

Peters, Jeanne Shaheen, Alex Padilla, Christopher A. Coons, Brian Schatz, Michael F. Bennet.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 41.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of P. Casey Pitts, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 41, P. Casey Pitts, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Alex Padilla, Tim Kaine, Margaret Wood Hassan, Ben Ray Lujan, Raphael G. Warnock, Tammy Duckworth, Jack Reed, Sheldon Whitehouse, John W. Hickenlooper, Catherine Cortez Masto, Tammy Baldwin, Brian Schatz, Christopher Murphy, Tina Smith, Debbie Stabenow.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions filed today, June 8, be waived.

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

VOTING RIGHTS ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, today our democracy held firm against voter discrimination. The Supreme Court has ruled that Alabama's Republican-drawn congressional districts discriminate against Black voters, violating the Voting Rights Act and must be redrawn.

This case is a message to every American who has struggled to cast a ballot or felt like their vote does not matter. Our democracy is worth fighting for. We can make change happen, and that is what the Voting Rights Act represents.

But today's case also reminds us that Jim Crow and racial disenfranchise-

ment live on to this day in ways both subtle and explicit. Discrimination at the ballot box is very real in today's day and age.

Alabama State lawmakers intentionally tried to dilute the voices of Black voters through discriminatory districts. It is a good thing for democracy that the efforts of the Alabama lawmakers to disenfranchise Black voters have failed in this case.

So, once again, the democracy held firm, but the struggle for equal representation, of course, continues.

We must fight to make redistricting much fairer throughout the country. We must do more at the State level, and we must do more in Congress to pass legislation that will strengthen the Voting Rights Act and fight back against racial discrimination at the ballot box.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Dilawar Syed, of California, to be Deputy Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

VOTE ON DILAWAR SYED NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Syed nomination?

Mr. CARDIN. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) and the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS).

The result was announced—yeas 54, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 150 Ex.]

YEAS—54

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

NAYS—42

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

NOT VOTING—4

Barrasso	Murray
Lummis	Sanders

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 166, Molly R. Silfen, of the District of Columbia, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years.

Charles E. Schumer, Debbie Stabenow, Sheldon Whitehouse, Catherine Cortez Masto, Brian Schatz, Richard J. Durbin, Alex Padilla, Raphael G. Warnock, Tammy Duckworth, Tina Smith, Martin Heinrich, Peter Welch, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Christopher A. Coons, Elizabeth Warren, Benjamin L. Cardin, Gary C. Peters.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Molly R. Silfen, of the District of Columbia, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted "yea."

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 151 Ex.]

YEAS—55

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

NAYS—41

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

NOT VOTING—4

Barrasso	Murray
Lummis	Tillis

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PETERS). The yeas are 55, the nays are 41.

The motion is agreed to.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

SPACE FORCE

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, there is no better place in the entire United States than Ohio for the Space Command Headquarters and their additional units. Our State is ready to lead our military into the next frontier.

And I rise because I don't know that my colleagues think—I understand we all care about our own States, but I don't know that they think enough about how my State has been for decades—literally decades—in many ways, the premier aerospace State in this country. The Wright Brothers are from Ohio, American heroes like John Glenn, and Neil Armstrong. The story of modern aviation was written in Ohio.

Our State continues to lead the country in aerospace innovation and in military service. We have nearly a million veterans in Ohio, and I would like to call out—it is not really the purpose of the speech—but call out one veteran in particular. My mother is from Mansfield, GA; my dad is from Mansfield, OH. And my dad went off to war, and my mother came to Washington to help in the war effort.

My dad, when he came back from overseas, went to a soldiers' dance at the Mayflower Hotel, and my dad met my mom at that soldiers' dance—one from Georgia, one from Ohio.

And my daughter, who runs the YWCA in Columbus, was in town last night, and we decided to have dinner at the Mayflower Hotel. I am sure it looks

very different. It wasn't a soldiers' dance, but it was fun to celebrate my parents and her grandparents.

Back to the subject directly on aerospace, on Space Command, think about the military installations we have across my State. We have Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, of course, but the Air Force Research Lab and the National Air and Space Intelligence Center and the Space Force's National Space Intelligence Center.

We are home to the 88th Air Base Wing of the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, where they support our military aircraft, engines, munitions, electronics, and cyber weapon systems. We have the Air Force Materiel Command that keeps Air Force weapons systems ready for war.

Wright-Patterson has been a leader in military aviation development since the time of airplane inventors like the Wright brothers. It is positioned to lead us into the future.

