

But our investment is also expanding our production capacity. That means more factory floor space, new production lines, and new shifts of workers—all to help meet future threats. State by state, we are breathing new life into the arsenal of democracy.

And, crucially, America's allies and partners are following suit. They are investing historic sums in their own industries, their own militaries. They are expanding their own defense industrial bases, and many are also choosing to "Buy American."

Poland has invested \$3.75 billion in new Abrams tanks from Michigan, Alabama, and Ohio; Estonia has spent half a billion dollars on HIMARS rocket systems from Texas; and Slovakia and Romania have spent a combined \$350 million on new tactical vehicles from Wisconsin.

And it isn't just European allies who recognize the need to modernize. Japan has allocated \$1.3 billion for new E-2 command and control aircraft from Florida. Australia has put \$6.3 billion toward new C-130 aircraft from Georgia, and Indonesia has invested \$14 billion on a new crop of F-15 fighter jets from Missouri.

All told, America's allies and partners have invested \$120 billion and counting since February of 2022 to rebuild their defense capacities right here in America. They are buying American because they appreciate our cutting-edge technologies because they understand the importance of an interoperable combined force.

But, most of all, they are buying American because of American leadership. It has been the United States' example that has helped our allies wake up from years of neglecting their commitments to defense. It is confidence in our leadership and military edge that is driving their historic efforts to start sharing more of the burden of collective security.

And let's get something absolutely clear: This will not continue if America loses its resolve. We don't have the luxury of closing our gates and hoping for evil to leave us alone. America's allies are waking up to that fact. Now is not the time for the leader of the free world to go to sleep.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Now, Mr. President, on another matter, last week, the NLRB released a particularly unsavory new installment in the Biden administration's mess of overregulation. The NLRB's new rule dramatically expands the legal definition of an "employer-employee relationship," turning small business owners in a franchise setting into middle managers.

By one outside estimate, this rule will increase costs for small businesses, national franchisors, and consumers, all while decreasing the availability of jobs and business ownership possibilities. It would subject more of the American economy to the whims of the left's Big Labor allies, and it would force national companies to choose be-

tween offering less support for small business-owning franchisees and accepting greater liability for the policies of individual branches.

It is bad policy whichever way you slice it. Apparently, that is the self-described "most pro-union President in American history" in action.

Of course, the NLRB is just one example of how President Biden's radical nominees have led a campaign to drown the American economy in red-tape.

Since the day he took office, the President's war on affordable and reliable domestic energy has been driving up costs for working families. Last year, President Biden canceled three offshore oil and gas lease sales. This year, total U.S. oil production has fallen below the Department of Energy's predictions by 1.4 million barrels per day, and the administration's shortsightedness has left the Strategic Petroleum Reserve at its lowest level in 40 years.

Blanket bans on developing America's abundant energy reserves have already taken their toll on everything from grocery prices to home heating costs. But Washington bureaucrats continue to dream up new ways to micromanage families' choices on everything from home appliances to light bulbs. By one estimate, the Biden administration's energy regulations will drive up gas furnace costs by nearly \$500 and water heater costs by \$2,800. New efficiency standards could cost households an extra \$140 on lighting and another \$200 on washing machines.

And, while working families contend with this administration's maze of red-tape, the President is giving the architects behind it promotions.

Recently, President Biden designated Laura Daniel-Davis as Acting Deputy Secretary of the Interior. As several of my colleagues have noted, Ms. Daniel-Davis brings such an extreme record to the job that even the Democratic majority here in the Senate couldn't confirm her. For example, she has been a key player in the administration's efforts to curtail leasing on our Nation's abundant reserves of oil and natural gas.

Almost 3 years ago, President Biden handed the keys to his energy policy to the far left, and it shows. Working Americans are already struggling to contend with historic inflation and rising crime on the President's watch. The last thing they need is more of Washington Democrats' redtape.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arizona.

MILITARY NOMINATIONS

Mr. KELLY. Mr. President, we are in complex and dangerous times.

Ukraine is fighting off a Russian invasion. Israel is defending itself against Hamas. American soldiers have been attacked by Iran's proxies. China is watching closely and testing the United States and our allies. We need our military to be stronger and more focused than ever. However, because of

one Senator, our military is being severely hamstrung.

