

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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 PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

#### VOTING LAWS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, at this time 1 year ago, the Democratic Party was in the middle of a hysterical meltdown over a new voting law in the State of Georgia.

The President of the United States declared that the State's modest changes to election procedures were "Jim Crow 2.0." He said the law was about "voter suppression and election subversion." He said citizens should doubt "whether your vote counts at all." The sitting President of the United States said lawmakers' positions on this bill would define—listen to this—whether we were "on the side of Dr. King or George Wallace . . . John Lewis or Bull Connor . . . Abraham Lincoln or Jefferson Davis."

The Senate Democratic leader said his fellow U.S. Senators who are Republicans were "supporting the reenactment of those Jim Crow laws."

My colleague from New York, as the Senate majority leader, is supposed to safeguard and steward this institution. Instead, he tried to destroy the Senate and "nuke" the 60-vote threshold so that Democrats could take over all 50 States' election laws on a partisan basis. And, believe it or not, 47 of the other 49 Democrats went right along with him.

The liberal hysteria spread to the press and the private sector. Woke activists started talking about boycotting companies like Coca-Cola and Delta Airlines. Major League Baseball caved and moved the All-Star Game out of Atlanta, directly harming the local economy, all for the sake of symbolism.

Republicans said this was unhinged, phony outrage over a commonsense law that would make it both easy to vote and, of course, hard to cheat. Democrats said the new voting rules were evil and racist and the literal death of democracy.

Well, the facts are now in. We have hard evidence. After the new bill took effect in early 2022, the State of Georgia held a primary election. Do you know what happened? Record turnout for a primary.

Then, last November, Georgia had a general election. What happened? A new record for ballots cast in a midterm.

Oh, some might say: But that doesn't tell us anything about the voting conditions. Maybe there were terribly long

lines. Maybe there were sinister road blocks, and voters persevered in spite of them.

Ah, but alas, except an academic research center at the University of Georgia spent weeks—weeks—conducting a major survey of Georgia voters after the election. Let's take a look at what they found.

Seventy-two percent of all Georgia voters—and 73 percent of Black voters, specifically—said their voting experience was "excellent." Ninety-two percent of all voters—and 92 percent of Black voters, specifically—said either that voting had gotten easier since the prior election or that there was no difference. Ninety-two percent of all voters in Georgia said that voting had either gotten easier or that there was no difference between that election and prior elections. More than 70 percent of Black voters in Georgia said they waited less than 10 minutes to cast their ballot.

This is all with the supposed "Jim Crow" law in action: record-high turnout, lightning-fast voting lines, a supermajority of African-American voters rating their experience under the new voting rules as "excellent."

Ah, but here is the icing on the cake. The same Democratic Party that cheered Major League Baseball from moving the All-Star Game out of Atlanta—listen to this—now has Atlanta on the short list for the next Democratic National Convention.

Here is what happened. We were right, and they were wrong. But it goes beyond that. These people actually lied. They invoked our darkest history and slandered half the country because they wanted more power for themselves.

Some of the most powerful people in our entire country, including the President of the United States, staked their personal credibility to these claims. President Biden screamed from a podium that the bad old days of Jim Crow were back. Over this?

The majority leader from New York tried to destroy the Senate. Over this?

The American people were subjected to months of baseless, pointless, media haranguing. Over this?

And the country is supposed to go on pretending like nothing happened? We are all supposed to take the President, Vice President, and Senate Democrats seriously the next time they start shouting and waving their arms about the next supposed crisis? I don't think so. I don't think the American people will forget who kept their credibility and who lit theirs on fire.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, now, on an entirely different matter, today, Ranking Member CAPITO of the Environment and Public Works Committee will introduce an important resolution on behalf of millions of American farmers, ranchers, and builders.

Two years ago, the Biden administration picked up an Obama-era crusade to micromanage the small businesses that help feed, clothe, and power America. Literally, on President Biden's first day in office, he signed an Executive order that began tearing down the regulatory certainty that Republicans had worked hard to restore for American workers and entrepreneurs.

And in December, this crusade yielded a new rule from EPA that enacted a dizzying new definition of which temporary, tributary, and upland waterways fall under the Federal Government's authority. There is a case before the Supreme Court on this very subject right now. The Court's ruling in *Sackett v. EPA* will provide new clarity on just how far Federal bureaucrats can stretch their powers to meddle in working Americans' business under the Clean Water Act.

But instead of waiting to see whether a massive expansion of the regulatory state would be legal, the Biden EPA went ahead with their new rule. Can you imagine why Washington Democrats would be in such a rush to get ahead of the law?

So what does this latest power grab by Washington Democrats mean for working people out in our country? Well, for starters, it means that cattlemen, contractors, and all sorts of folks have now had to put up with three—three—major changes to Federal regulation on the lands where they do business in just the past 8 years.

Democrats' relentless attempts to step on State and local authorities in their own backyards has left small business owners across America chasing moving goalposts. The Biden administration's latest rule means it will be harder for farmers in Kentucky to figure out which ditches on their property are subject to the whims of Washington bureaucrats. It will create new headaches for builders in West Virginia trying to make sure they dot every "i" and cross every "t" on much needed development projects. It will mean ranchers out West may discover that every ditch and low-lying puddle they own—even ones that only hold water when it rains—is now the business of EPA.

And as every American who has tried to create jobs or build something knows, redtape doesn't just cost valuable time. Legal experts project the Biden administration's latest overreach would raise the cost of development and infrastructure projects near waterways by—listen to this—a million dollars an acre.

So while President Biden takes a victory lap on infrastructure projects made possible by bipartisan work, this latest salvo in Washington Democrats' war on working Americans would devastate the sort of small businesses that actually build the infrastructure projects.