Just 150 miles away is NASA Glenn Research Center—one of only 10 in the country—at Lewis Field in Cleveland, and a few miles west in Sandusky, near Lake Erie, is the NASA Armstrong Test Facility. These are facilities researching and developing and testing innovative technologies, taking us to the next frontier.

We have the 178th Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Group at the Springfield Air National Guard Base. We have our Air Guard and Reserve bases—Toledo, Springfield, my hometown of Mansfield.

It makes sense to base our country's space military leadership near these important assets that make Ohio the right location for both the U.S. Space Command headquarters and additional Space Force units.

Think about the opportunity for collaboration here. Having Space Command located alongside the Air Force Research Lab will assist in the creation of new space technologies and capabilities. The NASIC at Wright-Patt is already the Space Force's intelligence center.

Close proximity to NASA Glenn and Armstrong Testing Facility in northern Ohio will allow Space Command and Space Force to benefit from their unmatched experience and expertise in space missions. The Armstrong Testing Facility performs specialized research and testing that can't be done—that can't be done anywhere else in the world.

Locating Space Command and additional Space Force assets in Ohio also means that the world's leading trade schools, research universities, Federal laboratories in Ohio, to our east Pennsylvania, to our north Michigan, to our west Indiana, to our south Kentucky and Tennessee, and Illinois are nearby, ready to work together to provide a pipeline of workers to be on the front-line of the next frontier of modern warfare. This proximity is, pure and simple, Mr. President, unmatched.

Ohio alone has a network of world-class research universities and commu-

nity colleges—14 4-year public universities and their 24 branch campuses, 23 2-year community and technical colleges, nearly 60 4-year private universities.

Moving Space Command and Space Force units here would be good for the military, good for Ohio, good for our national economy.

Ohioans know how important aerospace sector jobs are to our State. There is a direct line that runs from GE Aviation in Cincinnati through the base and aerospace companies in Dayton and around Columbus and up to NASA in Cleveland, touching thousands of Ohioans, reaching every region of our great State.

With the CHIPS Act, we are bringing 10,000 good-paying, high-tech jobs to central Ohio making semiconductors. If you don't think this plays a role in our national security, ask the Chinese Communist Party if they would rather the chips for our cars, phones, missiles, planes, and satellites be made overseas. We are finally correcting that. We finally understood as a nation that we can't continue to outsource manual labor. We finally understand that chips should be made here—they were invented here and should be made here; that light bulbs invented here should be made here; that steel, where we led the world, is coming back and building our bridges and all that we should be doing.

We are already the center of the country for aerospace jobs. We are going to be a major hub for semiconductors and manufacturing. Locating our space military leadership near the domestic hub of both semiconductors and aerospace innovation is good for Ohio's economy, and it makes sense for our military. The military challenges of the future demand that our servicemembers have the most innovative, cutting-edge technology. Ohio and the entire Midwest make that technology.

It is not a partisan issue, Mr. President. It is not ideological either. We have always worked together to support and grow these jobs and to invest in Ohio's military installations. This is no different.

Ohio representatives from both sides of the aisle support this effort. This letter is led on the Senate side by me and on the House side by Republican DAVID JOYCE from northern Ohio. Together we call on the President to bring new space missions to Ohio.

It is simple: Ohio stands ready to meet the space-related national security challenges the United States faces now and in the future. It is how you bury the term "Rust Belt." We bury it with the Air Force Research Laboratory. We bury it with the National Air and Space Intelligence Center. We bury it with the National Space Intelligence Center. We are burying it with NASA. We are going to bury it with U.S. Space Command and U.S. Space Force coming to Ohio.

NOMINATION OF MOLLY R. SILFEN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this week, the Senate will vote to confirm Molly Silfen to the Court of Federal Claims. Ms. Silfen is an experienced litigator and public servant who is highly qualified to serve as a judge on the Court of Federal Claims. She earned her B.S. from Yale College and her J.D. from Harvard Law School. After beginning her legal career in 2006 as an associate attorney at Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett, and Dunner, she clerked for Judge Alan D. Lourie on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit from 2008 to 2010.

During her time in private practice, Ms. Silfen handled patent and trademark issues for both individual patent owners and major companies. She performed a significant amount of pro bono work as well, including representing a veteran seeking benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Ms. Silfen joined the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office as an associate solicitor in 2013 and remains there today. In her work with the USPTO, she regularly briefs and argues appeals before the Federal Circuit and other Federal courts of appeals. She has argued 23 appeals before Federal courts of appeals and has served as counsel of record in five merits cases before the Supreme Court.

While with the USPTO, Ms. Silfen has also been detailed to the Civil Division of the Department of Justice and to the Senate Judiciary Committee as part of former Senator Leahy's staff on the Subcommittee on Intellectual Property.

