

country. Thanks to their hard work, our country has added a record 12.6 million jobs over the last 2½ years. What is more, unemployment is at its lowest level in more than 50 years, a testament to the hard work of Secretary Walsh and Deputy Secretary Su.

And before coming to Washington, Julie spent decades fighting for workers in her home State of California as Secretary of Labor in California, Commissioner of Labor, and as a civil rights attorney.

Beyond her stellar professional track record, Julie's personal history informs her commitment to building an economy that puts workers first. Like me, Julie is a daughter of immigrants. Her mother came to America from China on a cargo ship, unable to afford a passenger ticket. After arriving in the United States, she got a good job with a union with predictable hours, paid sick leave, and a reliable income. That job helped Julie's mother and father go on to become business owners themselves, ultimately running a franchise pizza restaurant and a laundromat.

Thanks to her parents' hard work, Julie went on to attend Stanford University and Harvard Law before receiving a prestigious MacArthur Genius award for her work fighting for undocumented garment workers in California.

Julie Su is a relentless advocate for workers, and she also knows how to build consensus. It is no wonder, then, that she enjoys broad support from business and labor alike, garnering the endorsement of groups including the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Majority, the AFL-CIO, and dozens of labor unions across the country.

She has the support of leaders like Cecil Roberts, president of the United Mine Workers of America, who said last month that Acting Secretary Su is "straightforward, very knowledgeable and a passionate advocate for workers and their families. President Biden has made the right choice for Secretary of Labor"—and Secretary Walsh himself, who said that he has "the utmost confidence in [Julie's] ability to sustain the work of the department and advance the President's vision of an economy that puts workers first and leaves no one behind."

I couldn't agree more. Confirming Julie Su should be a no-brainer, just like it was 2 years ago when every Democrat in the Senate voted to confirm her as Deputy Secretary of Labor. But special interests are working hard to block her nomination, lobbing unfair attacks and intentionally misrepresenting her record.

In States like West Virginia, Montana, and Arizona, massive billboards have been erected suggesting that Deputy Secretary Su's confirmation would harm our economy. They claim—outrageously—that she is somehow working to destroy franchise businesses like the one her own family ran. In reality, she has worked to ensure workers at

all franchise businesses have basic protections so that those businesses and their employees can thrive.

They claim that she has worked in the so-called gig economy—another lie. What she has done is crack down on corporations like Uber, exploiting hard-working Americans for their own profit, because Deputy Secretary Su understands that our economy can thrive only if workers have the dignity and support they deserve.

What we are witnessing is a coordinated campaign by those on the right to discredit Julie Su and her impressive record, but her credentials are as clear as can be. And as we enter Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, I would be remiss not to also mention the important role Acting Secretary Su will play as the only AAPI Cabinet-level Secretary in the Biden-Harris administration.

Confirming Julie Su as Secretary of Labor is one of the most important things we can do to support workers, strengthen small businesses, and ensure our economy works for all of us—for working people.

I look forward to voting for her nomination; and, for our country and our economy, I hope this body will confirm Julie Su without delay.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, last month, I continued my annual 95-county tour with a swing through East Tennessee. Over the past few years, this area has experienced both economic growth and a population boom. So the people who live there have seen firsthand what can happen when Tennesseans are allowed to build and nurture a community free from the heavy hand of government.

But they also know how fragile that stability can be, and they are just baffled by Joe Biden's determination to ruin what they and millions of other Americans have worked so incredibly hard to build. In just over 2 years, Joe Biden and the Democrats have sabotaged our national defense, our border security, and public safety in the name of dangerous woke agenda items that prioritize mandates and intellectual conformity over the safety and security of the American people.

Tennesseans are worried about the rise of the new "axis of evil." Joe Biden is allowing Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea to cross one line after another, and that is not going over very well. Neither is the Biden administration's neglect of a security risk that hits much closer to home.

