

and help wealthy tax cheats avoid paying their fair share.

The House GOP bill is woefully inadequate and has the hard right's fingerprints all over it. It makes aid for Israel, which has just faced the worst terrorist attack in its history, contingent on poison pills that reward rich tax cheats. In short, it makes it much, much harder to pass aid for Israel.

It is insulting that the hard right is openly trying to exploit the crisis in Israel to try and reward the ultrarich. The new Speaker knows perfectly well that if you want to help Israel, you can't propose legislation that is full of poison pills. And this kind of unnecessary partisan legislation sends the wrong message to our allies and adversaries around the world.

It is almost as if the real goal of this House GOP package is not to help Israel but to get tax relief for the superwealthy, while leaving out Ukraine aid, leaving out humanitarian aid for Gaza, leaving out funding for the Indo-Pacific.

Instead of advancing a serious proposal to defend Israel, defend Ukraine, and provide humanitarian aid, this House GOP proposal is clearly designed to divide Congress on a partisan basis, not unite it. The Speaker's allies have said as much to the press. I hope the new Speaker realizes that this is a grave mistake and quickly changes course. To protect Americans against any one of these foreign threats, we must protect against them all, because you can be sure that President Xi will watch what America does in Ukraine, just as much as they watch what we do in Israel, in the Indo Pacific, and everywhere else. And the last thing Republicans in Congress should be doing is exploiting the crisis in Israel to sneak in a highly partisan provision that caters to the ultrarich, as the GOP package blatantly does.

As I mentioned when I spoke to Speaker JOHNSON the night of his election, the only way we will get anything done is in a bipartisan way. Unfortunately, in his first major decision as Speaker, Speaker JOHNSON has ignored that advice.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now on AI, yesterday, President Biden announced the first ever artificial intelligence Executive order that will keep America in the lead on AI. Later this morning, the Senate's bipartisan AI gang—Senators ROUNDS, HEINRICH, YOUNG, and I—will go to the White House to meet with President Biden to discuss how we can work together to pursue bipartisan AI legislation.

I applaud President Biden for doing the right thing by issuing yesterday's Executive order. It outlines a number of commonsense guardrails that will increase American leadership on safeguards and better protect Americans against all sorts of risk, from cyber security to bio and nuclear threats.

President Biden's AI Executive order was welcome news, but everyone knows we can and must do more here in Congress. The President's action yesterday importunes us to act, to augment and expand his Executive order with bipartisan legislation. Congress must act with a sense of urgency when it comes to AI because AI is already changing our world in dramatic ways, and other countries are trying to gain ground on us.

Tomorrow, the Senate will continue our bipartisan work on AI with our third and fourth AI Insight Forums.

In the morning, the AI Insight Forum will begin at 10 a.m. tomorrow and focus on our workforce, both the risks and opportunities that AI presents to American workers and our economy. We will hear from leaders in labor, tech, civil rights, and business on how Congress can best protect workers from the changes that IA will bring.

The afternoon AI Insight Forum will bring another diverse group to debate how Congress can prepare for AI in high-impact areas, including financial decisions, healthcare, law enforcement, among other highly consequential use cases. We will be careful to pay attention to potential bias when AI is used.

For the information of Senators, tomorrow's AI Insight Forums will take place in the Kennedy Caucus Room. Each will last approximately 2 hours. I encourage everyone on both sides to attend, and I thank Senators ROUNDS, HEINRICH, and YOUNG for their help making these bipartisan AI Insight Forums possible.

NOMINATION OF JACOB J. LEW

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now on Jack Lew, it is going to be a busy day here in the Senate. Before the end of the day, the U.S. Senate will confirm Jack Lew as the next Ambassador to Israel. For the information of Senators, we will have a cloture vote on Mr. Lew's nomination this morning, with a final vote on confirmation in the early afternoon. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of sending an American Ambassador to Israel today.

With everything happening in Israel right now, confirming Jack Lew at this moment will be one of the most important and consequential nomination votes the Senate has taken in a long time. The need to confirm Mr. Lew is plain and irrefutable. Israel in crisis. America needs to stand with her, and a most urgent and obvious step would be ensuring we have an ambassador in place.

As the Senate takes this important vote later today, I want to applaud the remarkable team at the U.S. Embassy in Israel, all of whom have done exceptional work under the most difficult circumstances. When I went to Israel with my Senate colleagues, I got to see the Embassy's incredible work up close, especially the outstanding Charge d'Affaires. So I thank them all

for their dedication in these hard times. But it was clear when we went there that Israel needs an ambassador from the United States, especially at this time. So I hope we will get as large a vote for Mr. Lew as possible.

I want to thank my colleagues on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee who approved Mr. Lew on a 12-to-9 basis. Mr. Lew has a strong, long proven record as a public servant and a ferocious ally of Israel, and it will help send a powerful message of support to Israel to have this appointment filled ASAP.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, finally, on the minibus, on the legislative front, the Senate will move forward this week on bipartisan appropriations legislation. I would note that we are the only bipartisan appropriations legislation in town. The House has passed a series of very, very partisan bills filled with poison pills, cutting deeply, way below the agreement that was made in the last resolution when we dealt with avoiding default.

Last week, we began holding votes on a large number of amendments here in the Senate, offered on both sides of the aisle. In fact, when all is said and done, we will have considered 40 amendments—40—here on the floor. If both sides cooperate, it is my hope we can pass these three appropriations bills by tomorrow. When that happens, these three bills will be the only appropriations bills that have passed through either Chamber with bipartisan support, which is the only way we are going to get any funding passed in divided government.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

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 ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

ISRAEL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the brutal terrorist attacks of October 7 poured gasoline on the flames of anti-Semitic hatred around the world. Take the alarming reports this weekend out of Russia, a country with a long, troubled history of anti-Semitism. After weeks of pro-Hamas propaganda spewed from the Kremlin, an angry mob overran a provincial airport and surrounded a plane that had just arrived

from Israel. Chillingly, the mob went person to person, checking passports and asking if they were Muslim or Jew—a modern-day pogrom in Southern Russia.