Ms. Silfen's extensive experience at all levels of the Federal judicial system, along with her commitment to public service, will make her an exceptional addition to the Court of Federal Claims. I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for her confirmation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I ask that the rollcall vote begin now, immediately.

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

VOTE ON SILFEN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Silfen nomination?

Mrs. CAPITO. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK-

BURN), the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) would have voted "nay."

The result was announced—yeas 55, nays 39, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 152 Ex.]

YEAS—55

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

NAYS—39

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

NOT VOTING—6

Barrasso	Lummis	Scott (FL)
Blackburn	Murray	Whitehouse

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). The Senator from Virginia.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about a tragedy that happened in Richmond a couple of days ago at the Altria center, in the heart of our city, when gun violence erupted right at the end of the graduation ceremony for the 2023 graduating class of Huguenot High School.

Two people were killed: a Huguenot High School graduate, Shawn Jackson, and his stepfather, Renzo Smith. It is a tragedy that is really having a deep, deep impact in my community.

I wanted to rise to speak about those who were killed and those who were injured, trampled in the pandemonium, the Huguenot High School community, the Richmond Public Schools community. The Altria center is a beautiful entertainment and event venue on Monroe Park in downtown Richmond. It was built in the 1920s and was built in the Moorish architectural style and was given the name of the "Mosque," and it was called the Mosque for a very long time.

I was elected to the Richmond City Council in 1994, and members of our Muslim community came to the Richmond City Council and said: We understand that this building has a particular architectural style. And we understand it may even be sort of a trib-

ute to us to call this building a mosque, but it is not a mosque; it is an entertainment venue. There is alcohol served. There is dancing and other things that wouldn't be appropriate. And our Muslim community asked, in a very respectful way: Can you come up with a different name for this facility? It was in my city council district, and we acted to change the name of this facility to the Landmark. And then a number of years later, Altria, a company headquartered in Richmond, agreed to help renovate the facility, after nearly 100 years, and bring it to more 21st century use, and the name is now the Altria Theater.

I spend some time talking about this place because, Mr. President, I imagine you have places like this in Hawaii. These are places where everybody has gone for their entire lives for events like high school graduation. Virtually every public high school in Richmond and many of the private high schools in Richmond and the surrounding community, you go to a graduation, and it is at the Altria Theater.

Of my three children, two of them graduated and walked across that stage at the Altria Theater. As a mayor and then-Governor and now Senator, I have spoken at many graduations right there on that stage at the Altria Theater. My wife, a graduate of Richmond Public Schools, who was the Secretary of Education in Virginia and First Lady of Virginia, has also delivered graduation speeches right there. We have been to concerts there and theatrical performances there. We know this building in every last square centimeter, and we know what it is like when the Altria Theater is filled with a crowd of people.

High school graduation. I mean, think about it. I am 65 years old. Think about, over the course of a life, the happiest days of your life: high school graduation, college graduation, your wedding day, births of your children. I mean, over the course of a life, there are maybe 5 to 10 days that are universal experiences for American people where it will be in the top 5 to 10 happiest days of your life. High school graduation is that.

For Richmonders and people in the surrounding communities, you think high school graduation, the odds are, you are walking across the stage at that theater. These Huguenot High School graduates had walked across the stage. The young man, Mr. Jackson, had shaken the hand of Jason Kamras, the Richmond Public Schools principal, had received his congratulations. He was a young man who had done well in the classroom and had a lot of challenges—a lot of challenges—to get to that day.

Often a graduation is that. It is an opportunity to thank everybody who helped you, but it is also an opportunity to reflect upon the challenges that people have to get to that day.

Back in the day, the grandparents would tell us how they used to have to walk 5 miles through the snow to get to school. That may not be the case anymore, but an awful lot of our kids have to do the equivalent—the kind of psychic equivalent—of a 5-mile walk through the snow because they have to go through challenges. Whether they were homeless, whether they got a cancer diagnosis through school, they faced adversity and challenges.

Then they get to this day, and they are entitled—they are entitled—to celebrate. That is what they were doing. Then, as they are exiting the Altria Theater, which is right near the campus of Virginia Commonwealth University, and crossing the street to a beautiful park, Monroe Park, directly across, these gunshots break out, 20 shots in succession: families scrambling, knocking over people; vendors who were there, knocking over citizens; people scrambling in every direction. A young kid got pushed out onto the street and got hit by a vehicle. Thank goodness, she is going to be OK. Others sustained all kinds of minor injuries. Even those who were not injured, they will remember this and be scarred by it for the rest of their life because one of these four or five or six pivotal days in your life—the happiest days of your life—for them, will always be connected to seeing a classmate killed and seeing this happy day turned into an unspeakable tragedy.