So far this year, Border Patrol and other law enforcement officials have reported almost half a million encounters with migrants trying to illegally cross our border. Over the course of this fiscal year—now, the numbers I am going to give you are for this fiscal year. They have recorded 332 encounters with people who are on the Terrorist Watchlist. That is right. Three hundred thirty-two have been apprehended at the border. These are people who are terrorists. They are on the watchlist, which means, if you catch them, they cannot come into this country.

They have apprehended 330 dangerous gang members—that is MS-13 and that is other of these gangs—who are trying to get into the country, and they have seized almost 19,000 pounds of drugs.

Now, this is what we know, and we can only estimate how many other terrorists or gang members or criminals escaped into the country and how much deadly contraband did they bring with them because they are all in the category of "got-aways." They are the people that you see on surveillance, but you cannot get to them. They are "got-aways" or they are people who, after the fact—you don't see them, but after the fact, you find things that they have left along their path as they have escaped into this country. So think about those numbers and who might be coming in.

Now, when you look at it, this is a total neglect of our most basic line of defense, and it might be easier to comprehend were it not for this administration's betrayal of local law enforcement. The President has denied that he supports the anti-police movement, but I would remind the President and my Democratic colleagues that acting on anti-police sentiment behind the scenes is still anti-police.

Making the job of law enforcement harder to do every day is anti-police; using the bureaucracy to undermine access to grant funding and lifesaving resources—that is anti-police; and deliberately leaving our border wide open to the drug mules, bringing fentanyl into our backyards—that is anti-police. Allowing the cartels and the human traffickers to run rampant, turning human trafficking from a \$500-million-a-year business, which it was in 2018, to a \$13-billion-a-year business—that is anti-police. The damage that this administration has done in just under 2½ years will take a lot longer than that to repair.

But simply answering one sweeping policy change with another won't magically reverse the ripple effects of this complete breakdown in orderly governance. Yes, we have to reverse policy, but we must also pay attention to the problems that have left local leaders, law enforcement officials, and families begging for help.

So let's kind of work through these issues, because they are of concern to Tennesseans. Tennesseans feel like this administration is seeking to normalize

lawlessness. They feel they are seeking to normalize lawlessness—because of that open border, because of the sentiments and the actions that are anti-law enforcement. They are seeking to normalize lawlessness.

Now, at the border, the immediate solution, of course, is to eliminate incentives to illegal immigration, to fund the border patrol, and invest heavily in both a physical barrier and enhance technology.

Now, these are two things that the Border Patrol has been asking for about three decades. Give us a barrier of some type; and where you can't have a barrier, give us better technology.

Now, we also need to address the plagues of drug smuggling and human trafficking. The Biden administration's refusal to stand up to the cartels has turned every town into a border town and every State into a border State. Between August of 2021 and August of 2022, the United States lost more than 107,000 people to drug overdose. Now, 66 percent of these deaths were due to fentanyl. So 107,000 people lost their lives to drugs. They are coming primarily over that southern border. Talk to any law enforcement officer, they will tell you the majority of the drugs they apprehend are coming across that southern border. The majority of those drugs is fentanyl.

Now, I want you to think about this. We all know about World War I, the lives that were lost—precious lives; World War II, the lives that were lost; the Vietnam War; the Gulf War. Here are some stats for you.

In World War I, you had 116,516 U.S. citizens who lost their lives. In World War II, it was 420,200; in Vietnam, 58,220; the Gulf War, 383. So think about that and what we did to protect those lives. And think about what is happening with these drugs coming over that border and this administration not willing to close that border. And in 1 year—1 year—1—107,000 lives. Think about that. Why will this administration not step up, man up, and work to secure that border?

Maintaining the title 42 order will help us keep what little control we have over the cross-border drug trade. Tens of thousands of migrants are waiting for May 11 to roll around so they can flood the border. And we are watching that footage right now. I would encourage any of my colleagues who are not watching this footage, you need to log on and look at how people are coming up. El Paso, I think they have had 15,000 people over the weekend that have come to that border. The numbers are staggering. We are not ready for this.

Last week, my Tennessee colleague Senator HAGERTY and I reintroduced the Stop Fentanyl Border Crossing Act, which would preserve the continued use of title 42 authority to remove illegal border-crossers and interrupt drug smuggling operations along the border.

