman, he was a sportsman—so much like most Montanans—and he spent his free time enjoying the great outdoors in Montana with family and friends, floating the Big Hole, skiing Discovery, and camping Canyon Ferry.

Reilly was also an artist. He enjoyed all these things and more until July 30 of 2022, the day Reilly died taking a pill laced with fentanyl. Reilly was in Montana when this happened. He was just 24 years old.

Reilly lives on in the stories that families and friends tell about him. But

that shouldn't be the case. Reilly should be alive today.

Fentanyl overdoses quickly became the leading cause of death for 18- to 45-year-olds in our country. It is a fast-acting poison—50 times more powerful than heroin, 100 times more potent than morphine. And it is taking children away from their parents and spouses away from their partners. We lost over 75,000 people just last year.

And I commend law enforcement in Montana and across our country for doing everything in their power, many times risking their own lives, to get fentanyl off our streets, but they can't do it alone. We must stop fentanyl from flooding our streets to begin with by securing our wide-open southern border.

Since President Biden took office, there have been over 5 million illegal border crossings. Montana has just over 1 million total residents. We have had over 5 million illegal border crossings since the President took office. This includes gang members, drug dealers, suspected terrorists, as well as thousands of pounds of deadly, illegal fentanyl. This is the most in our Nation's history.

You see, Mexican cartels are using chemicals that come from China sent to Mexico; and there in Mexico, they manufacture illicit fentanyl, which is pressed then into counterfeit pills, smuggled across the southern border, and sold as pills in powder form in our communities.

These cartels are terrorist organizations. We need to call and treat them as such. The cartels are taking advantage of the wide-open and lawless southern border. So many of us have spent nights on the southern border, including myself, shoulder to shoulder with those brave men and women, with Border Patrol, trying to protect our country but vastly outnumbered, because they are not only flooding the southern border with illegals but also flooding the southern border with poison, including our Montana communities.

Montana is a northern border State. But we have a southern border crisis. And the consequences of this crisis are most tragic. These are not just numbers and statistics. They are human lives—lives like Reilly's. Every single one is someone's child, somebody's parent, somebody's friend. And they are people that should still be here today.

When Tom Schrapps joined me at the State of the Union Address earlier this year, he said that even though talking about what happened to Reilly is so painful, that if he could just save one person, one family, from the pain that he has gone through, the pain would be worth it.

So I am here talking about this, urging—urging—the administration and my colleagues to secure the southern border, change the policies that once were working that this President rescinded. We need to do everything to prevent more families from feeling this pain.

The scourge of fentanyl on our communities is the single greatest threat to public safety today. When you look at the violent crime that we are seeing increasing across the State of Montana—you spend a little time; it doesn't take a lot of time—a little time with any law enforcement across the State of Montana, they will tell you it is the drugs that are causing the crime—every one of them. Fentanyl will continue to fuel the worst drug crisis in American history until we take serious action to address the open border crisis at our southern border. And there are solutions right here at our fingertips.

If this administration and my colleagues across the aisle would join us, we can crack down on these Mexican drug cartels and those who supply them with the chemicals to produce illicit fentanyl.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. YOUNG. Madam President, we are entering graduation season; 17- and 18-year-olds should be attending their senior prom, preparing to finish high school, and looking forward to their futures, as my oldest daughter is right now. They should not be in the obituaries of our local newspaper. Their high school lockers should not be makeshift memorials covered in flowers. And yet all over America, they are.

Fentanyl is the leading cause of death for Americans aged 18 to 45—the leading cause of death. A rapidly increasing number of the dead are teenagers. And the rate of teen overdoses since the pandemic have more than doubled compared to the decade before.

Between 2019 and 2021, the number of deaths caused by fentanyl among 10- to 19-year-olds increased by 182 percent. And this is due almost entirely to the fentanyl found in counterfeit pills, many of which are sold via social media—platforms like TikTok and Snapchat.

The drug is incredibly lethal. Two milligrams, the equivalent of 10 grains of salt, can kill. It is inexpensive to produce and exponentially more dangerous than heroin or morphine. Even the overdose rate of children 5 and under is growing. Hundreds of thousands of Americans are dying, so many of our kids among them.

How can we be so powerless to prevent this?

To all the families who have lost loved ones to fentanyl, we grieve with you. We share your anger, and we vow—we vow—not to let your loved one's death be in vain. It is past time we took the fight to the monsters who traffic in this poison, who profit from our loss.

I know the Presiding Officer feels the way I do about this issue.