I know how I think about my high school graduation. It was one of the happiest days of my life. Having been in that building, I know how the Huguenot community for the class of 2023 will remember their high school graduation day, and it is a tragedy that the memory is so polluted by this epidemic of gun violence.

Mr. President, I had the opportunity earlier this year—and I have spoken about it on the floor—to attend another school in Virginia, Richneck Elementary School in Newport News. On January 6, a 6-year-old brought a gun to school in a backpack. It was a student who had all kinds of difficult, difficult challenges. As his compassionate and brave teacher, Abby Zwerner, tried to deal with the situation, the student shot her. Thank God, she is recovering. Thank God, no one was killed that day.

But I had the opportunity to go down about 2 weeks after that to have an off-the-record, no press, no administrators discussion with parents and teachers at the school. The degree of trauma—the degree of trauma—of this happening and the degree of fear: “Every day I go to work now, every day I go to work now, I am afraid this might happen.” “Every day I drop my child off in the morning, I drive away wondering whether I am going to get a call” or “I am going to get an emergency alert on my phone or if I pull up at the end of the day, am I going to be able to pick up my child and will my child be safe?”

My kids all went to the Richmond Public schools, the same schools that

include Huguenot High School, and my youngest only graduated 10 years ago. But I will say, my wife and I, from pre-K to 12, in that 13 years for each of my three kids, never one day—never one day—never one day did we drop our kid off at school and worry about whether they would be safe at the end of the day.

The shooting at Sandy Hook happened right after my youngest child graduated from high school. There had been shootings at Columbine High School years and years ago. But the reality of my own children's public education in an urban school setting was we weren't worried about them.

But just 10 years later, what parent in this country who takes a child to school does not have a voice in their head with some worry about what might happen to them when they are there? Even if you live in a community where there has never been a school shooting, that fear is not absent from your mind because you have seen it happen in every region of the country. You have seen it happen in public schools. You have seen it happen in the Covenant Christian School in Nashville, in elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, colleges.

Maybe I am naive, but gun violence has been a reality of American life for a very long time. To me, it seemed, as a 65-year-old, that there have been some safe spaces. There have been some safe havens. There have been some refugees. There are none anymore. A church is not a refuge. A synagogue is not a refuge. A mosque is not a refuge. A school is not a refuge. An event space that is beloved by the entire community because everybody graduated from high school there for the last 100 years is not a refuge. A public park where you can gather to recreate with your family and friends is not a refuge. There is no refuge from this epidemic.

We talk about American exceptionalism. Often, when we do, we are talking about the things where we are exceptional in a positive way. It is important to acknowledge those things and be proud of them.

But there is an American exceptionalism to this, the degree of these mass shootings and the absence of any place—any place—that is a refuge is something that is exceptional about us in a way that is very, very painful.

As you know, because of my time in Central America, I have a particular connection with a lot of folks from the Americas who work here in the Capitol, and they often come up to me and we shoot the breeze and we talk in my somewhat limited Spanish about what is going on. And I had somebody, earlier in the year, after the shooting at the Richneck Elementary School in Newport News, come up to me and say: You know what—in Spanish—you know, El Salvador is one of the most dangerous countries in the world, but there aren't shootings in the schools.

The homicide rate may be higher than here, but there is a refuge. There is an understanding that you do not strip young people of their innocence and subject students and their families to the threat of gun violence every day.

We live in a country of no refuge, and I just wanted to take the floor to say to the family of Shawn Jackson and Lorenzo Smith, his stepfather—Shawn's mother has had to deal with both her husband and her son not just being taken away but taken away on the same day, on what was supposed to be the happiest day of their life. And she has been interviewed and talked about how hard it was for her son to get to this graduation and what a meaningful milestone in his life it was to be there on that day.

But the last thing that I would like to say is, it is easy to give up and be hopeless. I mean, I find, having been a mayor in Richmond when the homicide rate was the second highest in the United States and having been the Governor when the worst shooting in the United States happened at Virginia Tech, and how sad it is that I wish that would always be the worst shooting—it is a weird thing to say about your own State. But I hope there never would have been a tragedy that would have eclipsed 32 people being killed at Virginia Tech on April 16, 2007, and yet there have now been many tragedies that have claimed more victims than that, what had seemed like an unprecedented one.

It can seem hopeless. It can seem hopeless. I just want to say to students and families, especially to young people who are kind of trying to grapple with the reality of life in America circa 2023, and they are seeing skies that look apocalyptic outside because of climate issues, and they are reading stories about gun violence, and they are worried about a whole variety of things that maybe I didn't have to worry about when I was their age: We can't be hopeless because we can make progress.

