

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

their health is at risk or in cases of rape or incest. Those veterans fought to protect our rights, and now Republicans want to roll back theirs. These veterans put their lives on the line for us, and now Republicans who support this resolution want to tell them that when their lives are in danger, tough luck. Politics comes first. No one—no one—deserves that.

So I urge all of my colleagues to stand with our veterans, to stand with their families, and vote against this unthinkable cruel bill that seeks to force women veterans to stay pregnant even when their lives are at risk, even after rape or incest.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators Tuberville and Schumer be permitted to complete their remarks prior to the rollcall vote.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I am proud to have come from a military family. Our veterans are some of the best people in this country. Because of that, I am grateful to serve on the Veterans' Affairs Committee. Giving back to our veterans has been a passion my whole life. Our men and women in uniform deserve the best medical care available. I am grateful for every healthcare provider that works for and with our veterans.

The mission of the VA is taken from Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural address. Lincoln pledged our country to "care for him who shall have borne the battle." That is what the VA is supposed to be about. But today, under the Biden administration, we see the VA increasingly—increasingly—getting distracted from that very important mission. The Biden administration increasingly has the VA involved in politics.

Last year, the VA announced they would begin providing taxpayer-funded abortions—last year. This is something the VA has never, ever done. Let me repeat that. The VA has never done abortions. In fact, the VA has been prohibited by this body from performing abortions at its facilities for more than 30 years.

The 102nd Congress—1991 to 1992—made taxpayer-funded abortions at VA facilities illegal. Let me repeat that. Thirty years ago, this body made taxpayer-funded abortions illegal. It is a law. They did this with the bipartisan Veterans Healthcare Act of 1992. The last I heard, that is a Federal law, passed by this body, which, for some reason, we don't want to do anymore. We want the executive branch to be able to do it on their own, and that is wrong. We need to do our job.

This, today, is not about abortions. It is about taxpayers paying for abortions that they don't have to pay for because of a law that was presented and passed in this Chamber in 1992. The bill was introduced in the House and the Senate by whom? None other than the Demo-

crats. The Senate passed it unani-mously. This includes a Senator by the name of Joe Biden.

Now President Biden is breaking the law that he voted for. How do you do that? This is a direct violation of Federal law. The Biden administration even wants taxpayers on the hook for abortions for veterans' dependents. That has never happened. So we are changing the law at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue and not in here, where we are supposed to do our job. It has got nothing to do with the VA's mission.

The VA won't even tell Congress if they are placing restrictions on abortions. When are they doing it—at 5 months? 3 months? 2 months? after the baby is born? We can't get any information out of them. They just write the laws themselves. The VA has refused to cooperate with Congress throughout this whole process. And that is what this is all about. For all we know, a taxpayer-funded abortion can be at any time, at their choosing.

This new policy also includes very limited moral protections for VA medical staff. This, too, is unheard of in our laws and our traditions. We have had moral protections on the books for decades. It was James Madison who said that a man has a right to his property, and "Conscience is the most sacred property of all." This was the attitude of our Founders. Frankly, the Founders would be shocked by what is happening in this Chamber today.

Frankly, the Biden administration is violating the consciences of the taxpayers as we speak by putting pressure on the taxpayers to have to defend and go after this. Taxpayers shouldn't be forced to pay for abortions, especially not when this was done without anybody's taking a vote in this building, especially when Congress voted to make it illegal 30 years ago. It is illegal and it is wrong.

In just a few moments, the Senate has a chance to do something about it. We are going to vote on a bipartisan basis to overturn this rule. If Democrats want taxpayer-funded abortions within the VA healthcare system, let's vote on it. That is what we are elected to do, not lean on a President and the White House to say this is what we are going to do. That ain't the way we do it in this building. If we are going to do it that way, let's lock the door and go home and save the taxpayers a lot of money.

Again, this is not about abortion; this is about doing it the wrong way. Let's pass the bill. Let's change the law. Let's don't break the law in here.

I would like to thank the dozens of Senators supporting my resolution. I would also like to thank Senator MANCHIN and Senator MARSHALL for standing with me earlier today at a press conference to explain the facts to the taxpayers and the citizens of this country.

It is very simple: Any Senator who votes against this resolution is voting for taxpayer-funded abortion with no

guardrails or protection for any medical staff or nurses.

Voting no on this resolution means voting to give away even more power from Congress to the executive branch, and that is really all we need around here.

Right now, the VA is spending money we have never voted to spend. Anyone who believes in the appropriations process, let's oppose this rule and support this resolution.

Voting no would mean letting the administration spend money without the consent of the people in this room, and that is what we are elected to do. Voting no means a big stamp of approval for a blatantly illegal regulation. Voting against the resolution also means turning the VA into a taxpayer-funded abortion clinic.

The VA should be focused on their mission. Lord knows, we have got 20 veterans a day dying of suicide. Why don't we focus on helping the veterans who have been fighting in wars, these last 20-year wars that we have been funding. Let's keep politics out of the VA. These people have had enough politics in their lives. Let's stay focused on their mission to "care for him who shall have borne the battle," as spoken by President Abraham Lincoln.