The SAVE Girls Act, which is a bipartisan bill I introduced with Senator

KLOBUCHAR last month, has a similar goal of thwarting human trafficking operations.

Here is another stat for you. These are not my numbers; these are the administration's numbers. The State Department estimates that between 14,500 and 17,500 people are trafficked into the United States every year. Most of these people that are trafficked across that southern border—that is what we are talking about here, that is the universe—and they are looking at between 14,500 and 17,500. Most of them are women. And it is upsetting to realize that 90 percent—90 percent—of these women and girls become the victims of sexual exploitation.

The SAVE Girls Act would authorize an additional \$50 million in grant funding to prevent the trafficking of women and girls and protect children who have been smuggled across this border. Why are we doing this? Because it is our local law enforcement—they are the ones who are on the front lines in this. They are the ones who are conducting rescues and pulling these women and girls away from these traffickers, away from these pimps, that are rescuing them and getting them to safety.

We all know that no bill, no matter how effective, can stop these criminal enterprises entirely, just as no amount of policing or community support can eliminate local crime.

Still, our police departments are in trouble. Tennessee is no exception. In April of last year, the Knoxville Police Department was 10 percent understaffed.

As of last December, the Nashville Police Department was 193 officers short. Morale is a problem, but so is a lack of funding and resources.

So in March, Senator OSSOFF and I introduced the bipartisan Filling Public Safety Vacancies Act, to provide a one-time emergency boost in funding to help departments hire officers and sheriff's deputies.

The bill conditions this funding on the implementation of new vetting procedures not currently required by Federal law. I have also introduced a series of bills that would protect schools from becoming key targets for criminals.

The SAFE Schools Act would establish a \$900 million grant program to train and hire safety officers and to increase physical security at our schools.

The bipartisan Enhancing K-12 Cybersecurity Act would provide resources and information to schools that will help prevent cyber attacks and establish a better system for tracking cyber attacks nationally.

I want to emphasize again that many of these bills are bipartisan. We could pass them this week, and they would each make a difference right away in places like the State of Tennessee. There are things that our citizens want to see done.

There is no good reason to delay these bills. They would help to make our communities safer. It would be another tool in the toolbox for our local

elected officials and citizens who want to see our schools and our community safer, who want our law enforcement agencies to be able to hire and train more police. They would be pro-law enforcement, pro-safety, pro-security principals.

This administration's refusal to govern and their neglect of our most basic institutions has left Tennesseans really unsettled. They worked so hard to build what they have, and they cannot believe that they are looking at an administration that would seek to tear it down. They are frightened of how quickly things have become so out of control.

They deserve better than an uncertain future controlled by a President who is asleep at the wheel and a Congress that refuses to put politics aside and work in the best interest of the American people.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NOMINATION OF ANTHONY DEVOS JOHNSTONE

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Anthony Johnstone to a Montana seat on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Mr. Johnstone is an accomplished appellate litigator, academic, and public servant and was unanimously rated "well qualified" by the ABA. He received degrees from Yale University and the University of Chicago Law School before clerking for Judge Sidney Thomas, whom he has been nominated to succeed.

Mr. Johnstone began his career in private practice as a commercial litigator in New York before returning to Montana to pursue a career in both public service and academia. From 2004 to 2011, Mr. Johnstone served in the Montana Department of Justice. In recognition of his legal acumen, he was appointed State solicitor—Montana's top appellate lawyer—in 2008. In this role, he handled 29 cases on appeal, including 19 as sole or chief counsel of record.

Since 2007, Johnstone has also served as a professor at the University of Montana Blewett School of Law. He teaches courses on constitutional law, legislation, the regulatory process, and other topics. In addition to teaching, he is also a prolific writer and has authored pieces on federalism, the law of democracy, and issues of importance to rural communities—including those located in the Ninth Circuit's jurisdiction.

Mr. Johnstone has earned the trust of leaders throughout the Montana legal community. With his experience in both legal practice and legal theory, along with his unwavering commitment to the Constitution and the rule