Vladimir Putin is usually quick to accuse other countries of imagined atrocities, but he has issued no such condemnation of Hamas for the very real savagery inflicted on innocent Israelis. In fact, as this latest despicable episode of anti-Semitism unfolded on Russian soil, Putin's regime welcomed a delegation of Hamas terrorists to the Kremlin.

The Russian Government's policy is to demand that Israel agree to a cease-fire—a de facto amnesty for the terrorist aggressors who slaughtered children in their homes a few weeks ago. In that regard, street protestors across the West have found common cause with a Russian dictator.

No major power has done more to turbocharge Iran's terrorist network in the Middle East than Putin's Russia. The Kremlin's intervention in Syria allowed Tehran to establish a massive corridor of resources to terrorist proxies like Hezbollah and Hamas. So it should surprise no one that Iran has happily provided Russia with a kamikaze drone to fire at Ukrainian cities.

Russia, Iran, and China do not share an ideology, but they do share interests. They see themselves in conflict with the West and especially with America. Russia would love to see Iranian-backed terrorists in the Middle East weaken America and our allies. Iran would love to see a Russian victory against Ukraine that divides the West and deepens its own defense cooperation with Moscow. China, for its part, would love to see America's resolve to stand with European and Israeli allies and reestablish actual deterrence against Russia and Iran crumble.

So at the risk of repeating myself, the threats facing America and our allies are serious, and they are intertwined. If we ignore that fact, we do so at our own peril.

DEFENSE SPENDING

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the Biden administration's defense budget requests have systemically ignored these growing threats. The President's supplemental request to address multiple crises that have unfolded on his watch is a recognition of this failure. So our colleagues on the Appropriations Committee now have a chance to provide critical resources that our military and defense industrial base needs to keep pace with growing threats and support our partners.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, Congress also has an opportunity to force the administration to start treating our southern border like the sovereign, legal boundary that it is. The

southern border crisis is not a problem of insufficient resources. It is not the zero-sum alternative to deterring our adversaries overseas. It is the direct result of misguided policies that have incentivized record illegal migration.

It doesn't take tens of billions of dollars to fix this problem; it just takes common sense. I would urge our Democratic colleagues to show some common sense by working with Republicans to stop the border crisis, rebuild American military strength, and stand with our friends in Ukraine, Israel, and Asia.

ISRAEL

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, now on a related matter, I spoke recently about alarming reactions to the October 7 attacks coming from America's top universities. We have seen student radicals spew outright hate and campus leaders respond with agonizing, equivocating statements. But it appears that neither thick-headed, young activists nor mealy-mouthed administrators can hold a candle to university faculty when it comes to moral obtuseness. Here are a few examples:

After a student group at Columbia published a letter describing Hamas's savage attacks as—the listen to this—“struggle for freedom” of “occupied peoples [who] have the right to resist occupation,” over 100 faculty members signed a letter of their own expressing a desire to “preserve Columbia University as a beacon for fostering critical thinking and opening minds to different points of view.”

Needless to say, I am a staunch supporter of the First Amendment. People are entitled to different points of view, but they aren't entitled to different facts, and the only group that has occupied Gaza since 2007 is Hamas.

Besides, America's higher education system has a long way to go when it comes to protecting free speech and fostering diverse viewpoints. Just ask any right-of-center academic. But, of all places to start on their journey toward freedom of expression, they choose to celebrate terrorism—terrorism?

Meanwhile, the University of Pennsylvania is facing a donor revolt over campus protests and an anti-Semitic literary festival that predated October 7, but that didn't stop the local chapter of, essentially, its professors' union from issuing a six-page letter denouncing the university administration's pro-Israel views.

The school's painfully nuanced attempts at moral equivalency are, apparently, an “erasure” of Palestinian voices. Donors' outrage at radical calls for a pogrom are “coercive threats” that demand their removal from all university boards.

Let us remember who is doing the aggressing here. There is an open FBI investigation into online threats encouraging the murder—the murder—of Jewish students at Cornell. The university

has had to bring in police to help protect the kosher dining hall on campus, and many Jewish students are opting to stay in their rooms for safety.

Until recently, the tenured leftwing apparatchiks of America's elite universities might have expected donors to keep on writing checks no matter which sort of unhinged, post-modern hate they ginned up. Well, not anymore.

At Penn, one alumnus's call to boycott the school has spread like wildfire, precipitating a crisis that, by one account, could put a \$1 billion hole in the university's books. At least a dozen CEOs have pledged not to hire any members of the Harvard student groups who blamed Israel for the murders of its children. And elite law firms have started rescinding job offers from law students who regurgitate terrorist talking points. Some are even competing with each other to fund relief efforts in Israel.

So activist professors are entitled to their own opinions. But money is also protected speech, and they aren't entitled to donors' pocketbooks. That is not how the real world works.

America and our allies have woken up from a “holiday from history.” American business and philanthropists are starting to do the very same thing. Let's hope it continues.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

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 Matthew James Maddox, of Maryland, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland.

IRAN

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, Hamas's brutal attack on Israel on October 7 has thrust not just Hamas but Iran into the spotlight. Why? Because, while Hamas may have carried out this attack, Iran enabled it and is currently enabling terrorist organizations throughout the Middle East.