Last year, for the first time in 20 years, here in the Senate, we passed a bipartisan gun safety bill. It didn't do everything that needs to be done, but we showed—not easily, but we showed—that we could act.

During my time as a public official in Virginia, we have finally worked our way into the ranks of one of the 10 safest States in terms of major and violent crime. We were never in the 10 safest for a very long time, but, sort of toward the end of my time as Governor, we got there, and we maintained that position. The Virginia General Assembly, which had long, frankly, been enthralled to the National Rifle Association, whose headquarters is in Virginia, in 2019 and 2020 finally embraced a set of gun safety measures that haven't eliminated gun violence, just like seatbelts don't eliminate all traffic accident death, but have helped make us safer. And if we can do it in Virginia, though we have so much

more to do, we can do it here in the U.S. Congress.

Thank you for indulging me and letting me just share the personal nature of this reflection in my hometown, in this place where we have spent so much time and that Richmonders know in such an intimate way.

And this beautiful building, now 100 years old, where we have gone for generations to celebrate, it has a bloodstain on it now. And I am sure that stain is cleaned away, but we all will see it, and we all will feel it forever—forever.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). The Senator from Utah.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF BRYCE CANYON
NATIONAL PARK

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, today we commemorate the 100th anniversary of the attraction now known as Bryce Canyon National Park. This occasion allows us to reflect on the importance of Bryce Canyon and pay tribute to the pioneers who have helped make it such a great place and have shaped its history over the years and those pioneers who are still shaping its contribution to the world today.

Bryce Canyon holds a special place in the hearts of Utahans and of visitors from across the United States and really throughout the world. Its towering rock formations, which are known as hoodoos, are a testament to the unparalleled beauty found in nature. The vibrant colors that paint the canyon's walls at sunrise and sunset create a truly mesmerizing spectacle. And if you haven't been there, you need to visit Bryce Canyon.

In 1874, Scottish immigrant Ebenezer Bryce settled with his wife Mary on the land just below these stunning reddish-hued cliffs. The settlers in the area began calling it Bryce's Canyon after Ebenezer Bryce, who humorously remarked that it was "a helluva place to lose a cow."

The charm and allure of the canyon were evident even in those early days, long before millions of visitors from around the world had come to see it.

Fast-forward to 1915, when J.W. Humphrey, a U.S. Forest Service supervisor, first set foot on the rim above the location we refer to today as the Bryce amphitheater. Overwhelmed by the indescribable beauty, Mr. Humphrey shared his enchantment with the world, sending photographs and films to newspapers, magazines, and TV stations far and wide. He built roads, constructed trails, and established a campground, charging campers a \$1 fee.

And this fee had a guarantee attached to it. He made the \$1 fee fully refundable if any visitor didn't find the view completely worth it.

Well, Mr. Humphrey proudly boasted that he never once had to return a single dollar, not from a single visitor who received that guarantee.

Year after year, the allure of Bryce Canyon has continued to grow. In fact, it has grown exponentially. What start-

ed with around 20,000 annual visits in its early years had escalated to over 500,000 by 1975, over 1 million by 2002, and over 2 million in 2016. Last year alone, the park welcomed an astonishing 2.4 million visitors.

What is it then about Bryce Canyon that draws people in like this? I think it is the "Bryce moment," that magical instant when the park's magnificent panorama suddenly comes into focus. It is especially magical if you see it either at sunrise or sunset. Either way, you are going to be amazed by what you see. It is that breathtaking experience that is sort of akin to looking up at the Empire State Building or at the Taj Mahal, where you can't quite believe what you are seeing.

A few years ago, I was thinking about my many visits to Bryce Canyon over the years, and I have visited Bryce Canyon as a child and as an adult. I visited Bryce Canyon first with family members, and I have also visited with friends, with work colleagues, and in all kinds of different situations.

I still remember the first time I brought my three children to Bryce Canyon, when they were young, and how proud I was to show them this beautiful feature within our State, and how much I enjoyed it.

I remember another time, when I was right out of law school, clerking for a Federal district judge, the honorable Dee Benson of the U.S. District Court for the District of Utah. We had been working hard, and one day Judge Benson decided he was going to schedule a brief weekend visit for us, just voluntarily, just for fun, to go down and visit Bryce Canyon. The law clerks and the other court personnel who worked in his chambers went down and visited Bryce Canyon. It was so much fun.

