

disabled, and Sergeant Johnson never received the recognition he deserved in life because of the color of his skin.

I was honored to lead the push in Congress to have the White House posthumously award the Medal of Honor to Sergeant Johnson. I wrote to former Secretary Hagel, got on the phone with Army Secretary McHugh, and met with senior Pentagon officials. I made a push in 2014 to waive the time restrictions to receive the Medal of Honor, and my staff, amazingly, went deep, deep, deep into the Pentagon archives and discovered previously unknown writings of Sergeant Johnson's acts on the battlefield by his own foxhole partner.

Even General Pershing commented on his bravery, we found, because you needed contemporaneous views of how great Sergeant Johnson was to get the Medal of Honor.

And then, much to the delight and happiness of veterans groups in the Capital Region—Albany, NY—and around New York and the country, President Obama awarded Sergeant Johnson the Medal of Honor in 2015.

When Congress authorized the Naming Commission to provide new names to bases originally named after Confederate leaders, I knew that Henry Johnson was a perfect candidate for this honor. I am overjoyed that Sergeant Johnson has now joined the revered company of American heroes whose names are now affixed to our military bases.

Now a Black American hero is taking the place of a Confederate commander in the South. It is correcting history in a good way. Fort Johnson will forever stand proud as an inspiration for generations to come.

TAX REFORM

Mr. President, on the Republican tax plan, yesterday, the Republican-led House Ways and Means Committee advanced a sweeping array of new tax giveaways that reward the wealthy and well connected and leave ordinary families out to dry.

With this latest GOP tax scam, Republicans are showing exactly where their priorities lie: with large corporations, Big Oil polluters, and ultrahigh-earning households.

After the Trump tax law blew a nearly \$2 trillion hole in our national deficit, this new Republican proposal would increase the deficit by another trillion dollars.

This hypocrisy is just astounding. Three weeks ago, we were hearing: Well, we have got to reduce the deficit. Debt is our big problem. We should even default before we would deal with that problem.

And now, all of a sudden, they pass a bill that increases the deficit by another trillion dollars. The hypocrisy of that is bouncing around the walls here. How do they look themselves in the mirror? How do they look themselves in the mirror by bringing us to the brink of default because they wanted the deficit down and debt down, and

now they increase it by a trillion dollars simply to help their ultrarich friends and the biggest, wealthiest corporations that don't pay a fair share of taxes? Republicans push our country to the brink of default in the name of fiscal responsibility and deficit reduction, but now the same Republicans want to blow a trillion-dollar hole into the deficit without so much as batting an eye.

Do you know what it shows you? That those Republicans—not all, but them—it shows you they really don't care about the deficit. They simply resent the idea of making the ultra ultrawealthy and the biggest corporations pay their fair share.

The Republicans' latest scam is also bad news for anyone who worries about protecting our planet for future generations. Their proposal would gut billions in clean energy investments that are already creating millions of good-paying green jobs.

Our Inflation Reduction Act has helped to create over 142,000 new—new—good-paying jobs, and more are coming—many more—in the next few years. But Republicans now want to gut those investments completely.

Why? Big Oil. Big Oil. They get a \$10 billion tax break under the Republican plan. And we all know that the Republican Party in the House and in the Senate is under the thumb of Big Oil.

So it is clear that this latest GOP tax scam is more of the same: giveaways to large corporations, giveaways to Big Oil, and another massive hole in the deficit.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, on nominations, it has been another busy week here on the Senate floor. Yesterday, we confirmed Hernan Vera to serve as a district judge for the Central District of California and Jared Bernstein to be Chairman of the CEA, the Council of Economic Advisers.

Today, the Senate will continue our work by voting to confirm another district judge, Casey Pitts, for the Northern District of California and advance two more district judges today, Dale Ho for the Southern District of New York and Nusrat Choudhury for the Eastern District of New York.

This week, we will also advance the nomination of Julie Rikelman to be Circuit Court judge for the First Circuit.

It is a big week for judges here in the Senate. I thank my colleagues for their work.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Biden administration has been sending the Senate a dizzying list of radical and unqualified nominees to both the executive branch and the Federal bench. In several cases, the President's picks have been so far outside the mainstream that this Chamber's Democratic majority hasn't even been willing to confirm them.