First, we know that the majority of fentanyl is making its way into our communities through Mexico. To President Biden and his administration: Secure the border now.

Second, let's give the frontline soldiers in this fight the tools that they

need to keep fentanyl off our streets. The HALT Act, which my colleagues and I recently introduced, would do this. It would permanently classify fentanyl-related drugs as schedule I, meaning they would be deemed dangerously addictive with no medical value, and holds those who deal in this poison liable to civil and criminal punishment. This legislation would enable our law enforcement officials to better fight the impact of this deadly drug.

Lastly, we need to cut off the dealers' back channels to our children. We know that pushers prey on teenagers across social media platforms, embedding advertisements with emojis or codes. Social media companies must work with the Federal Government to shut down these one-stop digital drug shops—shut them down.

Another recently introduced bill, the Cooper Davis Act, would require social media companies to play their part in this fight and duly report drug trafficking across their platforms. To accomplish this, our bill would create a standardized reporting system with the Federal Government, modeled after the existing reporting system for child sexual abuse material on social media platforms. It has worked there. It will work here as well.

The Cooper Davis Act is a bipartisan proposal reflecting the scale of devastation caused by the drug crisis across all of the 50 States. In fact, this crisis knows no region, no class, no party. No American family is immune from it.

By securing the border, by passing the HALT Act, and by passing the Cooper Davis Act, we can start—we can start—to rally a true national response to this crisis. We cannot let the deaths of so many young Americans be for naught. Enough is enough.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ABORTION

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, I feel like, in fact, I have been here on a weekly basis to talk about this issue. And the reason I feel that way is that I have been here on a weekly basis to talk about what is happening in the wake of the Dobbs decision, which stripped the American people of the first fundamental freedom, the first fundamental right, that we have lost since reconstruction.

This was a 50-year effort on the part of certain people in this country, with an ideological commitment to overturn Roe v. Wade, who used every single mechanism that they could of our democracy and, now, ultimately, our judiciary, to enforce a legal outcome that the vast majority of the American people have never supported and, today, don't support.

We find ourselves on the floor today, I dare say, facing a resolution by the Senator from Alabama, whom I have been out here arguing with for the last 6 weeks—a resolution that would be derailed by, I would bet, 9 out of 10 Americans. I will be fair: 8 out of 10 Americans. This is an effort in the wake of the Dobbs decision, which stripped the American people of this fundamental freedom, this fundamental right that families have relied on for 50 years.

Millions of veterans now live in States where abortion is banned. I will come to that in a second.

In an attempt to deal with the catastrophe in the wake of Dobbs, the VA has promulgated some rules to make it allowable in the Veterans' Administration. When a veteran or their family member has been raped, is the victim of incest, or when the life of the mother is at stake, what the VA has said—because we are dealing with the overturning of Roe v. Wade—in those cases, those three limited cases, we are going to allow people to get access to care at the Veterans' Administration.

That has set off the Senator from Alabama, who is now trying to get the Senate to pass a resolution to ban that so that veterans and their families who are the victims of rape, who are the victims of incest, or where the life of the mother is at stake, cannot get medical care at the Veterans' Administration. In a State like his, which has banned abortion, that is what is at stake this week.

A month ago, we were on this floor because the same Senator from Alabama was putting a blanket hold on every single flag officer's promotion in the U.S. military. Think about that. That sounds impossible. That sounds like an exaggeration.

Madam President, the reason it sounds that way to you is because, first of all, you are a reasonable person, but, second of all, it has never happened in the history of this Senate before—that somebody has held up the promotion of every single flag officer, put a blanket hold on.

Now, that is not because of what the VA is doing. That is because of what the Department of Defense is doing, because the Department of Defense, again, in the wake of Dobbs—the Dobbs decision overturning Roe v. Wade—in the wake of that, DOD has said: If you are serving in a State where abortion is banned, we will pay for your travel from that State to another State. We will say that you don't need to use unpaid leave to get to that other State.

And we have said—DOD, not me, has said: If you want to take a little longer to talk to your commanding officer about one of the most personal decisions anybody could make, any family could make, any woman could make, we are going to give you a little bit of extra time to do that.

Those are the three things. I bet 80 percent of the American people support those things, and I guarantee you more than 80 percent of the American people

do not support the idea that we are going to hold up every single flag officer who is coming here for a promotion, at a moment when Putin has invaded Ukraine and China is rattling their saber over their idiosyncratic view of how the world ought to work.

