

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.

House and Senate Republicans passed a resolution disapproving of this rule, but unfortunately, again, the President vetoed it, meaning that for now retirees may have to accept that environmental goals—environmental goals—can come ahead of giving them a secure retirement.

But it was important to bring attention to this regulation—one of a number of radical environmental regulations from the Biden administration.

Senate Republicans have also passed resolutions from Senators MULLIN and MARSHALL addressing Biden administration overuse of the Endangered Species Act; a resolution from Senator LUMMIS addressing the administration's expansive new definition of "critical habitat," which could have major negative consequences for landowners and businesses; a resolution from Senator FISCHER disapproving of an EPA rule on truck emissions that could drive some smaller trucking companies out of business entirely—and more. We have more resolutions of disapproval in the pipeline.

While, unfortunately, President Biden has predictably vetoed attempts to check his administration's aggressive use of Federal power, we have had some successes.

When Senator CAPITO announced her intention to challenge a Federal Highway Administration memo discouraging States from pursuing highway expansion projects and prioritizing funding for projects that reduce emissions, the Federal Highway Administration withdrew the memo and issued a revised version without the problematic language, which was a win for infrastructure investments in rural areas.

As I mentioned, while the President vetoed the resolution disapproving of his overreaching waters of the United States water rule, the Supreme Court's recent decision effectively overturning this regulation is a win for farmers, for ranchers, and for other landowners—and, honestly, for common sense.

While it wasn't a Biden administration regulation, Senator HAGERTY led a successful charge in the Senate to overturn Washington, DC's crime bill that would have weakened penalties for a number of crimes.

Congress, of course, has the legal authority to block DC ordinances thanks to Federal legislation rooted in the Constitution which gives Congress legislative jurisdiction over the seat of the U.S. Government—namely, Washington, DC.

Republicans' effort to overturn DC's dangerous new crime bill ultimately persuaded the President to change his mind and sign the resolution of disapproval.

As we move forward, Republicans will continue to use the Congressional Review Act to push back against overreaching regulations from the Biden administration. We may not always be successful, but at the very least, we can highlight the true cost of the Biden

administration's regulations and the burdens they place on our economy and on hard-working Americans.

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.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to support the nomination of Ambassador Elizabeth Richard to be Coordinator for Counterterrorism.

Ambassador Richard is an eminently qualified candidate to lead the State Department's Bureau of Counterterrorism, and it is well past time that we confirm her nomination. Having already served our country as U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon, Ambassador Richard is deeply familiar with the geostrategic and counterterrorism issues facing the Middle East.

Throughout her career, she has worked across the region to advance U.S. national security interests and support the safety of the American people. That is why I believe she is exceptionally qualified to serve as the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, and it is a role that needs to be filled urgently.

The counterterrorism challenges that we currently face and could face in the future are crystalized in the detention and displaced person camps in Syria. Mingled together in camps across northeastern Syria are an estimated 12,000 suspected ISIS fighters and 60,000 women and children who have possible ISIS affiliation. The humanitarian conditions in those detainee camps are dire. And compounding the pressure of ISIS extremists are inadequate medical facilities, insufficient sanitation, and lack of access to schooling.

Last fall, the Syrian Democratic Forces, supported by U.S. troops, completed the 24-day security operation which yielded 300 ISIS operative terrorists and freed 6 women from slavery.

This is a crisis waiting to happen.

I have heard very directly from General Kurilla, who is the head of CENTCOM, about his concerns at the detainee camps. This is another reason why we urgently need a senior official in place to lead the U.S. Government's efforts to work toward closing the camps, to address the humanitarian and security concerns in the camps, and to coalesce the international support that is needed to achieve the enduring defeat of ISIS.

Under the Biden administration, the Coordinator for Counterterrorism has also served as the ISIS Detainee Coordinator. That is a role which my bipartisan legislation, the Syria Detainee and Displaced Persons Act, would cod-

ify. Along with Senators GRAHAM, MENENDEZ, and RISCH, I introduced this legislation to ensure that the U.S. Government has a senior official working to coordinate all lines of effort to address the causes and consequences of the ISIS detainee camps in Syria.

The creation of this position was originally a recommendation of the Syria Study Group, and it would empower the coordinator to lead on all diplomatic engagements and the planning regarding the future of ISIS detainees. But as Ambassador Richard's nomination to be the Coordinator for Counterterrorism has been stalled by Republicans, this important position has been unfilled.

Right now, we have hundreds of general officers who are being held up by one of our Republican colleagues. They can't take their promotions and move on to their next deployments because they are being held up. We have multiple ambassadorial nominees who are being held up, like Ambassador Richard.

We hear that one of our colleagues from Ohio is planning to hold up all nominees to the Justice Department.

These are not games we are playing here. These are not games. These are serious issues that affect the ability of the United States to compete in a global environment, and holding up the people whom we need in positions to address the critical challenges facing this country is really just unacceptable.

I hope we can move Ambassador Richard's nomination, just as I hope our colleagues are going to stop their obstructionism and let us move on the other nominees who are critical to ensuring our national security.

With that in mind, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nomination: Calendar No. 144, Elizabeth H. Richard, to be Coordinator for Counterterrorism; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Reserving the right to object, I agree with the Senator from New Hampshire that this position at the State Department is important, and it should be filled by someone qualified and someone who will use the position to stand up to the terrorists who target Americans all across the world. Unfortunately, Ms. Richard—her record makes her singularly unqualified for this post.

The Biden administration has put forward many troubling and radical nominees during the past 2½ years. Indeed, the nominees who have been put forth by this President are more extreme, are more radical than any nominees I have ever seen in my lifetime.