Right now, our Democratic colleagues are struggling to convince one another to confirm a State employment commissioner who was responsible for tens of billions of dollars in fraudulent unemployment insurance payments, and this nominee has been recommended by the administration for Secretary of Labor. They have had a hard time agreeing to give a lifetime judgeship to a self-described "wild-eyed leftist" who likened hate for conservative Americans to "righteous indignation" and "moral clarity."

All the while, the docket of down-right radical nominees continues to fill. This week, the Democratic leader will file cloture on two new nominations to the Federal bench. First, Nusrat Choudhury is President Biden's latest pick to join the Eastern District of New York. This nominee has made statements ranging from reckless suggestions that crimes like theft do not threaten public safety to false and inflammatory assertions that police kill Black men "every day" in America. Unsurprisingly, these statements have drawn the ire and opposition of law enforcement groups across our country.

And second, Julie Rikelman is nominated to the First Circuit Court of Appeals. Ms. Rikelman has described efforts to limit abortion as a "vicious assault" by "hostile politicians" and has even objected to restrictions on reprehensible practices like sex-selection abortions.

So, Mr. President, these are the nominees of a President who promised to unify our country. I would urge my colleagues to join me in rejecting each of them.

UKRAINE

Mr. President, now on an entirely different matter, as I have discussed repeatedly, Vladimir Putin's brutal escalation in Ukraine has prompted America's European allies to take their commitments to collective defense entirely more seriously. Meanwhile, on the other side of the world, Russia's authoritarian aggression has reinforced a reality our friends in the Indo-Pacific understand all too well.

From communist China's backyard, American partners in Japan, Taiwan, and elsewhere see the clear connection between Ukraine's fight against Putin's Russia and the threats they face closer to home. And they haven't been shy in calling it out.

Last year, Japanese Prime Minister Kishida said:

Ukraine might be East Asia tomorrow. We must show there are consequences to the attack.

The Japanese Defense Minister put it this way.

If the international community somehow allows or condones Russia's aggression . . . it might send a wrong message that such actions can be tolerated in other parts of the world.

Last month, Taiwan's Ambassador delivered the same message:

Support for Ukraine is relevant to us because . . . it helps to deter. It imposes costs on the aggressor.

And Taiwan's Deputy Foreign Minister was even more specific. He recently said support for Ukraine is "the best way"—"the best way to deter China" and that Beijing is "waiting to see" whether the "Western democratic camp will be able to hold their position."

So, Mr. President, take it from our friends with the most to lose from Chinese aggression: Ukraine's fight is not a distraction; it is fundamental to deterring China—fundamental.

Of course, our friends in the Indo-Pacific aren't just telling us; they are showing us. Japan has committed more than \$7 billion to the Ukrainian cause, including drone technology, mine detection systems, support for critical infrastructure, as well as humanitarian aid. And Prime Minister Kishida made a special effort to travel to Kyiv in March.

Taiwan has provided tens of millions of dollars in humanitarian relief to Ukraine, and the island's businesses are stepping up to send lifesaving technologies to the frontlines. And let's not forget the brave citizens of Taiwan, who have literally volunteered for frontline service in Ukraine—Taiwanese citizens going to Ukraine on the frontlines.

So, Mr. President, America's Indo-Pacific partners are standing with the West against today's authoritarian aggression, and our combined efforts are helping the entire free world to prepare to meet tomorrow's threats.

As Taiwan's Foreign Minister pointed out today in Prague, we are drawing critical lessons from Ukraine's successful defense of its territory, allowing vulnerable partners to adjust training, procurement, and tactics accordingly.

We are investing in our own defense industry's capacity here in America to improve our ability to compete with China and to enhance deterrence. And, importantly, America's friends in Europe and the Indo-Pacific are forging closer ties with one another.

Europe increasingly understands that NATO has global interests, that the world's key theaters of competition are connected, and that the challenges we all face from China are simply not confined to Asia. Our European allies will be affected by instability or conflict in Asia as much as the United States, if not actually more so. So I am encouraged by the way NATO is thinking about the scope of the challenges posed by the PRC's aggression. And, particularly, I am glad that NATO has invited our friends in Japan, South Korea, Aus-

tralia, and New Zealand to join the United States and our allies at the Vilnius summit next month.

