

managers, and payers. Prices are often disconnected from the health impacts of the products being purchased. Opponents of addressing the high prescription drug prices claim that more affordable prices will come at the expense of innovation.

I must tell you, I disagree with that, and research also tells us that is just not true. To ensure access to innovative treatments and prescriptions, the U.S. Government, thanks to the U.S. taxpayer, makes significant investments in biomedical research. No greater example of this investment is the National Institutes of Health, located in my home State of Maryland, which is the world's largest government funder of biomedical research. Almost all drugs rely on NIH-supported basic science in their development, and the returns on these investments are very high. We have doubled down on this in the CHIPS and Science bill, putting more money into basic biomedical research.

Researchers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have found that each \$125 million NIH grant leads to \$375 million—that is a 3-to-1 ratio—more in private market value, 33 more patents, and 1 new drug.

Another study estimated that the rate of return on NIH investments is 43 percent and that each dollar of NIH funding leads to an additional \$8.40 in private research and development spending. These are great public investments, and it is leading to innovation. It is leading to development of new drugs.

Further, the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Programs also support innovation. Known as the SBIR/STTR Programs, they currently are the largest U.S. Federal Government programs supporting small businesses to conduct research and development. This is just another example of government-supported research that is inspiring new innovation and discovery.

SBIR began in 1982 and currently requires that each Federal Agency spending more than \$100 million annually on external research set aside 3.2 percent of these funds for awards to small businesses. SBIR is very selective, with only about 22 percent of the applicants receiving funding. For many small businesses, the SBIR “serves as the first place many entrepreneurs involved in technological innovation go to for funding.”

Through the SBIR/STTR Programs, NIH supports drug innovation by setting aside more than 3.2 percent of its overall intramural research and development budget, specifically to support early-stage small businesses throughout our Nation. Many companies leverage this NIH funding to attract the partners and investors needed to take innovation to the market.

I have the honor of chairing the Small Business Committee here in the U.S. Senate, and I can tell you the

small businesses are the innovators of America. They are the ones coming up with new discoveries.

Thanks to this government program and thanks to these government-supported partnerships, our small companies are leading in biomedical developments. And, I must tell you, thanks to small businesses, they are also growth engines for jobs in America.

For example, Amgen, which was founded in 1980, received an SBIR investment in 1986 as a small company. Today, it is a multinational biopharmaceutical company with over 20,000 employees. That is creating jobs—good jobs—here for Americans.

Despite these significant taxpayer investments, prescription drugs are often priced at levels that limit access to lifesaving drugs, particularly among those who are underinsured or uninsured. Even after accounting for the costs and risks of R&D, evidence shows that the returns on new products exceed the normal rates of return.

For years, Congress has been working on commonsense solutions to increase access to affordable prescription medications, reducing costs for patients and taxpayers. Finally, last year, under President Biden's leadership, Congress passed the Inflation Reduction Act. This historic law removed a decades-old restriction on Medicare negotiating directly for the price of prescription drugs, finally empowering Medicare to get older Americans the best prices for their prescription drugs.

In the private sector, no plan sponsor or manager would ever accept responsibility without the ability to decide how to negotiate. No private sector company would parcel themselves out in order to negotiate. They would use their full size as their market force. That is exactly what we did in the Inflation Reduction Act to allow Medicare to negotiate using its full market force to bring down the costs of prescription medicines for those under the Medicare system.

It should have been done originally. We got it done in the Inflation Reduction Act. Medicare negotiations will ensure that patients with Medicare get the best possible price on high-priced drugs.

Three weeks ago, the Biden-Harris administration announced the first 10 drugs that will be part of the first round of negotiation. This historic occasion is the culmination of decades of efforts by Democrats to make prescription drugs more affordable and accessible to Medicare beneficiaries. The 10 drugs chosen for negotiation are taken by 10 million older Americans, representing about \$50 billion in annual spending. They are used to treat conditions including blood clots, diabetes, cancer, heart failure, and rheumatoid arthritis.

