

sticks to his guns as this process begins in earnest. Both parties in both Chambers must come together on passing emergency supplemental funding to help our fellow Americans reeling from natural disasters, to stand with our friends in Ukraine fighting against Putin, and to fight against the fentanyl crisis, among other priorities.

Later this morning, I will attend a classified briefing on the state of the war in Ukraine, where I expect we will see precisely why, now more than ever, our friends abroad need our help. We must continue to show Putin and the forces of autocracy that the United States stands firmly behind Ukraine. The worst thing we could do right now for our own national security and for our democratic values is to waver or hesitate in our support.

What is the point in cutting off support now when we are at a turning point in the war—an inflection point—after we have invested such a large amount of resources to get us to this inflection point? It is a crucial moment right now.

So one more time, let me implore my House colleagues: Follow in the Senate's example when you return next week and work with Democrats in a bipartisan way so we can avoid a costly, pointless, and very harmful and unnecessary government shutdown. We do not need to go down that road, and we cannot follow the lead of a mindless few who believe a shutdown is a good thing and who want it and who openly admit they want it. They are hurting the American people, plain and simple. We should not follow them.

Democrats and Republicans in both the House and Senate should not follow this small band of people who are at the extreme. Instead, let's keep our economic recovery going. Let's keep our investments in infrastructure and manufacturing flowing, and let's make sure we help Americans with disaster aid, help our friends in Ukraine, deal with fentanyl, and fulfill our other needs too.

The Senate, as I said, is off to a very good start. I hope the House gets off to a good start next week as well by embracing bipartisanship. We will know very soon whether they are ready or not to follow through on this very important responsibility they have to the American people.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, nominations, well, it has been a productive first week back here on the Senate floor for nominations. Yesterday, I am proud to say, we confirmed Gwynne Wilcox to a second term on the NLRB, the National Labor Relations Board. I am happy she passed, just as she did 2 years ago when she became the first Black woman ever to be confirmed to the NLRB. Confirming highly qualified nominees like Ms. Wilcox to the NLRB is a top priority for Democrats and for all working Americans, because it is

one of the most important proworker Agencies in the country.

Under the Biden administration, the NLRB has been hard at work overturning Trump-era rulings that harmed workers and unions. They have been at work expanding protections in the workplace and safeguarding the right to organize. All important to maintaining the middle class and growing the middle class; because after all, it was the union movement that really created the broad American middle class in the first place. And when unions were attacked, the middle class declined.

During her first term on the NLRB, Ms. Wilcox was a fervent champion of the labor movement, so I am pleased that she will be back on the board again.

Now, later this morning we will confirm Adriana Kugler to be on the Federal Reserve Board. I was proud to champion this historic nomination of Ms. Kugler, a Colombian-American economist who will make history as the first—the first—Latina in the Fed Board's 109-year history. And I want to thank Chairman MENENDEZ for championing this outstanding nominee.

Ms. Kugler's historic confirmation will be a great moment for the Fed and for America, as we elevate fresh, diverse perspectives to our Nation's central bank and continue our strong economic recovery.

We also confirmed two other very impressive nominees to the Federal Reserve this week: Philip Jefferson and Lisa Cook, another historic nominee, as Ms. Cook became the first Black woman confirmed to a full term on the Fed. Both of them again passed with bipartisan support.

And, finally, today we will vote to confirm Anna Gomez as a Commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission. Ms. Gomez is an exceptional nominee with considerable telecom experience and broad support from groups on both sides of the aisle. And if confirmed, she will be the first Latina on the Commission in over 20 years, another glass ceiling broken. And these are so important to getting a full, diverse view on important governing Agencies like the Fed, like the FCC.

Ms. Gomez's confirmation will fill the fifth and final spot on the FCC so they can do the crucial work of expanding access to high-speed internet, administering programs for affordable internet access, and protecting consumers from junk fees and much more.

So I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their cooperation on these nominees, and I look forward to continuing this Democratic Senate's historic pace of confirming well-qualified and diverse nominees.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now, finally, on AI. Next week the Senate will host one of the most important

conversations of the year when the top minds in artificial intelligence convene for our first AI Insight Forum. It will be a meeting unlike any other that we have seen in the Senate in a very long time—perhaps ever. A coming together of top voices in business, civil rights, defense, research, labor, the arts—all together in one room having a much needed discussion, conversation, about how Congress can tackle AI.

Both parties recognize that AI is something we can't ignore, but we need a lot of help understanding the best way forward. Different countries are taking such different approaches to AI, and some are more successful than others.

We have to learn from their mistakes and learn from this panel, illustrious as it is. We need to find an approach that balances both innovation and savings. That means both creative innovation to develop new applications, new technologies, new breakthroughs so we can advance in science and in medicine and in education and in health and in so many other areas—communications. But we also need innovation on guardrails so we can find creative and new ways to protect our kids, our privacy, prevent racial bias, prevent doomsday scenarios. Innovation must apply to both sides of the equation, innovating so we can move the advantages of AI forward but innovating so we can deal with the problems that AI might create and lessen them as much as we can.

It will not be easy, not easy at all. In fact, it will be one of the hardest things we undertake in Congress, the hardest thing we probably ever have undertaken. That is why next week's conversation will be so important because it will be the first of a series of forums that will give our committees the knowledge base and thought insights to draft the right kind of policies. Already our committees have done some outstanding work on this topic, holding no less than eight hearings on AI on matters related to national security, intellectual property, human rights, and more. In fact, as we speak, the Energy and Natural Resources Committee is holding a hearing on AI and the Department of Energy's role in preserving competition and new technologies.