The Senator from Alabama, Mr. TUBERVILLE, has a policy disagreement with the Pentagon. However, instead of addressing this policy, he has decided to singlehandedly shut down what has historically been a bipartisan process to promptly confirm military nominees.

My Republican colleagues made this very clear last night. His decision isn't affecting just a handful of positions; he is currently blocking 367 admirals and generals, and that number continues to grow. That has left members of our Armed Forces stranded and unable to get the promotions they have earned. It has put their lives and the lives of their family members on hold.

Today, we will vote to confirm three of them: the Chief of Naval Operations, the Air Force Chief of Staff, and the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps. They are the top officers in the Navy and the Air Force and the No. 2 officer in the U.S. Marine Corps.

Now, that may seem like progress, and the Senator from Alabama may say that this is an example of how the Senate can confirm military nominees one by one, but here is the thing: The new leaders of the Air Force and the Navy won't have anyone confirmed as their No. 2s. So they will have to do two of the highest ranking jobs in their services at the same time—their new jobs and their old jobs. That is because of Senator TUBERVILLE. With hundreds of admirals and generals awaiting promotion because of his holds, it is impossible for the Senate to catch up by doing this one by one.

In the Marine Corps, the situation is even more serious. Over the weekend, we learned the terrible news that Gen. Eric Smith, confirmed just last month to lead the U.S. Marine Corps, suffered a medical emergency. General Smith was in the same position—forced to do two jobs at once. Today, we will confirm his deputy, who will have to immediately step up to be Acting Commandant of the Marine Corps for as long as General Smith is recovering.

It is an outrage that it takes an urgent vote of the U.S. Senate to fill a leadership gap at the top of the U.S. Marine Corps. That is the result of this blockade, and it is what we risk across our military leadership if, God forbid, another service chief has to step away from their job.

The Senator from Alabama doesn't think this does real damage to our military readiness. He either doesn't know what he is talking about or he doesn't care. At this very minute, the brave men and women of the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit are aboard the USS *Bataan*, the USS *Carter Hall*, and the USS *Mesa Verde* just south of Israel in the Red Sea. This is our quick reaction force, trained to evacuate civilians in conflict zones. Those marines are in a dangerous part of the world at a dangerous time, prepared to do a very dangerous job. They deserve fully

staffed and focused senior leadership, able to advise the President while also giving the best guidance to their commanders. For 4 days this week, within arm's reach of a war, they didn't have it because of one Senator.

The solution is clear, and it has been clear since day one: The Senator from Alabama must remove his hold on our admirals and generals. We wouldn't be in this position if it weren't for him. He can stop this today if he wants to. If he continues to refuse, it is just too dangerous to wait for him to do the right thing. There is a proposal for the Senate to make a temporary change that will allow us to vote on the bulk of these nominees at once. It is designed to put our national security ahead of all else by addressing the dangerous circumstance these holds have put our military in.

Now, I have talked with many of my colleagues—Republicans and Democrats—about this fact, and I encourage everyone to give it serious thought. At what George Will called “the most dangerous U.S. moment since World War II,” the Senate must consider whether it will allow the U.S. military to be without hundreds of confirmed admirals and generals and to be just one illness or accident away from once again having a service branch without senior leadership because, to me, that is a pretty clear choice.

I yield the floor.

NOMINATION OF ADM. LISA M. FRANCHETTI

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I rise today to express my strong support for the nomination of ADM Lisa Franchetti to serve as the Chief of Naval Operations.

As some of my colleagues know, I was 17 years old when I raised my right hand to take the oath to defend our country and Constitution, Navy ROTC midshipman at Ohio State at the height of the Vietnam war. We had no women in our Navy ROTC unit at Ohio State or at any other Big Ten college, no women in the ROTC units. In the service academies, no women served in those roles, training roles. How things have changed. How things have changed. We are here today to actually put a really strong marker on that change and to applaud it.

I spent, all in, 23 years in Active and Reserve duty, and I am the son of a Navy chief petty officer, the nephew of a Navy chief petty officer, and the nephew of a deceased 19-year-old Navy veteran who was killed in a kamikaze attack in World War II on a carrier in the Pacific. My grandmother is a Gold Star mother. In my family, we bleed Navy blue.