During one of my more recent visits to Bryce Canyon, a few years ago—not my last one but one of the more recent visits—I went down there and met with one of our county associations of governments, where State, local, and Federal elected officials came together to talk about lands issues. And I happened to have brought my daughter Eliza with me on that trip. It had been a few years since I had brought Eliza to Bryce Canyon, but we got there. We looked over the hoodoos and looked through those canyons right at sunset. It was yet another magical moment.

So these things become a tradition and certainly become a tradition with me and my family and my friends. It is a cherished tradition that brings people together. In rural communities and in this particular rural community, it brings tourist visitors to an otherwise sparsely visited region of our State, and it exemplifies the spirit of adventure and of camaraderie.

On that particular trip, when I brought my daughter Eliza to meet with these State, local, and Federal Government officials, we went on an ATV ride around some of the areas surrounding the park, and it took us just outside of the park to the north.

The night before, we had had the opportunity to meet with these incredible individuals who call the region home, and at Ruby's Inn, we had gotten together for dinner and shared stories and laughter at the deep appreciation for this unique landscape and for the people who lived there. The sense of community and shared experiences was palpable.

We ventured into Bryce Canyon National Park for an evening hike, and, as the sun began to set, casting a warm glow upon those structures known as hoodoos, we were enveloped in a world of natural wonder. The majesty of Bryce Canyon revealed itself in all its glory. It was a transformative experience, just one of many that reminded me yet again of the enduring power of nature to uplift and to inspire.

So, as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of Bryce Canyon, let us honor the pioneers who recognized the unique beauty of the land and its potential to inspire and to attract people from all across the United States and throughout the world. Let us embrace the spirit of adventure and exploration that defines Bryce Canyon and all of our national parks, but especially that one. And may we continue to cherish the memories and experiences these natural wonders provide, ensuring that future generations can forge connections with the breathtaking landscapes of Bryce Canyon.

Thank you, Mr. President, and may Bryce Canyon forever hold a special place in our hearts.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION SHORTAGES

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, our country is facing a medication shortage crisis. Americans can no longer count on their medicines being available at the pharmacy counter when they need them.

Unfortunately, it is actually worse than a simple shortage. It is, in particular, that America doesn't have access to an adequate supply of generic drugs that can be stocked by our pharmacies.

I have heard from parents throughout my State whose kids are sick with a strep throat, and they are out there scrambling from pharmacy to pharmacy trying to track down a basic antibiotic. These concerns are especially serious in rural parts of my State—I think this is true in a lot of parts of this country—because of the long distances families have to drive if their community pharmacy in a rural area can't meet their needs. This, in my view, is an enormous and urgent national challenge.

There are, for example, cancer patients who can't get treatment because

the medication they need is in low supply. With cancer, we know every single second counts. In many cases, people die if they are not treated. This makes the crisis not abstract, but it is a real life-or-death crisis. There are Americans suffering from ADHD who can't get their hands on the medications they rely on that their doctor prescribed to them to help so they can function at school, at work, and at home.

A pharmacist in southern Oregon told me that one of their patients went without their medication for almost 2 months, and it undercuts their ability to complete daily tasks. Derailing these lives—young and old—due to a generic drug shortage just has got to be unacceptable—unacceptable—to the richest country in the world.

Now, the crisis is hurting Americans in many places; but as I have indicated, it is especially stark in rural America. Independent pharmacies have been essential in rural communities in my State. These pharmacies can't always afford to keep brand-name drugs stocked, especially during a shortage. They rely, as do so many of these pharmacies across the land, on available generic medicines so they can serve their customers and stay in business.

And the travel I mentioned from pharmacy to pharmacy to get needed medications is no simple challenge. I'm having a whole group of town halls in eastern Oregon at the end of this month. I made a commitment to have an open-to-all town meeting in every county that I have the honor to represent. I've had 1,050 of them, and I can tell you the distance between small towns in eastern Oregon is often measured in hours, not miles or minutes. So if you live in rural Oregon and your local pharmacy lacks your medication, you have got to find the time and the gas money to travel anywhere from 60 to 90 minutes to the next closest pharmacy and hope and pray that the medication hasn't just been sold before you got there. These commute times are even longer in the winter months when the weather conditions are especially serious.

I heard recently about an Oregonian who went to the pharmacy every day for 2 weeks—2 weeks—to get that day's shipment of the prescription they needed. Every single day, they went to the pharmacy. That is a lot of time spent on top of working, taking care of a family, and trying to get your basic needs met. This is going to get worse in pharmacies across Oregon and the Nation without this Congress and our country acting.

Shortages of these generics has generated a domino effect. It's caused shortages of alternative medications to treat ADHD. And so many Americans—millions and millions—have looked for this drug, and they are looking for alternatives. And some of these other medicines may be less effective. We ought to be clear, in some cases there is no domino effect because some

generics don't have any alternatives at all.

