

If the only argument you are left with is “we are not paying for the actual surgery itself; we are just paying for everything around it,” when the value attached to the travel, to the per diem, to the paid leave time is a significant expense—an expense that I suspect in many, if not most, instances would well outpace the cost of the medical procedure itself—that’s too cute by half. They are, in fact, funding abortion. That is what this does. It is done knowing, expecting, anticipating, and desiring that this would increase the number of abortions performed in the military every year to a significant degree. That is what they are doing, and it is wrong.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

(Ms. BALDWIN assumed the Chair.)

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WHITEHOUSE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

BICENTENNIAL OF THE KENTUCKY SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as a polio survivor, I have a special appreciation for organizations that help those with conditions often overlooked in our society. The Kentucky School for the Deaf—KSD—in Danville, KY, is a remarkable example of such an organization, having dedicated itself to serving the deaf and hard of hearing for over two centuries. Today, I would like to recognize this institution for its outstanding work, as its students and faculty celebrate the school’s bicentennial.

In a hearing world, it can be hard to imagine the life of the deaf. Nowhere was this misunderstanding more pronounced than throughout early human history. For centuries, the deaf were relegated to the outskirts of society, frequently sent to asylums for the insane, or otherwise forgotten. Many contended with Aristotle’s opinion that the deaf were “incapable of education” due to their inability to hear. This was, unfortunately, the standing belief on deaf education for hundreds of years.

Gradual shifts in cultural attitudes and educational techniques led to slow but steady progress over time. The early days of deaf education were typi-

cally born from the philanthropic efforts of wealthy citizens, while schools were privately held and operated out of the country’s east coast.

In the early 19th century, General Elias Barbee, then a member of the Kentucky State Senate, hoped to change that. Senator Barbee launched an effort to establish the first State-supported school for the deaf in the United States. In 1822, legislation was signed into law, bringing deaf schooling west of the Alleghenies for the first time in American history. Shortly thereafter, Barbee’s daughter, who had been deaf since childhood, enrolled as the first of three students at the Kentucky school.

From the start, the institution intended to educate the whole person, preparing the deaf and hard of hearing for success in both academic and real-world settings. The school secured two Federal land grants, with the help of Kentucky’s illustrious statesman Henry Clay, that were used to fund the construction of KSD’s campus.

The board of trustees faced their first great hurdle early on: finding faculty to lead the fledgling school. They soon took up the training of John A. Jacobs, a young student at Centre College. Jacobs, often described as the “founding father” of the institution, would go on to serve as faculty for over 40 years and was integral to the school’s success throughout its infancy. Under his leadership, the school prevailed through some of the most perilous periods of our Nation’s history, even resisting three attempts from Confederate soldiers to occupy the school during the Civil War.

In recent history, the school has seen its campus and its student population flourish and expand. Meanwhile, opportunities for deaf children in public schools also became more widespread. In 1975, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act was signed into law by President Ford. This landmark legislation ensured equal access to education for every child, regardless of their disability, and marked a major turning point for deaf education in the United States.

Today, KSD remains a leading institution for deaf education throughout the country. It promises an academic experience uniquely suited to the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing and affords its students a rare opportunity to learn as the hearing do: directly communicating and connecting with their peers.

Through English and sign language, students freely exchange ideas in the classroom, participate in afterschool activities, and learn the skills needed to succeed on their own after graduation.

For over 200 years, KSD has empowered deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals to lead a life of dignity and self-sufficiency when many thought it impossible. This Kentucky institution has made an indelible impact on the history of deaf education and the thou-

sands of students who have called it home.

I ask my Senate colleagues to join me in recognizing the Kentucky School for the Deaf for their tireless dedication to educating and enriching the lives of America’s deaf and hard of hearing. Thank you for 200 years of remarkable service to the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

58TH ANNIVERSARY OF HEAD START

Mr. LUJÁN. Mr. President, I rise today to commemorate and extend my heartfelt congratulations to Head Start on its 58th anniversary to celebrate the program’s 58 years of providing early learning to more than 30 million children since 1965. As the only Head Start alumnus along with Senator RAPHAEL WARNOCK serving in the U.S. Senate, I am proud to honor this transformative program that has made a significant and positive difference in the lives of millions of children and families across our great Nation.