But it isn't going unanswered. Twenty-five Governors, representing fully half the States in our country, have

condemned the EPA's waters of the United States rule. And here in the Senate, West Virginia's own Senator CAPITO has consistently led our efforts to cut the overreaching regulatory state back down to size. She sponsored the legislation that would have codified the last administration's common-sense fixes. She spearheaded Congress's brief to the Supreme Court as it considers this issue.

And today, she will introduce her Congressional Review Act resolution to give every one of our colleagues the opportunity to protect the future of transformative infrastructure, energy, and agriculture projects in their States.

West Virginia should be proud that one of their two Senators is committed to reforms that get more of Washington's messes out of their way. I am proud to support Senator CAPITO's resolution. I would urge each of my colleagues to do the same.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Joseph Lee Falk, of Florida, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the United States Institute of Peace for a term of four years.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). The Republican whip.

#### CONGRATULATING THE SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY JACKRABBITS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, yesterday the Senate unanimously approved my resolution with Senator ROUNDS formally congratulating the South Dakota State University football team on their championship season. And what a great season it was for the Jackrabbits. They ended the season 14 and 1 and never lost a game in their conference. They earned the No. 1 seed in the Football Championship Subdivision playoffs. And they brought home the FCS National Championship for the first time in program history with a 45-to-21 win against the North Dakota State Bison last month in Frisco, TX.

I happened to be on hand for that game. It was an extraordinary game and capped off an extraordinary season. I happened to be there for the semifinal game against Montana State, which the Jackrabbits won decisively. In each of those games, and their games

throughout the season, they demonstrated on the field not only great skill but just an incredible determination, resilience, and a willingness to play together as a team, which, really, I think, is what distinguished and differentiated their team from many others around the country this year. It really was an extraordinary team to watch on both sides of the ball. And as someone who has been a fan of sports for a long time, it was really exciting to see the success that they had not only throughout the course of the season but ultimately capping it off with the national championship.

That championship win was a fitting capstone to coach John Stiegelmeier's 26-season career leading the Jacks. Coach Stig, as he is affectionately known, is the heart and soul of Jack-rabbit football.

Like many South Dakotans, he learned his values from his dad. He worked on a family farm in Selby, SD. His dad told him: If you work hard and be a good person, you will have success. Work hard, be a good person, and you will have success.

I would say Coach Stig has done all three. His determination transformed SDSU's football team into what it is today. SDSU became a Division 1 program under his leadership, and former Jacks players have gone on to careers in the NFL. His calm, patience, and caring set the standard for the players and made the team a family.

He leaves as the winningest coach in SDSU history, the 2022 FCS Coach of the Year, and, of course, with a national title for the team that he has dedicated his career to making great.

Huge congratulations to the Jackrabbits on their season and to Coach Stig, and we wish you all the best in your retirement. You have earned it.

#### COMMITTEES

Mr. President, yesterday Republicans confirmed their committee assignments for the new Congress. And for the 118th Congress, I am excited to once again be serving South Dakotans on the Senate Agriculture, Finance, and Commerce Committees.

If any committee is a good fit for a South Dakota Senator, it is the Senate Agriculture Committee. Agriculture is the lifeblood of South Dakota, and day in and day out, one of my top priorities is addressing the needs of farmers and ranchers.

And my seat on the Senate Agriculture Committee gives me a particularly valuable platform from which to advocate for South Dakota producers. Over the years, thanks in part to my position on the committee, I have been able to help secure resources for farmers and ranchers whose herds and crops have been hit hard by adverse weather.

I have been able to strengthen the farm safety net through commodity programs like the Agriculture Risk Coverage Program. And I have been able to establish a safety net for livestock producers through programs like the Livestock Indemnity Program and the Livestock Forage Program. I have been able to make the Conservation

Reserve Program a more effective tool for producers. And more.

And 2023 is a particularly exciting time to be on the Ag Committee because 2023 is a farm bill year. During my time in Congress, I have been involved in drafting four farm bills, and I am eager to get to work on my fifth.

I have been gearing up for the 2023 farm bill since last year, when I began convening roundtables with farmers and ranchers and ag stakeholders to hear about their top priorities for this year's bill.

I have also introduced several pieces of legislation that I will work to get included in this farm bill, including legislation to strengthen and improve the Conservation Reserve Program, increase the information available on the impacts of conservation practices, and address the needs of South Dakota livestock producers.

In addition to focusing on the farm bill, I will be monitoring the evolving situation on the Obama-era Waters of the United States rule that President Biden's Environmental Protection Agency just resurrected, which would give the Federal Government sweeping jurisdiction over most water features in our State, from ephemeral streams to prairie potholes.

This would be a nightmare for South Dakota landowners and particularly farmers and ranchers, and I will be doing everything I can to keep the heavy hand of the Federal Government out of the business of regulating landowners' puddles.

I am also proud to continue serving on the Commerce Committee of which I am a long-term member, including 4 years as chairman. The Commerce Committee's jurisdiction is broad. It is the Senate's "planes, trains, and automobiles" committee and its oceans and space; it is the technology committee.

Our work is inherently forward-looking, and it is often some of the most interesting, relevant, and exciting work going on in the Congress. So it is no surprise that the Commerce Committee offers plenty of opportunity to deliver for South Dakotans.

With a reliable internet connection being increasingly essential for everyday life, closing the digital divide is more important than ever. And as a member of the Commerce Committee, expanding broadband access into unserved areas has long been a priority of mine.

I have worked to support broadband expansion, reduce unnecessary obstacles to building reliable networks, and, most recently, to hold Federal agencies accountable to ensure that Federal funding for rural broadband goes to its intended purpose, which is expanding broadband access to areas that currently lack it.

I also believe we need to hold Big Tech platforms accountable. South Dakotans and many other Americans are