I asked a pharmacist in eastern Oregon to share with me how this has affected the people she and her family serve. She told me that many customers who took medication that were working very well are now bumping up against this shortage. So now a patient's doctor, according to this pharmacist, will write a prescription for another medication and then change the patient back to the original preferred medication—the one that has been working for them—if and when it is available. In essence, the doctors are forced to lurch as their patients go back and forth from one medicine to another—medicines that can have a different effect—if they can get them.

Another patient in rural Oregon was receiving the generic for Adderall at a 30-milligram dose, which suddenly became unavailable. Their insurance wouldn't pay for the brand-name drug, so the patient was forced to take a lower dose version of the generic. This patient has to change the medication every month, not based on their medical needs, but trying to figure out what their rural pharmacy is going to be able to provide.

Then, because ADHD medicines are Schedule II drugs, the prescriptions can't be transferred between pharmacies. If a person's medication isn't available at their local pharmacy but is available at a pharmacy 90 minutes away, patients in this situation have to double back to their doctor to get a new prescription before they can even start the trek to the distant pharmacy. So sometimes this means the patient has to physically drive to the doctor's office and pick up a hard copy of the prescription if the doctor isn't registered with the Drug Enforcement Agency, the DEA.

Just picture this kind of bureaucratic nightmare for people who are just hoping—hoping—in small towns that somebody is thinking about their needs. But the idea of physically driving to a doctor's office, getting a hard copy of the prescription when the doctor, as I said, isn't registered with the DEA to prescribe the drugs electronically is just a microcosm of what these patients in rural Oregon and rural America are telling us.

A rural pharmacist told me that what I just described happened this week with a patient who was forced to drive from Heppner to Pendleton, an hour and a half away, to pick up their physical, paper prescription, and then off they went to their pharmacy.

Now, there are a variety of reasons of why we have these shortages; but when it comes to the ADHD medication, specifically, part of the problem may be that the generic drug manufacturers are not communicating with the government Agencies who regulate the manufacturing of these drugs. And neither the generic manufacturers nor these Agencies are communicating effectively with the public, which is why

so many Members of Congress are getting these calls asking them to step in and help.

Now, the DEA is in charge of how much of this ADHD medication can be produced and dispersed. Okay? This is the Agency that tells you how much of this medication is going to be available. They are telling me drug companies can make more medication any time they want to. The companies say, not so. They are saying what the DEA says isn't true. The companies claim that the DEA is denying their applications to make more medicine during the shortage. Now, add to this the Food and Drug Administration, the FDA, saying they don't know of any denials to make more drugs handed down by the Drug Enforcement Agency to the drug manufacturers and that the DEA has approved applications that the FDA has weighed in on.

So if your head is now spinning as you try to sort through the word salad, as I call it, of American healthcare, it is understandable, because at every level, there are new requirements that you try to reconcile with what I have already described.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services is required by law to post justifications when the DEA denies these kinds of applications on the FDA's website, but none have been posted. So if you are a patient who is hurting or a family who is trying to treat a sick child or an elder, you deserve something better—something better—than the chaos I have just described. Again, companies are saying their applications to make more medicine have been denied.

So I have just given you the conflict between these Agencies that, heaven forbid—quaint idea—would actually talk to each other. Something doesn't add up, so the Senate is going to have to step in and sort this out so that the citizens of this country get straight answers. And this bureaucratic doublespeak is particularly hard on Oregonians who come to me and ask why they are suffering from a crisis that is not of their making.

Now, I recently spoke to the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Agency. She was aware I had an interest in this as I serve as chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, and she agreed that greater transparency in the process is going to help the ongoing work of the Agency to reform the system.

Well, we are sure going to hold them to that. Certainly some clear, at least coherent language is desperately needed and better communication for the patients. That is what I am insisting on from the Drug Enforcement Agency and the FDA because they have a responsibility to reach out to these companies of these essential medicines to sort these out and make these medicines accessible to the American people, and the Agencies ought to give the manufacturers clear guidance on how to navigate the bureaucratic fiefdoms that exist here in Washington.

I will also say that I am concerned that despite this heightened attention to medication shortages, these Agencies appear to be solely focused on production at the national level, and there is no real connection to the local pharmacy window. We know that when we finally took away the grail—the Holy Grail—from the pharmaceutical companies and that Medicare could negotiate to hold down, you know, prices, one of the reasons we did is that we knew this issue really mattered at the pharmacy window. That is when people in New Jersey and Oregon and everywhere else want to have available drugs and have them made affordable. It has to become local.