One thing I want to underscore before I finish my speech here on my little talk here on AI is that we are doing this in a bipartisan way. Senator ROUNDS, Senator YOUNG, Senator HEINRICH, and myself are sort of steering this effort. We are having this be done in a bipartisan way, and we expect the committees to work in a bipartisan way because if this becomes a partisan issue, nothing will happen, and that could create real problems in our society. So the Senate is ready and engaged on this most important issue.

I want to thank my colleagues for their work. I want to thank Senators ROUNDS, YOUNG, and HEINRICH for helping organize these forums, and I look forward to our conversation, our very

important conversation, next week. We hope Senators will come—Senators and their staffs will come, listen, learn, and then act.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, last week, the Biden administration rolled out the first targets of the scheme it has been working on for years—prescription drug socialism.

Ironically enough, Washington Democrats' plan to fix prices in the market for world-leading medical innovations is baked into legislation they produced after their own runaway spending sent consumer prices through the roof.

As we know, the Inflation Reduction Act did nothing to reduce inflation, and by one estimate, the government price controls it created may well cost the American economy 676,000 jobs.

Before Democrats rammed the IRA through on party lines, the average net prices for drugs were actually stable or falling, but that didn't stop the Biden administration from storming ahead with a drug-by-drug Federal power grab.

So let's be clear about what this means. Companies that don't comply with the administration's scheme will be forced to pay an unprecedented and excessive fine or withdraw their products from Medicare coverage, leaving American seniors with fewer options for lifesaving treatments. Meanwhile, researchers will have less certainty to dedicate years to creating the high-quality, consumer-friendly, affordable medications American industry is known for.

Research from the University of Chicago estimates that prescription drug socialism will result in 135 fewer new drugs—135 fewer new drugs, 188 fewer new treatments, and a \$663 billion drop in innovative research and development. It will impact 60 percent of cancer medications on the market today and inevitably freeze innovations on future treatments.

To make matters worse, limits on price increases will force manufacturers to launch new drugs at much higher prices to cover future rising costs and leave many low-income and elderly Americans simply out of luck.

Price fixing is not some bright new idea cooked up on a liberal college campus. It is the sort of decrepit socialism that has been tried with disastrous results in places like China, Cuba, Venezuela, and the former Soviet Union.

We cannot afford for America's world-leading medical innovators to be next on the leftwing chopping block,

and the millions of Americans living with rare and aggressive diseases can afford it least of all.

UKRAINE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, the loudest critics of American assistance to Ukraine tend to rest their case on three dubious claims: first, that somehow our support for Ukraine is a distraction—a distraction—from China, when, in fact, there are many reasons to believe exactly the opposite; second, that there is no accountability of lethal U.S. assistance when, in fact—in fact—we have unprecedented visibility into how the weapons and vehicles we are providing Ukraine are being utilized; and third, that somehow this whole thing is a zero-sum proposition, that support for Ukraine or European security comes at the expense of American prosperity and security, that we are spending too much.

I will discuss each of these faulty arguments in detail in the coming days, but today I would like to discuss this last one, in particular. Set aside the fact, recognized by the previous administration's National Security Strategy, that "a strong and vital Europe is of vital importance to the United States."

Standing with our allies against Putin is directly and measurably strengthening the U.S. military, growing the U.S. industrial base, and supporting thousands of good-paying American jobs. The overwhelming majority of the money that we have appropriated is being spent here in America, right here in this country. This is especially true for the security assistance we have appropriated for Ukraine. This assistance falls into two basic buckets.

The first, smaller portion is for the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative—USAI for short. USAI predates the Biden administration. It was used by the previous administration to enhance Ukraine's military capabilities.

The second, larger portion isn't even for Ukraine. It is referred to as "backfill" or "replenishment" money, and it is used to purchase new versions of weapons and vehicles to replace the old—sometimes very old—versions the United States has taken from stockpiles and warehouses and transferred to Ukraine.

Now, the Biden administration often announces tranches of assistance as though it is new, direct aid to Ukraine. In fact, it is previously authorized or appropriated assistance that is only too slowly actually being disbursed. But, in both cases, the money we are talking about doesn't go to Ukraine; it goes to defense manufacturing facilities all across America and supports tens of thousands of American jobs—expanding our defense industrial capacity to better compete with China, replenishing America's arsenal with weapons built by American workers.

But don't take my word for it. Just look at where some of these resources are going. Nearly \$1.4 billion is buying the U.S. military new Javelin anti-tank missiles. These weapons are manufactured at facilities in Troy, AL; Ocala, FL; Farmington, NM; and Tucson, AZ, that employ hundreds of thousands of Americans.

Another \$3 billion is producing new precision rockets and Patriot missiles for our military. That work is underway at a plant in Camden, AR, that employs nearly 1,000 workers. Dozens of suppliers across the country are doing work to support these high-end weapons.

Hundreds of millions of dollars in new air-to-air weapons systems bound for the U.S. military are rolling off production lines across the country—from a Massachusetts facility that employs 400 people to one in Arizona that employs 14,000. And this work is made possible by suppliers all across America, including in Iowa, Missouri, Texas, Florida, Alabama, Utah, and my home State of Kentucky—tens of billions of dollars directly invested in American military strength, directly supporting thousands of American jobs, and expanding our defense industry's capability to produce the weapons needed to deter adversaries like Russia and China.

Our support to Ukraine is grinding down one of America's biggest strategic adversaries and showing the other one the strength of our resolve; and it is providing Western forces, from NATO to Taiwan, with valuable operational lessons to apply to their own defense.

The value of that to American interests can hardly be measured simply in dollars or jobs; but critics of this investment cannot ignore its returns: American industry and workers are stronger for it; our warfighters are stronger for it; and our Nation is stronger for it.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Adriana Debora Kugler, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for the unexpired term of fourteen years from February 1, 2012.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

MEDICARE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, my timing couldn't have been better than to