I heard that somebody today said: Well, this veterans rule violates the Hyde amendment.

First of all, the Hyde amendment, as is well known, doesn't even apply to the VA. And, if it did—guess what—there are three exceptions to the Hyde amendment: rape, incest, and the health of the mother.

So they are even trying to turn back Hyde. That is what they are trying to do on the floor of this Senate, and they are messing with the readiness of the American Armed Forces to do it.

What brought us here?

What brought us here was the Dobbs decision. What brought us here was a Court packed—packed—with a wish list of people who, for 50 years, have been fighting for an originalist—so-called originalist; made up, made up—but an originalist conception of constitutional law, and they finally found a guy in the form of President Donald Trump who was willing to put these people on the Court.

And they gave the Court the majority they needed to eviscerate *Roe v. Wade*, to strip this fundamental right, to strip this fundamental freedom, and to do it with contempt; to not wrestle with the question of what is going to happen to people serving in the Armed Forces of the United States if they are unlucky enough to need an abortion and they live in a State like Alabama, for example, where, if you are a doctor and you perform an abortion, you can go to jail for 99 years—although, admittedly, admittedly, there is an exception in Alabama for the life of the mother.

This end point—I hope it is an end point. This end point of that 50-year war on freedom, war on *Roe v. Wade*, war on a set of expectations that women, in particular, have in this country, but that families have in this country—that war was brought to a conclusion, in some sense, by a majority opinion written by Justice Scalia that, essentially—read it, read it—essentially came down to this: If it wasn't a right in 1868, it is not a right in 2023. If it wasn't a freedom in 1868, it is not a freedom today.

Forget that, at that time of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, Black people and women didn't even have the right to vote. They didn't even have the right to vote. But in the 21st century, when we are meant to compete in a global economy, in a society that, by any measure, is still profoundly unequal but far more equal than it was in those days, where women do have the right to vote, where Black people do have the right—thank God—in this country to vote, we are reading the language in 1868 and saying: Well, was it a right or a freedom then? That is

how we are going to decide whether it is one today.

In the early 1990s, when I was in law school and when we knew that it was at the dawn of originalism—I mean, that was happening right then. It was part of the Reagan revolution. It was part of law and economics. It was part of making the shareholder the supreme being in the United States of America—part of that whole measure, that whole time period in the country's history. That is when some genius—and they were a genius—came up with the word “originalism” to describe a legal ideology that says: We are only going to look in the rearview mirror to figure out what our rights are today—as if they could divine the intent of the Founding Fathers on a question like abortion, who, by the way, had massive disagreements among themselves.

Anybody who has ever read even a signpost or a tourist—you know, some sort of signpost on the side of Independence Hall in Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia—knows how many disagreements the Founders had with themselves. The idea that somehow you are going to divine their one view about what the Constitution should say is preposterous. But here we are. Here we are.

And we were told when this happened: Don't worry about it. You know, this is just a matter of the Supreme Court sending this right, sending this fundamental freedom—this fundamental freedom—back to the States. That is all. It is just an exercise in federalism.

Well, since this happened, since Dobbs was passed, 18 States have banned abortion. I have one kid who is about the age of the pages now. Two others are older than the pages now. I am telling you, I was with my daughter Caroline the other day, riding through Colorado, looking at the billboards as we went by, and I said to her: Man, Caroline—she is now 23—if you had told me 20 years ago that in 2023 we would be living in a country that was legalizing marijuana and banning abortion, I would not have believed you. I would not have believed you.

She doesn't believe it either.

As my friend JON TESTER, my friend the farmer from Montana, says, his daughter is having to fight for rights that her mother never had to fight for because her grandmother won these rights. And now we are rolling it all back because the Supreme Court majority that Donald Trump made possible after all these years, after all this effort to strip the American people of this freedom, has decided, if it is not a right in 1868, it is not a right today.

So 18 States have banned abortion. Nine have no exceptions for rape or incest. There have been now restrictions on freedom to travel. Texas famously has put \$10,000 bounties. It is like the Wild West, all of a sudden, where if you are a friend or a neighbor who is driving somebody to access abortion services and somebody catches you, says

you shouldn't have been doing it, you can get a \$10,000 bounty.

In Florida, in the Sunshine State—I think Florida is the third largest State in the country—one of them, the third largest State in the country—in broad daylight—actually, to be honest with you, it was at 11 o'clock at night—the Governor has now signed a 6-week ban on abortion.

One in three women don't even know that they are pregnant. A third of women don't even know that they are pregnant at 6 weeks.