I yield the floor.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to S.J. Res. 10 to roll back protections for veterans and their family members who are seeking to access basic reproductive healthcare. I would like to thank Senator MURRAY, Senator BALDWIN, and Senator DUCKWORTH for their leadership in standing against this resolution.

Almost 10 months ago, the Supreme Court issued a ruling overruling nearly five decades of precedent protecting a woman's right to make her own healthcare decisions. Now, women are at the mercy of a patchwork of State laws governing their ability to access reproductive care, leaving them with fewer rights than their moms and grandmas.

S.J. Res. 10 is yet another attempt to roll back women's access to care. It would overturn a decision by the Department of Veterans Affairs to allow veterans and their family members to access basic healthcare. Currently, the rule allows Veterans Affairs doctors to provide counseling and care to women veterans and beneficiaries covered by Veterans Affairs insurance, as well as abortion care in the case of rape, incest, or when the life or health of the woman is at risk. The rule is limited, and the Department has said that Veterans Affairs doctors, nurses, or healthcare professionals can opt out of providing abortion care.

Women across the country are already facing so much uncertainty because of the Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. This resolution threatens the lives and health of women veterans who risked their lives for our country. Today, we are standing up for

them by making it clear that we will not settle for a reality where they cannot access basic care.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

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

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

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, when the health and safety of our country is at risk, it is up to veterans to step up to protect us. They risk their lives for us. They are always there for us. But today Senator TUBERVILLE from Alabama is pushing legislation that would take away reproductive care for hundreds of thousands of veterans and their families. That is right. The hard right is telling our veterans they should be treated as second-class citizens, our women veterans.

It is the kind of extreme proposal millions of Americans strongly oppose and one which, if it is passed, would gravely harm women's health. There are over 150,000 women veterans. They risk their lives for us. Now we must protect them.

The more Americans reject MAGA extremism, the more MAGA Republicans seem to double down, and this bill is a perfect example. That is the MAGA right in a nutshell: Eliminate women's choice at all costs, even at the cost of our national defense. Again, the MAGA right says: Eliminate women's choice at all costs, even at the cost of national defense.

Here is the bottom line: Our veterans dedicated their lives to our freedom so we should protect their freedom of choice, plain and simple.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote in relation to the Scott of Florida amendment No. 81 occur following the vote on the motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 10; further, I ask that the Senate vote at 11:15 a.m. tomorrow in relation to amendment Nos. 85 and 83; and the Senate vote on passage of S. 870, as amended, if amended, at 1:45 p.m., with all provisions under the previous order remaining in effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor, and I strongly urge a "no" vote on this CRA, this awful CRA.

VOTE ON MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 10.

Mr. COTTON. 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 48, nays 51, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 90 Leg.]

YEAS—48

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

NAYS—51

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

NOT VOTING—1

Feinstein

The motion was rejected.

(Mr. SCHATZ assumed the Chair.)

FIRE GRANTS AND SAFETY ACT— Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). The Senator from Florida.

AMENDMENT NO. 81

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. I call up my amendment No. 81 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Florida [Mr. SCOTT] proposes an amendment numbered 81.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To use unspent COVID-19 relief funds to offset the costs of grants)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . TRANSFER OF UNOBLIGATED COVID FUNDS.

(a) COVERED FUNDS.—The term "covered funds" means amounts made available under—

(1) the Coronavirus Relief Fund established under section 601 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 801); and

(2) the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund programs established under section 602 or 603 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 802, 803).

(b) IDENTIFICATION OF FUNDS TO TRANSFER.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the

Treasury shall identify unobligated covered funds, which shall be transferred to the Administrator of the United States Fire Administration under subsection (c).

(c) TRANSFER.—Effective on the date that is 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the unobligated covered funds identified by the Secretary of the Treasury under subsection (b) shall be transferred to and merged with other amounts made available to the Administrator of the United States Fire Administration to carry out section 17(g)(1)(N) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2216(g)(1)(N)).

(d) AVAILABILITY AND USE.—Amounts transferred under subsection (c) shall remain available until expended.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, we must do more to support firefighters, which—I support this bill. However, as we all know, we are in a very tough financial situation. Families are struggling. We are over \$31 trillion in debt.

I have a very simple amendment. It would transfer all remaining unobligated State and local COVID funds to offset a portion of the cost of the Fire Grants and Safety Act.

I urge all my colleagues to support this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Madam President, the funds this amendment targets have already been obligated to States to help communities continue recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, at the end of last year, the Senate unanimously passed legislation led by Senators CORNYN and PADILLA that also allows States and localities to use these funds to respond to natural disasters and fund infrastructure and community development projects. Under this amendment, this funding would be redirected to the U.S. Fire Administration—an account that should be consistently funded through the annual appropriations process.

Firefighters deserve steady, dedicated funding for their programs. Redistributing this funding could weaken our Nation's ability to continue responding to and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic and would pull funds from a program that is supporting our communities, families, and small businesses in important ways.

Firefighters and the communities they protect are counting on us to reauthorize these programs to help them get the safety equipment and the training they need in order to do their job. We should not have to choose between supporting our Nation's recovery and investing in our communities and helping our Nation's firefighters.

I would urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, I appreciate what my colleague has said. Let's remember that President Biden declared the COVID emergency over. These are unobligated dollars. We do have \$31.5 trillion in debt. I think the right thing to do is pass this