Another policy included in the Inflation Reduction Act is to increase prescription drug affordability by capping Medicare patients' out-of-pocket costs at \$3,000 in just a couple months and

then lowering to \$2,000 beginning in 2025. This policy will save Medicare beneficiaries from paying tens of thousands of dollars to purchase lifesaving drugs prescribed by their doctors.

And there is more good news. As of this year, vaccines are free in Medicare, insulin is capped at \$35 a month, and drug companies are penalized if they raise prices faster than inflation.

All of these policies will make U.S. prescription drugs more affordable for individuals and families who desperately need them. Democrats worked together to pass the Inflation Reduction Act and to make these policies a reality.

Today, I celebrate the progress we have made, and I urge all of my Senate colleagues to join in our efforts to continue making progress and leading the world in developing new drugs to improve health outcomes and to make these drugs affordable to our constituents and lower the costs to the taxpayers of this country.

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. MORAN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SANDERS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Kansas.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, on Sunday, our Border Patrol reported more than 7,500 migrants illegally crossing the U.S.-Mexico border—7,500 migrants crossed the border on Sunday. Then on Monday, there were more than 8,000 arrests along the southern border as a new surge of migrants tried crossing on that day.

These numbers still haven't provoked any significant, meaningful response from the Biden administration, even though they are just shy of that single-day record for the year that was recorded in May after the end of title 42.

Every day, I think that there is going to be a response, a reply, a significant effort. It isn't necessarily a partisan issue. Democratic Mayor Eric Adams stated last week that New York City is being destroyed, and it will cost \$12 billion after an influx of 110,000 migrants from the southern border have landed in the city. And while 110,000 migrants clearly are a massive number for any city to absorb, it is only a tiny fraction—a very tiny fraction—of the 2.76—2.76 million migrants who crossed the border in fiscal year 2022.

The unending catastrophic situation on the border has continued for so long that it seems like the Biden administration has grown numb to what, in any circumstance, would be considered a crisis—a crisis for the people who are crossing, a crisis for the people in the United States, a crisis for the people in New York City.

Gone are the days when the migrants showing up at our borders were from our neighboring country to the south. Now migrants are flooding in on trains from El Salvador, Haiti, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and most significant to me, China.

We have a gaping hole in our national security that stretches from California to Texas and, I assume, our other borders as well, and our adversaries are already using that circumstance to their advantage.

I visited the border with a bipartisan group of Senators earlier this year and witnessed Chinese nationals being apprehended—apprehended—by our border agents.

This week, it was reported that approximately 18,000 Chinese nationals had been encountered at the southern border. This is compared to 2,000 in 2022 and only 450—still a big number—in 2021. It was also reported that some of these individuals potentially had ties to the Chinese Communist Party and that not one of them was detained for any length of time.

This failure to respond to the arrival of the Chinese succeeded the FBI report that I had read, with great concern, about migrants with ties to ISIS who had been permitted to enter the country. The Customs and Border Patrol, which is overworked and understaffed, released an individual on the terrorist watch list into the country. The American people deserve answers from Secretary Mayorkas and from the Biden administration.

I have been on this floor previously, numerous times, like many of my colleagues, to make the case that the crisis at the southern border is causing an influx of illegal, deadly drugs—like fentanyl from China—to enter the United States and is leading to the overdose deaths of thousands of Americans. I made the case that this is a humanitarian crisis as mothers and children attempt to make the long, dangerous trek across Mexico. Along the way, they face hunger, heat waves, human trafficking, and drug cartels. Caravans with thousands of migrants continue to march on our southern border. Border agents have been pulled away to deal with the record number of migrants and are left without the manpower to try and stop drug and human traffickers, spies, and potential terrorists.

For a long time, we have worried about people just coming across our border who are violating our sovereignty and taking our jobs; but it is even more significant and more critical that we respond now as our law enforcement deals with drug cartels, human trafficking, and now our national security—harmed significantly by those who enter our country illegally to do us harm.

President Biden must act to ensure the stricter enforcement of our immigration laws, reinstate the construction of a wall or fencing in areas that are largely unprotected, and the ad-

ministration must send a message, loud and clear, that our border is closed to unlawful entrants.