China may have proxies and client states, but the United States and our allies are friends with shared interests. To paraphrase NATO General Stoltenberg: It is better—better—to have friends.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

(The remarks of Mrs. MURRAY pertaining to the introduction of S. 1995 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, when it comes to what is happening in Washington, DC, it is often the legislation Congress is considering that gets the lion's share of attention, but just as significant are the regulations being put out by the executive branch. Regulations may not seem as significant as legislation, but they can have just as far-reaching an effect as any law and can radically shift Federal policy.

A look at the Presidential administration's regulations can tell you a lot about that administration's approach to government. Over the past 2-plus years, the Biden administration has built a record of regulation that reflects its big-government, big-spending priorities.

Take the President's student loan giveaway, which, if the "forgiveness" portion is not overturned by the Supreme Court, is set to cost taxpayers nearly \$1 trillion over the next decade, or take his overreaching waters of the United States rule, which, if enforced, would give the Federal Government sweeping jurisdiction over most water features on private property, including things like irrigation ditches, ephemeral streams, and even prairie potholes.

The ability to create regulations gives a Presidential administration a lot of power—and the ability to do a lot of damage. Checks do exist on the regulatory power, however, and one check is provided by the Congressional Review Act, which allows Congress to pass resolutions of disapproval that repeal the regulations in question. The President still has to sign the resolution for it to go into effect or else two-thirds majorities in both Houses of Congress have to override his veto. But the tool can be used to check excessive use of regulatory power.

Senate Republicans have been making regular use of the Congressional Review Act this Congress to attempt to address some egregious Biden administration regulations. We have passed nine now resolutions of disapproval of Biden administration actions so far this year, every single one of which has been bipartisan, which goes to show just how extreme the actions in question are.

I mentioned Senator CAPITO's resolution to overturn the administration's

waters of the United States rule. It is an Obama-era relic resurrected by the Biden Environmental Protection Agency. As I mentioned, if enforced, this rule would give the Federal Government jurisdiction over a vast number of water features on private property, including things like irrigation ditches and even prairie potholes—something we are very familiar with in my region of the country.

Farmers, ranchers, and other private landowners could see parts of their land rendered useless for months while the Federal Government determines what restrictions to impose. Landowners could also be faced with huge compliance costs, and the value of their land could plummet.

Now, I say "if enforced." While nine Democrats in the House and five in the Senate joined Republicans to pass a resolution disapproving the President's WOTUS rule, the President vetoed the resolution. But, in a victory for landowners, the Supreme Court recently ruled to clarify and limit the Federal Government's reach under the Clean Water Act, which effectively overturns the President's WOTUS rule.

I also mentioned the President's student loan giveaway. The forgiveness part of the President's student loan giveaway would cost taxpayers somewhere in the neighborhood of half a trillion dollars over the next decade. The President's legal authority to unilaterally forgive student debt is extremely dubious, not to mention how unfair it is to ask the many Americans who worked hard to pay off their loans or who never pursued college in the first place to take on the burden of student debt for individuals who took out loans for college or graduate school and agreed to pay them back.

With Senator CASSIDY's leadership in the Senate, Republicans in the House and Senate, joined by a handful of Democrats, passed a resolution disapproving of the administration's student loan forgiveness overreach, but the President vetoed it. However, the President's forgiveness plan could still be overruled by the Supreme Court, which is set to release his decision on two student loan forgiveness cases as soon as this week.

Another terrible Biden administration regulation that Republicans, through Senator BRAUN's efforts, have attempted to check is the President's rule that allows pension plan fiduciaries—those are the individuals who manage Americans' retirement accounts—to consider so-called environmental, social, and governance factors and not just the rate of return when investing their customers' money.

In other words, the individuals who manage \$11.7 trillion of Americans' retirement are no longer required to make investment decisions based solely on maximizing return. It might come as a surprise to many of the people out there who have funds invested. Instead, they will now be allowed to opt for a less valuable investment if they prefer its environmental profile.