

want to thank FEMA. I want to thank the Corps of Engineers.

I don't want my people to worry. Your folks in government have pounced on this issue like a ninja, and I am not saying we have it solved, but we are doing everything we can to get us through this.

INDEPENDENT AND OBJECTIVE OVERSIGHT OF  
UKRAINIAN ASSISTANCE ACT

Second issue, I will try to be brief. Mr. President, as you know, we have spent over \$100 billion to help Ukraine defeat Vladimir Putin, whose thirst for blood we now know is legendary. He has the same—"he" meaning Vladimir Putin—has the same thirst for blood that Stalin did. We have spent over a hundred billion dollars helping Ukraine. Some people think we have spent too much. Some people think we need to spend more. Some people think we shouldn't have spent their money there at all. Some people think we ought to spend less.

This is America. You know, opinions are kind of like bellybuttons; everyone has one. Some are innies; some are outies. But everybody has one, and you are entitled to share it in America.

The Senate is going to be debating Ukraine soon, as you know, Mr. President. But regardless of how you feel about beating back Putin and whether you think that is in America's national security interest and whether you agree with me that Putin is a pirate—he is a gangster—wherever you stand on that, there is one thing we all ought to be able to agree on: This hundred billion dollars plus—it is actually around \$113 billion—and that is not just money for arms. That is also money for humanitarian aid and money to keep the government of Ukraine running. And that money, that \$113-plus billion didn't just fall from heaven. We thank heaven for it. But it came out of people's pockets. Those people are called the American taxpayers.

And one thing—regardless of what you think about Ukraine—I think we can all agree on is that we have to watch that money like a hawk. We cannot allow it to be stolen. We cannot allow it to be wasted.

Now, Mr. President, I know you have had this experience in life because I know you are a wise man. Nothing in this world makes it easier to resist temptation than a proper upbringing, a strong set of values, and witnesses. And we need more witnesses, and I am talking about an inspector general.

Senator SINEMA and I have a bill; it is called the Independent and Objective Oversight of Ukrainian Assistance Act. All this bill does, it says, Mr. President—not our Mr. President here in the Senate, President Biden—appoint an inspector general to watch this money like a hawk.

And that inspector general would have to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate. President picks; we confirm. And that inspector general would give periodic reports to the President, to the

Congress, and to the American people on a weekly basis, if they would like, about its audits of this money and who has been stealing, if anyone, and who has been calling.

Now, let me make two quick points. President Zelenskyy is also fighting corruption, and there has been some corruption in Ukraine. You would expect there to be, frankly, when you are spending \$100-plus billion. And President Zelenskyy—I am proud of him—he has fired the people that he has caught, and they are prosecuting others. So he is watching.

I also want to be fair. Right now, the inspector general from the Department of Defense and an Agency called USAID and the Department of State, they say they are auditing the money, and I am not saying they are not. I am not saying they are not. But have any of you heard from them? I haven't.

I know they had one meeting where they came up here at their convenience to talk to us, and a bunch of us couldn't go. We were in hearings or something. But they haven't been giving periodic reports to the American people. And I am not saying they are doing a bad job. I am not saying that. What I am saying is that we don't need a cluster of Agencies involved here turning into a cluster of another description. Just like we did in Afghanistan, we need one inspector general, one woman or man, that we can hold responsible, appointed by the President, confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

The inspector general at the Department of Defense and the inspector general of the State Department, the inspector general at USAID can work under the people's inspector general, under Senator SINEMA and I's bill. But we need one person—one person—to hold accountable, just like we did in Afghanistan. And the American people, regardless of how they feel about the funding in Ukraine, and the Members of the U.S. Senate, regardless of how they feel about the war in Ukraine—surely, we can agree that we will all rest easily—or at least easier if we follow the money.

Now, I tried to pass this bill once, Mr. President, and I want to be fair. Some of my Democratic colleagues opposed it, but some of my Republican colleagues opposed it, too. And some of them were quiet about how they opposed it, but I know who they are. I love them, but I know what they were up to. They were taking orders from the Department of Defense because the Department of Defense—bless their hearts—they don't want any of us intruding on their turf.

They say, We have got this. Well, let me tell you something. There is one Agency in the Federal Government that has never been audited. One Agency in the Federal Government that has never been audited. Guess which one? The Department of Defense. The Department of Defense.

Now, I am not saying that is the fault of the inspector general there

now, but he needs to start with his own Department and let Senator SINEMA and I pass this bill. We are trying to help him, not hurt him. We are trying to give him some help. So that is what our bill will do.