Further, it is important not just to focus on the production and availability of these drugs like Adderall but to ensure that the generic equivalents are broadly available and recognized as a part of access for patients. For instance, a copay for the generic medicine could be \$10. If it is not available, and after the pharmacy spends 45 minutes on the phone with the patient's insurance company and the patient, the name brand Adderall could be approved, but even with insurance, the patient could face a copay of anywhere from \$75 to \$200.

For all of those families in America who are walking an economic tightrope in balancing their food bill against their fuel bill and their fuel bill against their rent bill, they are not going to be in a position to pay these constantly escalating prices, and, you know, when you are trying to feed your family, you might make your own health your lowest priority.

So the Federal Agencies need to help manufacturers get better at reporting spikes in consumer demand for important medicines that they are going to have a hard time meeting, and Congress has to work on making it a requirement—a requirement—for the manufacturers to report this information.

I am going to close by offering a really radical idea: that the Food and Drug Administration and the Drug Enforcement Administration get together and work this out, because it is not about Democrats and Republicans. I am a Democrat, and the Republicans sit over there. This has nothing to do with that—nothing—but it has everything to do with the proposition that Americans deserve better. These Agencies that I have cited ought to give a full explanation to the American people about what they are doing now, what they are doing a month from now, and what they are going to be doing until they get this fixed.

In my call to these two Agencies, I believe—and I know the Presiding Officer does—that Americans ought to be able to get the healthcare they need when they need it, and right now, too many Americans are suffering because they can't, particularly with respect to those who need medicines to deal with ADHD.

We are hurting people's lives. In the worst case, I believe Americans may be using drugs not prescribed by their doctors as a result of all of this bedlam I have described.

I will tell the Presiding Officer, in wrapping up, you know—and he and I have talked about this—that I was the co-director for the Oregon Gray Panthers for many years, and this has been the area of healthcare I have really tried to specialize in because I have always felt that if you and your loved ones don't have your healthcare, everything else goes by the board. I don't recall very many examples of this kind of dysfunction. I don't know any other way to sum it up. This kind of dysfunction is unacceptable to the millions of Americans who need this medicine.

So I am going to stay at it. I know the Presiding Officer well enough to know that he feels strongly about helping exactly these kinds of people. It is a problem that is hammering families from one end of the country to another. It is particularly hard right now as we speak on the folks I represent in rural Oregon, the folks I am going to see at the townhall meetings here in a few days. We are going to stay at it until we get it fixed.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nomination: Calendar No. 167, Eric G. Olshan to be U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there any objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Eric G. Olshan, of Pennsylvania, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania for the term of four years.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Olshan nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and 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.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE RUSSELLVILLE, ARKANSAS VETERANS AFFAIRS CLINIC

• Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, it is my privilege to recognize the patriots and healers that work at the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System's Russellville Community Based Outpatient Clinic. Those exceptional men and women have honored President Lincoln's famous admonition: "to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan."

The clinic's nurses and doctors care for over 2,300 veterans in the area and facilitate 14,000 appointments each year. Since it opened 13 years ago, this place of healing has treated and restored the health of tens of thousands of veterans and their family members. As important as the quantity of patients they serve is the quality of the service these caregivers provide. And the Russellville clinic is renowned for showing their patients the respect and attention that veterans deserve.

One patient, 98-year-old World War II veteran Jock Davis, was so grateful for the Russellville clinic's professional and diligent care, that he is helping organize a June 23 ceremony thanking the employees. I join my fellow Arkansans in gratitude for this clinic and its selfless public servants.

The employees at the Russellville clinic are fulfilling a sacred covenant between the Nation and its veterans. Every man and woman in uniform who serves our country should know that when they return to civilian life, they will be cared for and honored by the Nation they sacrificed to defend.

The doctors and nurses of Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System's Russellville Community Based Outpatient Clinic are making our State and country proud. God bless them, God bless our veterans, and God bless the United States of America.●

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF DWORSHAK DAM

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, with my colleagues Senator JIM RISCH and Representative RUSS FULCHER, we congratulate Dworshak staff on the dam's 50-year anniversary.

Dedicated on June 15, 1973, the Dworshak Dam, located on the North Fork Clearwater River, has been an important flood control and power generator for 50 years. Following its congressional authorization in 1962 and construction that began in 1966, the dam's flood damage reduction became operational in June 1972, with power generation coming online in March 1973. In addition to the dam, the project also includes Dworshak Reservoir lands, powerhouse, recreation facilities, wildlife mitigation and Dworshak National Fish Hatchery, which is considered to be the world's largest steelhead hatchery.