I can tell you firsthand, folks, that we have before us a terrific, terrific nominee to serve as Chief of Naval Operations. She spent practically her whole life in the Navy, serving our country around the world in places including Italy, South Korea, as well as a number of posts here closer to home.

Admiral Franchetti's career has spanned nearly every theater of en-

gagement, every level of service—commanding ships, squadrons, strike groups, and fleet levels. She has been a commander of U.S. Naval Forces Korea, deputy commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa, commander of Carrier Strike Group 9, Vice Chief of Naval Operations, and Acting Chief of Naval Operations, just to name a few. What a career. What a career. For her tremendous work, she has received almost two dozen prestigious awards and recognitions. She has even received some of the awards multiple times. What an impressive servant.

Admiral Franchetti has been making our country proud for not just a couple of years but for decades, from the day she signed up for the Navy ROTC Program at Northwestern University to this day.

The Senate stands poised to confirm her as Chief of Naval Operations, where, again, she will become the first woman to serve in that role and the first woman to serve on the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I know she will continue her outstanding work as she breaks barriers for the Navy and for women everywhere.

So, today, I am here to urge my colleagues to join me and others to confirm ADM Lisa Franchetti to serve as the U.S. Navy's Chief of Naval Operations.

I would just say to the admiral, to her husband Jim, and to their daughter Isabelle: We have two words in the Navy that we use when we want to applaud service, and they are “Bravo Zulu.” I can think of no woman more deserving of those two words.

As a human being—for my colleagues who had an opportunity to meet with her, you could just tell, you could see and feel why she has received the kinds of promotions and the kind of recognition and the kind of responsibility. She is one terrific human being as well. So I am honored to stand here on her behalf.

I would also say that we have about 300 other men and women—senior officers in the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps—who are ready to be promoted, deserve to be promoted, and are not being promoted because we are not confirming them. Today, we have a chance to do something about it, and we can start with Admiral Franchetti. 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. REED. 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.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for 5 minutes and that, following my remarks, Senator BLUMENTHAL be allowed to speak for 5 minutes.

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

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise to express my support for three military leaders whom we will soon be voting on: ADM Lisa Franchetti, Gen. David Allvin, and Lt. Gen. Christopher Mahoney. These are some of the finest leaders our Nation has to offer, and America is stronger because of their service and their sacrifice.

I am particularly proud to support the nomination of ADM Lisa Franchetti to be the next Chief of Naval Operations. Admiral Franchetti brings a wealth of experience and expertise to this position. She has served in leadership roles at every level throughout the Navy, both ashore and at sea, and with postings around the globe. She has served as commander of U.S. Naval Forces Korea; commander of Carrier Strike Group 9; commander of Carrier Strike Group 15; commander of U.S. Sixth Fleet; commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe and U.S. Naval Forces Africa; and director for strategy, plans, and policy on the Joint Staff, among many other operational roles. She has worked her way up the ranks in the U.S. Navy. She has commanded at sea. She has accepted and has excelled at every challenge that is presented to her. She is superbly prepared to be the Chief of Naval Operations.

As the current Vice Chief and now as the Acting Chief of Naval Operations, she brings an important perspective on the key challenges for the Navy. Her understanding of the Joint Force and the Navy's ever-expanding role within it will be critical.

I want to acknowledge the historic nature of Admiral Franchetti's nomination. If confirmed, she will be the first woman to serve as CNO and the first woman on the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I am glad we have reached this moment.

At every step of her career, Admiral Franchetti has been a trailblazer and a team builder who focuses on the mission, leads by example, and gets the job done. She is an inspiration to many and someone who will always put the security of our Nation and all who defend it first—first before herself, first before anything else. Those are the qualities that make an outstanding officer and an outstanding leader.

Indeed, the Navy faces a dangerous and evolving global security environment. Threats from Russia, Iran, North Korea, and violent extremist groups remain persistent, and the Navy has an important role to play in addressing them. But the clear, pacing challenge for our naval forces is China. In the Indo-Pacific and in seas and ports around the world, the U.S. Navy will continue to be the first line of deterrence and defense against China's expanding global ambitions.

I am confident that Admiral Franchetti has the skills and experience to meet this challenge and provide the Nation's sailors, their families, and Navy civilian employees with the leadership they deserve.