I am not giving up. "I will be back," as I said the other day, just like the Terminator, on another issue. This is something that all Senators can agree on, regardless of our position on Ukraine, that this money shouldn't be wasted.

I am going to say it again. Nothing makes it easier to resist temptation than a proper upbringing and a strong set of values and witnesses.

Senator SINEMA's bill and my bill will provide those witnesses, those auditors, those inspectors general that we need.

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. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, according to news reports, September was another recordbreaking month at the southern border. My State, of course, has 1,200 miles of common border with Mexico so we are bearing the brunt and have borne the brunt of this flow of humanity, this humanitarian crisis, which has created now a public safety crisis as a result of unrestrained illegal immigration.

News reports are that more than 260,000—more than a quarter of a million—more than a quarter of a million migrants crossed the border last month, making it the busiest month on record. I know sometimes it is hard to grasp the immensity of these numbers, but let me put it another way. It is an average of 8,600 migrants coming to the United States every day. Of course, when they come to Texas or Arizona or California, they don't stay there. That is why you are hearing from the Governor of Illinois, the Governor of New York, the mayor of New York City, talking about the impact on their States and their cities.

Of course, we all know that the fentanyl crisis, which is part and parcel of this open border, has taken the lives of 71,000 Americans last year alone. We know where the precursors come from. They come from China. We know where it is manufactured—in Mexico—and then it comes across the border. The business model of the cartels is flood the border with people, divert the attention of the Border Patrol who have to engage in pushing paper and processing these migrants. Meanwhile, the unprotected border allows for the surge of drugs across the border, and they end up in all 50 States and in every community.

So it is an average of 8,600 migrants per day, but we have seen surges up to 11,000 people a day, and it isn't going to get any better unless something changes. Former Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson once warned that even 1,000 migrants a day overwhelm the system. We are now operating at more than 8½ times that pace, on average.

When migration levels are so high, it impacts all of our missions at the border, even those that have nothing to do with migration. Law enforcement, as I said, shifted from the frontlines. Instead of stopping dangerous drugs, many agents find themselves pushing paper and changing diapers because we have seen 300,000 unaccompanied children come across the border since President Biden took office.

Unfortunately, as the New York Times has documented, in at least 85,000 instances, when Health and Human Services—the Office of Refugee Relocation—made a wellness call to the sponsors for those children, there was no answer and no followup by the administration. So the administration can't tell you whether they are being trafficked for sex or whether they are being forced to work in dangerous jobs, whether they are getting healthcare, whether they are going to school. They just can't tell you, and they, frankly, don't care. They say: It is not our job anymore once we place them with sponsors.

This is up to the Child Protective Services in each of our States. As the Presiding Officer knows, all of our States are seeing tremendous caseloads in their Child Protective Services, and they can't handle what they have now much less the thousands more coming each day.

Under President Biden's leadership, the crisis at the border just gets worse. As I said, we have hit a record of 260,000 a month. The United States has pretty much broken every record on the books at the border and broken those records again. The busiest days, years, months at border crossings have all happened under President Biden's watch. With each day that passes, the border crisis is affecting the safety and security of our country, and the White House refuses to accept any responsibility or to change anything about the way they operate or to reach out or to even receive suggestions or have a willingness to meet to try to solve the problem. They just show no interest.

The President and his administration act like their hands are tied and they can't do anything, but that is simply false. In the 1990s, President Clinton signed a law establishing what is called expedited removal. It allows the Border Patrol to detain and quickly remove illegal immigrants. Expedited removals have been utilized by Republican and Democratic administrations over the years. It is a powerful deterrent, and what we lack now is any sense of deterrence.

I learned with interest today that the mayor of New York is making a trip to

Central and South America to give the message: Don't come. Don't come to the United States. Don't come to New York City.

Of course, that voice is lost among the images on TV that demonstrate that people who do come can successfully make their way to the border and into the country. Of course, then there are people who successfully make it and call their relatives back home and say: I made it. You can, too. Come.

So there is no deterrence, but there would be if we used the law that President Clinton signed which allows for expedited removal, because not all of the people coming to the border are claiming asylum, but they are being paroled in the nomenclature of our immigration laws. They are being released into the interior of the United States without even claiming any legitimate basis for being here.

President Biden has the authority to conduct expedited removals today. He had that authority from day one, but he refuses to utilize it. Rather than stand up new facilities or hire more personnel to make the expedited removal process function, the Biden administration has simply been releasing people into the interior of the country at an unprecedented pace.