I don't know whether the Governor of Florida knows that or doesn't know that, but it is an interesting question: Which would be worse, him knowing it or not knowing it?

And, now, all of a sudden, 9 million veterans and their families, including 2 million female veterans, live in States that have banned abortion or restricted it in ways that would have been unimaginable to my daughter Caroline, to families all over the country.

And, as I said, in some limited way of dealing with it, the VA announced these rules. But these narrow rules that have to do with rape and incest and the life of the mother, they are not enough for the Senator from Alabama, and, this afternoon, he is forcing a vote to strip away the VA policy and impose a position on every veteran in America that is more extreme than his own State.

Hyde doesn't apply to the VA, and, even if it did, there are exceptions for rape, for incest, for the life of the mother. That is not extreme enough for them. His resolution would ensure that veterans who have been raped, who are victims of incest, whose life is at risk, can't seek an abortion at the VA, along with their spouses and their dependents.

Even in Alabama there is an exception for the life of the mother, and they have one of the most restrictive abortion laws in the country.

I am going to come to an end because my colleague is here from Nevada. I have two colleagues here from Nevada. So I am confused. I said I am going to finish, but I will take a couple of minutes and then finish, but by saying that it is tragic that we have to have this vote in 2023. It is.

This is a tragedy. It is a tragedy. It is a spectacle. It is an embarrassment. But at least people will have the opportunity to know where every Member of the Senate stands, and they are going to understand what a 50-year political effort to strip America of this freedom looks like.

You know, there was a survey in a poll last month in Florida, and my colleague won't be surprised to know this: 75 percent of Florida opposes a 6-week ban; 61 percent of the GOP in Florida opposes a 6-week ban. Let that sink in.

I don't know. I am not a great politician, unlike some people. But, maybe, that is why he was signing it at 11 o'clock at night. Maybe that is why, when the Governor of Florida signed it,

he sent out a tweet that didn't say he had signed a 6-week ban on abortion in Florida, because 75 percent of the people there oppose it, just like the majority of Americans.

And so I think we should defeat this resolution. I think the American people should take note of every single vote that is cast here by these Senators.

But, really, as important as that, we need to understand what has happened to our politics, what has happened to our Supreme Court through this 50-year war on American freedom and this 50-year war on a woman's right to choose.

And we need to come together as a country and codify a woman's right to choose so the next generation of Americans has the benefit that the last 50 years of Americans have had.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The senior Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the following Senators be permitted to complete their remarks prior to the scheduled recess: Senator ROSEN, myself, Senator KLOBUCHAR, and Senator SMITH.

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

The junior Senator from Nevada.

S.J. RES. 10

Ms. ROSEN. Madam President, since the Supreme Court overturned longstanding protections for the fundamental right to access abortion care nearly a year ago, we have seen countless attacks on women's reproductive rights from anti-choice States across our Nation—States that are banning abortions without exceptions for rape or incest; States that are risking the lives of women who have miscarried; and I have been doing everything I can to stand up and to defend a woman's fundamental right to make healthcare choices for her own body without interference from anti-choice politicians.

And this includes making sure we protect our veterans' rights, and that includes the right for those veterans to make decisions over their own bodies. Our veterans and their families—you know, they have risked so much to protect our Nation, to protect our rights. And we owe it to them to defend their fundamental right to access reproductive care, regardless of where they live. They put themselves in harm's way. We must protect them.

That is why, last year, I urged the Department of Veterans Affairs to make it clear that they will provide access to abortion care to veterans and their families, and I am glad they listened. But today—today—anti-choice Republicans in Washington want to overturn that decision, and they want to restrict our veterans' access to reproductive care.

That is what today's debate is about. If they get their way and they roll back this rule, the VA healthcare sys-

tem would no longer be allowed to provide abortion counseling or any kind of care to servicemembers and veterans and—listen to this—even in the cases of rape, even when the mother's life is at risk.

I am not going to let that happen.

My State of Nevada is honored to be the home of hundreds of thousands of veterans, and we are a proud pro-choice State. When Nevadans sent me here to the Senate, they sent me here to fight for their rights, and that is what I will always do.

So I urge my colleagues to join me in fighting back against this ideological attempt to restrict reproductive rights for veterans by opposing this resolution.

For our veterans, for our women in Nevada, for women everywhere in the United States, I urge a "no" vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Madam President, I join my colleagues today to continue to speak out against the far-right Republicans' harmful and, frankly, insulting resolution to prevent women veterans from accessing essential healthcare in this country.