Head Start’s legacy is one of hope, opportunity, and equity. Since its inception in 1965, this comprehensive early childhood education program has been a beacon of support for vulnerable children and families, helping break the cycle of poverty and providing a strong foundation for success. By prioritizing the educational, health, and developmental needs of low-income children, Head Start has been instrumental in leveling the playing field and ensuring that every child has an equal chance to thrive.

My personal experience as a Head Start alumnus fuels my unwavering commitment to championing policies that strengthen early childhood education and invest in the future of our Nation’s youth. I understand firsthand the profound influence that Head Start can have on a child’s life, setting them on a trajectory towards academic achievement, social-emotional growth, and lifelong success. By nurturing the whole child and fostering a love for learning, Head Start equips children with the tools they need to reach their full potential.

Head Start has demonstrated its ability to adapt and evolve with the changing needs of our society. Over the past 58 years, the program has expanded its reach, providing comprehensive services to millions of children and families. Head Start has embraced innovation, incorporating evidence-based practices and leveraging community partnerships to ensure that children receive the highest quality early education and support services available.

I applaud Head Start’s ongoing commitment to inclusivity and diversity, recognizing that every child brings unique strengths and experiences to the classroom. By embracing cultural competency and promoting bilingual education, Head Start celebrates the rich tapestry of our nation and prepares children to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

As we celebrate this important milestone, we must also acknowledge the challenges that lie ahead. Access to high-quality early childhood education remains a critical issue for many families, especially those living in underserved communities. As Head Start continues to grow and evolve, we must redouble our efforts to ensure that all children, regardless of their ZIP Code or socioeconomic background, have access to this life-changing program.

Head Start's success is a testament to the power of investing in our children and communities. The return on investment in early childhood education is well documented, yielding significant long-term benefits for individuals, families, and society as a whole. We must seize this moment to strengthen and expand Head Start, recognizing that our Nation's future prosperity depends on the opportunities we afford our youngest citizens.

I would also like to express my gratitude and provide special recognition to my home Head Start program that helped to give me the best start in life—Nambe Head Start—and Senator WARNOCK's home Head Start program—Savannah Head Start. Without the dedicated educators and program directors at these programs, we would not be where we are today.

In conclusion, I proudly stand before my distinguished colleagues to commemorate the 58th anniversary of Head Start and extend my heartfelt congratulations to this remarkable program. Let Congress reaffirm its commitment to early childhood education and its Members work together to ensure that Head Start's profound effect reaches every child in need. By investing in our children today, we will build a brighter, more equitable future for all Americans.

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ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO NATHAN SMALL

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, with my colleague Senator JIM RISCH and Representative MIKE SIMPSON, I congratulate Nathan Small, who is retiring from serving as chairman of the Fort Hall Business Council, the governing body of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes on the Fort Hall Reservation.

Chairman Small has been an unwavering voice for his people for roughly 40 years, leading in various roles for the Fort Hall Business Council since the late 1980s. He has dedicated his life to protecting the Tribes' rights under the 1868 Treaty of Fort Bridger and other Federal laws and tirelessly worked to preserve the traditional ways of life of the Shoshone-Bannock people. He is respected not only in Idaho for his efforts to protect the rights of all Idaho Tribes but also on the national level for his inspiring and effective advocacy in ensuring the United States upholds its treaty and trust responsibilities to Tribal governments.

We have been grateful for his steady leadership, especially while we partnered with him and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes on various efforts over the years. Chairman Small's wealth of knowledge and experience was pivotal to his advocacy on the Tribes' behalf. He is also a member of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Bar Association and has been both a prosecutor and public defender in Tribal court. He was instrumental in opening the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' first gaming operation and was gaming manager from 1990 to 1998. He also served in the Tribes' Water Resources Department in the Environmental Waste Program, advocating for the protection of the Reservation's water and land. He is a founding Board member and is Secretary of the Coalition of Large Tribes, which advocates for the sovereign rights of Tribes.

Thank you, Chairman Small, for working with us to properly recognize tribal sovereignty and the Federal Government's treaty and trust obligations to Tribes. We hope that retirement will provide you more time to spend enjoying the outdoors you love. We thank you for your leadership and wish you all the best. •

TRIBUTE TO LORELEY GODFREY

• Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, as we mark Mental Health Awareness Month, I am honored to recognize Loreley Godfrey of Portsmouth as May's Granite Stater of the Month. At age 18, Loreley has become a powerful force advocating for youth mental health education in New Hampshire.