CBS News reports that the Department of Homeland Security has released most migrants into the interior in recent months, instructing them to undergo immigration court proceedings which are years away. One of the New York newspapers recently reported that in order to get a hearing in an immigration court in New York, it could take up to 10 years.

The administration has engaged in catch-and-release on an unprecedented scale, and communities across our country are paying the price. Their children are being stolen by fentanyl. Their streets and sidewalks are filled with migrants who have nowhere to go. Their city budgets are being wrecked by a crisis that should be managed by the Federal Government.

I have often asked myself, what is it going to take for President Biden to care and do something about this crisis? He seems unfazed by the more than 6 million border crossings that have happened since he became President, not to mention the 1.5 million "got-aways."

He seems unconcerned that this crisis serves as a perfect diversion for the drug cartels that are trafficking fentanyl and other deadly drugs into the United States. He seems unbothered by the fact that the administration has lost track of hundreds of thousands of migrant children, including countless kids who we know are being exploited for child labor.

Thanks to President Biden's neglect, the border needs far more resources than ever. We need more agents; we need more detention space; more physical barriers; more immigration judge teams; and more flexibility to remove individuals who have no legitimate claim to remain in the United States.

I will give you an example of where one small tweak in our asylum practices could change a lot. It could send a message that you can't come unless you have a legitimate claim. It involves something like what is known as safe third country transit.

For example, about a year and a half ago, Del Rio, TX—a small town of 35,000 people—had 15,000 Haitians show up. You can imagine the chaos and the burden just of trying to take care of the basic human needs of that many people at one time. Well, it turns out these Haitians did not come from Haiti, at least not directly. They had been living in South America. But because they knew that they could show up at the border, say the magic words, and then be released into the interior of the country, only to be told to show up for an immigration court hearing years in the future, they knew they could beat the system. They knew how to exploit the system.

Well, neither little cities like Del Rio nor, apparently, big cities like New York City have the infrastructure or the ability to manage this many migrants in a fair, orderly, or humane way. But given the administration's complete lack of interest in solving the problem, the only thing I know to do is for Congress to act. We need Democrats and Republicans to try to work this out.

I have worked on immigration issues the whole time I have been in the Senate, and, believe me, it is one of the most frustrating topics to work on that I can imagine. But I don't think we have any choice but to keep trying. This should be a point of agreement among our colleagues on both sides of the aisle. After all, the impact of this crisis is now being felt far beyond the southern border.

The majority leader's home State of New York is overwhelmed, they say, by the burden of the migrant crisis even though Texas and Arizona, for example, have had millions of people come across our borders. Now Mayor Adams of New York City is crying uncle when 10,000 people show up in New York City. The Governor of New York and the mayor of New York City have sounded the alarm over the devastating impact of this crisis.

The majority whip's home of Illinois is feeling the burden too. Governor Pritzker recently made similar comments to the Governor of New York and to the mayor of New York City. The situation has become so untenable that hundreds of migrants have begun sleeping on the floors of police stations and the O'Hare International Airport in Chicago.

Cities more than 1,000 miles away from the southern border are overwhelmed by the unbearable weight of President Biden's border crisis. Thanks to his failed policies, every State has now become a border State. No community is immune to the consequences of the security failures at the southern border, including communities where I

have met with the parents of young people who lost their lives by consuming fentanyl, by taking a pill that they thought was innocuous but that had just enough fentanyl to take their lives.

We know where it is coming from, and it is a result of the failure to control the borders. There is nothing safe, orderly, or humane about the status quo; and our colleagues across the aisle need to work with us to fix it. This is now a nationwide disaster that affects every State and every community in America, and I hope we can rely on the courage and the leadership of the Members of the U.S. Congress to take action.

Border security is national security. It is not just a problem in my State or in Arizona or in New Mexico or in California. We need to be clear-eyed about the vulnerabilities at the border and what the ramifications of an open border are, and then we need to take decisive action to address them.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

#### NOMINATION OF SUSAN KIM DECLERCQ

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, I rise today to strongly support the nomination of Susan DeClercq, whom President Biden nominated to serve as the U.S. District judge for the Eastern District of Michigan; and we will be having that vote shortly.

One of the things that people consistently say about Ms. DeClercq is how warm and personable she is. She is, in a word, kind, but don't let that fool you. She can go toe-to-toe with anyone in the courtroom. Ms. DeClercq is a proud graduate of the University of Michigan and Wayne State University School of Law.