You know, our veterans stepped up to serve our country, putting their lives on the line to protect our freedoms and keep our families safe. We owe them a debt of gratitude. That is why I am working to ensure that we protect veterans' rights to essential healthcare.

We trust these women to make critical decisions in the line of duty to protect our national security; so why don't extremists on the right trust them to make decisions about their own bodies?

The purpose of the VA is to protect veterans' health and life. Since the Supreme Court struck down *Roe v. Wade*, my colleagues and I pushed the administration, including the VA, to take action to protect women veterans' access to abortion care across the country. At our urging, the VA created a rule to provide abortion counseling to pregnant veterans as well as abortion services in the limited cases of rape, incest, or the life or health of the mother. This is critical for women veterans, especially those who live in States with strict abortion bans and no access to care in their communities.

But we knew that after the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, anti-choice policymakers wouldn't stop trying to take away a woman's right to choose. And now they are going after the health and well-being of women who have fought for our country. There are 550,000 women veterans who get their healthcare through the VA. And 300,000 of those women veterans are at a point in their lives at which they need reproductive care. That is 300,000 women who have sacrificed for our country and who, according to extremist Republicans, don't deserve to make their own healthcare decisions. Some of these women veterans live in States where they can access reproductive

care outside the VA, but over 155,000 of them live in States with harsh abortion restrictions on the books.

Now, I am leading legislation to ensure our veterans—and all women—maintain their right to travel to pro-choice States to get the care they need. Unfortunately, for many of these women, the VA is their only option for accessing abortion care. That is why the VA's new rule is so critical to protecting veterans' health and why extremist Republican attacks on reproductive care is so dangerous.

Women veterans put their lives on the line to fight for our freedom, including control of our own bodies, our lives, and our futures; and now the far right wants to take these freedoms away. We cannot let that happen. We have to ensure that this resolution does not pass, because we should be looking out and protecting the rights of women across this country, not taking away their rights and freedoms.

I yield the floor.

Ms. SMITH. Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. SMITH. Madam President, I rise today in strong opposition to the resolution before us today. This resolution would overturn the VA's rule protecting veterans' access to abortion counseling and care in cases of rape, incest, or when the life of a woman or her health is in danger; and, unfortunately, it is just the latest attack on women's freedom to make their own healthcare decisions without interference from politicians.

Today, veterans, their spouses, and dependents are protected and have the freedom to receive essential healthcare in the most devastating of circumstances.

By voting yes today, the Senate would take that freedom away. So let's be clear about what this means. A "yes" vote means you would be saying to women who are entrusted to protect our national security that they can't be trusted to make their own medical decisions. You would be saying that the person who has been raped or the victim of incest should not have the freedom to get an abortion. You are saying, in effect, sitting in this Chamber that those of you sitting in this Chamber should have the power to decide what healthcare a veteran can receive if she faces a serious or even life-threatening health threat if she continues a pregnancy.

So if you are considering a "yes" vote, I ask you, what makes you think that you know better? What makes you think that you should have the power over another person and their body?

This is an insult to the dignity of people, to veterans, and to their families. These are people who have given so much; and yet this body would deprive them of their right to freedom and self-determination, the very rights that they sacrificed and fought to defend.

Colleagues, I understand that people have differing views on abortion. And I

respect that. But I cannot understand why anyone would think that they should have the power to impose their own views on others in such extreme ways, because this resolution is extreme. And everyone who votes for it is saying that when it comes to our Nation's veterans who get their healthcare through the VA, that there should be no exceptions for abortion, even if that veteran has been the victim of rape or incest, even when continuing the pregnancy would endanger the veteran's life or health. That is not just extreme; that is cruel.

Here in this Chamber, some are also going after current servicemembers. There is currently an unprecedented and reckless campaign in this Chamber to hold up the promotions of career military personnel in order to force the Department of Defense to deprive servicemembers of their legal right to seek abortion care.

Let that sink in. They are willing to compromise our national security and leave 187 important military leadership posts vacant in order to enact their dangerous and unpopular anti-abortion agenda.

And they are not doing this because of what Americans want. It is the opposite, in fact. According to a Pew Research Center poll, over 60 percent of Americans say abortion should be legal in all or most cases.

Before I was in the Senate, I worked at Planned Parenthood, and I saw there, firsthand, the capacity of people to make good decisions—moral decisions—for themselves and their families about how and when or if to start a family. So I ask my Republican colleagues to reject this extreme proposal. Ask yourself: Why do you think that you know better than these women, these veterans, whose lives and stories, whose health and family situations you will never know?