It is way past time—way past time—we finished the wall and gave our law enforcement agents the tools they need to better protect our border. Instead, this administration is sitting on resources and paying storage fees for the unused border wall panels. With the President's lack of action, it is just an amazing circumstance we find ourselves in. Our national security is at stake, and we have failed to respond.

I would say that we can do more than one thing at one time. I also believe that the Senate should act to deliver lasting solutions to keep our border secure, to keep our communities safe, and to ensure the humane treatment of migrants. We could start by taking a vote on the Secure the Border Act. Securing our southern border shouldn't be—and I hope isn't—a Republican or a Democratic issue. It is not a Texas or a New Mexico or an Arizona issue. It is a national security issue.

Speaking of national security, I would be remiss if I didn't raise the importance of passing a supplemental appropriation that includes not only support for our efforts to contain the influx of people on our southern border and on our borders generally but that also includes money to support the efforts by the Ukrainian people to have a free country. While Ukrainian forces have not made a decisive breakthrough in their counteroffensive, they are making incremental progress that deserves our ongoing support.

The commitments made by our European allies now surpass America's, and the assistance that the United States has sent to Ukraine has been accounted for by multiple inspectors general. A failure on our part to remain committed would shake the confidence in the United States of allied capitals around the world. This, in turn, could lead to more aggression by more adversaries. Now is not the time to give up on Ukraine. Vladimir Putin is counting on our doing so. His only way to win—his only way to win—is to hang in long enough until the West—until the United States—and our allies grow tired or otherwise become distracted. America's resolve against Russia's aggression should be unwavering.

The world is watching and judging American dependability. If we are found unreliable, the world will become an even more dangerous place. If we fail, the world becomes a more dangerous place. This is certainly about Ukraine, but it is about the security and safety of the people of the United States. Looking the other way is not an option.

What is happening at our southern border and, in fact, what is happening well beyond our borders in Europe needs a serious response. The security of our country, the security of American citizens, the security of Kansans depends upon it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WELCH). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CONFIRMATION OF GENERAL ERIC M. SMITH

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I am on the floor for a couple of reasons but No. 1 and most important is to congratulate General Smith, Gen. Eric Smith, to be the new Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Now, the Presiding Officer may have seen the vote—a pretty impressive vote, 96 to 0. That does not happen a lot in the U.S. Senate. But every Senator on the floor just an hour ago gave Gen. Eric Smith a huge vote of confidence—and with good reason.

This is a Marine officer who has a stellar career—stellar career. He has commanded at every level in the Marine Corps; as an infantry officer, Weapons Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment. As a general officer, he commanded the U.S. Marine Corps Forces Southern Command, 1st Marine Corps Division, III MEF—Marine Expeditionary Force—and Marine Corps Combat Development Command. That is about as stellar a career as it gets.

Additionally, he is a serious combat veteran. As I have noted to my colleagues before, a lot of the flag officers in the military right now were the lieutenants and captains right after 9/11. This is a group of senior military leaders who have seen more combat than certainly almost any other generation since World War II. And General Smith was one of those: wounded in action in Iraq, did not want to go home; front-line commander in combat; served in Afghanistan.

Unfortunately, like a lot of commanders during these challenging wars, he had a number of marines and friends killed in action whom he was in command of. So he knows war. He knows the Marine Corps.

I look forward to working closely with General Smith on a whole host of issues related to the Marine Corps and now, as a member of the Joint Chiefs, related to the national defense of our country, including Marine Corps force design, including the Navy's requirement that is in law—in law, if you are watching, Secretary of the Navy Del Toro; it is in law—31 amphibys for the Marine Corps.

So these and many other issues I look forward to working with General Smith on. But again, 96 to 0.

Great job, General. Semper Fi.

Mr. President, I also think it is important to just talk a little bit about how we got here, and to be honest, we should have gotten here a lot earlier—weeks, if not months, earlier.

I am a pro-life and pro-military Senator, so I have been very involved in these negotiations between leadership