Her first job out of law school was serving as a clerk to U.S. District Judge Avern L. Cohn. Judge Cohn was a force of nature who spent 40 years on the Federal bench, retiring at age 95. He was a bit gruff, but he had an open mind and an open heart—two attributes Ms. DeClercq has carried throughout her career that spans the public and the private sectors.

Currently, she is director and counsel for special investigations at Ford Motor Company. Before that, she spent 18 years in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Michigan in a variety of leadership roles, including as Chief of the Civil Division.

She has fought to protect people's civil rights over and over and over again—an example: a Michigan family that was literally kicked out of a restaurant because their children suffered from a genetic skin disease. She successfully represented an auxiliary firefighter, a U.S. Army reservist who was denied a promotion, which was extended to coworkers with less experience, after he returned from Active Duty in Afghanistan.

In all of her cases, she has won the respect of everyone in the courtroom. As one Michigan lawyer said: If I had

to lose to anybody in litigation, I am glad it was Ms. DeClercq.

It is worth noting that, if confirmed, Susan DeClercq will be Michigan's first Federal judge of East Asian descent. Susan DeClercq is an outstanding nominee who received bipartisan support during her cloture vote earlier today.

I urge my colleagues to support her confirmation.

I yield the floor, and I would ask unanimous consent that the scheduled vote begin immediately.

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

#### VOTE ON DECLERCQ NOMINATION

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the DeClercq nomination?

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY), and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY) would have voted "nay."

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 42, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 253 Ex.]

##### YEAS—52

Baldwin	Heinrich	Rosen
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Sanders
Blumenthal	Hirono	Schatz
Booker	Kaine	Schumer
Brown	Kelly	Shaheen
Butler	King	Sinema
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Smith
Cardin	Lujan	Stabenow
Carper	Manchin	Tester
Casey	Markey	Van Hollen
Collins	Merkley	Warner
Coons	Murkowski	Warnock
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Warren
Duckworth	Murray	Welch
Durbin	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Fetterman	Padilla	Wyden
Gillibrand	Peters	
Hassan	Reed	

##### NAYS—42

Barrasso	Ernst	Mullin
Blackburn	Fischer	Paul
Boozman	Grassley	Ricketts
Braun	Hagerty	Rounds
Britt	Hoeven	Rubio
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Cramer	Lummis	Tuberville
Crapo	Marshall	Vance
Cruz	McConnell	Wicker
Daines	Moran	Young

##### NOT VOTING—6

Graham	Menendez	Romney
Hawley	Risch	Scott (SC)

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The Senator from Rhode Island.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am back for now the 290th time to urge this Chamber to act on climate change. I have my trusty graphic here, which after nearly 300 of these is getting a little battered.

This evening, I would like to talk about two things: First is the grim parade of climate-driven disasters the United States and the world has experienced over the last several months. Then, our hearings in the Budget Committee on the enormous budgetary and economic dangers caused by fossil fuel emissions.

Let's start with the unprecedented warming the world is experiencing. This June was the hottest June on record. Then July became the hottest month on record. Then August became the hottest August and the second hottest month on record, and September was just declared the hottest September on record and by the largest margin.

Here is what that looks like when you compare it to previous years. We have popped out of the zone of previous experience.

So 2023 will almost certainly become the hottest year on record, with the first significant chance that global average temperature will hit 1.5 degrees Celsius warmer than the preindustrial average. Exceeding that 1.5 degree-Celsius point will expose us to dangerous tipping points, things like ice sheet collapses that could cause dozens of feet of sea level rise.

More than 6,500 daily heat records were broken in cities and towns across the United States this summer. Phoenix experienced a record 55 days this year with temperatures above 110 degrees, with a 31-day streak. People who fell on Phoenix pavement required medical attention for burns. The Midwest experienced its worst drought in over a decade, with huge swaths of the Midwest, Southwest, and the South still under the most severe drought designation.

Extreme drought in Hawaii set the conditions for its lethal wildfire. In Vermont, New York, and Pennsylvania, storms triggered deadly floods. Florida's gulf coast was hit by Hurricane Idalia, which intensified rapidly over warmed-up waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Wind speeds increased almost 55 miles per hour in just a 14-hour window.

Around the world, Europe baked; China hit record high temperatures; Italy suffered its worst flooding in a century; and more than 21,000 Libyans are dead or missing after massive flooding. Recordbreaking fires ravaged Greece and Canada.

Canada's fires burned an area roughly the size of Oklahoma.