And I can tell you: For women, this is personal. They don't want any of us making these decisions about their bodies and their health and their families for them. They are perfectly capable of making these decisions for themselves. So I urge my colleagues to stand with our veterans and vote to protect their rights after they fought so hard to defend ours.

I yield the floor.

RECESS UNTIL 4 P.M. TODAY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 4 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 3:12 p.m., recessed until 4:01 p.m., and reassembled when called to order by the President pro tempore.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RELATING TO "REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES"—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). The Senator from Washington.

S.J. RES 10

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, ever since Republicans succeeded in overturning *Roe v. Wade* and ripping abortion rights away from millions of women, they have been trying to hide how extreme their positions on abortion are and how devastating the fallout has been for families.

Even as each new day brings another horror driven by Republican extremists, like the dystopian bill put forward in South Carolina which proposed the death penalty for women who get an abortion, one of my colleagues even recently said that as President, he would "literally sign the most conservative pro-life legislation."

Let's not forget the terrifying lawsuit in Texas that is hanging over the entire country, where Republican extremists want to overrule the FDA's experts, undermine its authority to review and approve all manner of drugs, from chemotherapy to insulin, and take the abortion pill mifepristone away from patients all across the country, even in States like mine where abortion is still legal and even though we have 20 years of data showing this drug is safe and effective.

Yet, when the district judge issued a dangerous ruling that would rip this drug off the shelf, 69 congressional Republicans filed a brief calling for that ruling to go into effect and deny women in every single State access to this FDA-approved medication. The Supreme Court has stayed the decision for the time being, but this threat to women's ability to get this drug is as real as ever, and now 147 congressional Republicans—many Republicans who are in leadership, Republicans with oversight authority over the FDA—have filed a brief opposing our efforts to protect access to mifepristone and protect the FDA's authority.

And this extreme lawsuit is far from the only dangerous anti-abortion policy some congressional Republicans are pushing, as is the bill we are about to vote on today.

It has been incredibly infuriating for women to be told by Republicans that we are overreacting, fearmongering, even as we are being told by patients and providers about the nightmares they are now living in, about the impossible decisions they have had to make, and about the decisions—the deeply personal decisions—they have not been allowed to make that Republican politicians are, instead, now making for them.

It strains belief that Republicans actually think victims of rape or incest

are not being affected by their policies and that women whose health—whose very lives—are in danger are not facing any barriers or are being denied the care they need, especially when we see news stories reported every day showing that that is not the case—stories that show women are being put in horrific, unthinkable situations, forced to travel absurd distances for care after they are raped, forced to wait and bleed and get sicker and sicker before they can get the care they desperately need.

But even if Republicans are ignoring the devastation State abortion bans are causing and are ignoring women who are speaking out every single day, what we are talking about today in this Senate is a bill congressional Republicans wrote themselves. It really puts an end, once and for all, to some Republicans' empty claims that they are being moderate in any way here. Victims of rape or women with medical complications are not being heard, because this bill, which Republicans wrote, which Republicans are coming to the floor advocating for, would cut veterans and their families off from care when their lives are in danger and would cut them off from care after rape or incest.

Make no mistake, that is what this debate is about today. That is what they are voting for. In arguing for this bill, they are also showing they know full well how extreme State bans actually are. After all, they cannot pretend that, on the one hand, State abortion bans have meaningful exemptions for women with life-threatening complications and for people who have been raped, including children, while also arguing, on the other hand, that this proposal defies State laws to allow the VA to provide care in those heartbreaking situations. Those arguments contradict each other. More importantly, those claims contradict the real, heartbreaking stories we are already hearing from women and doctors about how these bans are putting lives at risk.

Extreme abortion bans are causing healthcare crises all across the country, along with so many personal crises for families in facing incredibly difficult situations, which is why the VA care rule that President Biden put forward is so important and why the Democrats are standing so firm to keep it intact. Despite the rhetoric from my Republican colleagues, this rule that they are trying to overturn is a meaningful, modest step to protect our veterans. It simply allows the VA to provide abortion care to make sure that none of our veterans or their eligible dependents go without medical treatment when their lives are in danger or are forced to stay pregnant after rape or incest.

That is it. That is what Republicans are so upset about. They are upset that this administration has taken action to make sure women who have served our country in uniform can get the basic reproductive care they need when