

keeping our elections secure—this time from the powerful changes wrought by artificial intelligence, AI.

This morning, I will join with colleagues from both sides and with experts from across the country for our AI Insight Forum on elections and democracy. It is one of the most important forums that we will hold this year, because of all the ways AI will shape our lives, and few are as immediate and stark as the impact it could have on elections.

This is the problem we now face: If left unchecked, AI has the potential to erode our democracy from within and from abroad.

Political ads have already been released this year using AI-generated images and text-to-voice converters to depict certain candidates in a negative light. Uncensored chatbots can already be deployed in a massive scale to target millions of individual voters for political persuasion. And, unfortunately, once damaging information is sent to 100 million homes, it is hard—and at times impossible—to put the genie back in the bottle.

If we don't enact the right guardrails soon, we could soon live in a world where political campaigns regularly deploy totally fabricated yet totally believable images and footage of Democratic or Republican candidates, distorting their statements and greatly harming their election chances.

Protecting our elections from AI's risks isn't just an issue for Democrats or just Republicans. Everyone—everyone—will be affected. Time is of the essence, as Americans prepare to go to the polls in 2024. So I encourage all my colleagues to come to this AI forum this morning.

#### GLOBAL ISSUES

Mr. President, now on global issues and challenges. The global community is facing a great number of challenges these days: Israel and Hamas are at war, with Iran itching to join the fray; Russian aggression in Ukraine challenges the stability of the Western alliance; the Chinese government threatens Taiwan's independence.

The United States is uniquely positioned and, I would argue, needed to play a role in ensuring the peaceful existence of the people of Israel, Gaza, Ukraine, and Taiwan. I believe that most Members of this body would agree with me. However, some Members on the other side of the aisle—not all—seem to prefer that the United States sit on the sidelines or, in other words, put their heads in the sand as we face these global battles.

Some Members on the other side of the aisle seem to prefer that Putin, Xi, and Hamas pursue their ambitions unthwarted.

I state right here and now that I do not agree with those Republican colleagues. I believe that the United States of America must make a stand against totalitarianism and terrorism. I would hope that everyone would agree with me. But here in the Senate,

it seems that some of my Republican colleagues are siding with Putin and placing unrealistic conditions on aid to Ukraine.

But we are not giving up. We are going to keep pushing, and we will succeed. Whether it is aid to Israel or aid to Ukraine or aid for Taiwan or humanitarian aid for the people of Gaza or keeping the government open or avoiding default, Republicans must shun doing the thing that some hard-right Republicans want them to do: take issues that, on their own, have strong bipartisan support and inject them with toxic provisions that make it impossible to get anything done. That is what happened last week with the House Israel bill. It is what is happening this week with a Senate GOP immigration proposal.

At a moment when the world is in crisis, when our friends abroad need our help, when our troops face increased attacks in Iraq and Syria, and with a government shutdown looming over us, this moment calls for bipartisanship. This moment calls for Republicans and Democrats to be realistic and clear-eyed about what we can pass through both Chambers on immigration, border, and all other issues.

Israel, Ukraine, civilians in Gaza, the Indo-Pacific, all of these things have bipartisan support in both Chambers. All of them deal with our national security. None of them should be turned into bargaining chips for hard-right policies. We must win on all of them.

Now, it has been over a month since Israel endured the deadliest terrorist attack in her entire history. There are still over 250 hostages held by Hamas, including American hostages and women and children. We promised to send Israel aid as soon as we could, and we will work hard—hopefully, in a bipartisan way—to get this done.

In the last 2 days, I have spoken with senior officials in the Israeli government—including President Isaac Herzog, Prime Minister Netanyahu, Defense Minister Gallant, Minister Gantz, and Opposition Leader Lapid—and reiterated that the United States has Israel's back in this dark hour. I made clear that 1 month after Hamas' attack, America's commitment to Israel and to the Israeli people is ironclad, and America will always be Israel's strongest ally. I assured them that I am doing everything to pass the President's assistance package ASAP.

In my conversations, I stressed to Israeli leaders that as Israel works to radically reduce the threat of Hamas, which they must do, they also have a responsibility to protect innocent Palestinian civilian life. We know this is not easy, but it must be done. We must likewise work together to send critical humanitarian aid to innocent civilians in Gaza who have nothing to do with Hamas.

I also strongly urged the Israeli government to quickly clamp down on settler violence against and displacement of Palestinian civilians in the West

Bank. Violence and displacement against these Palestinian civilians are not just wrong, it risks spreading the current crisis beyond Gaza at a time when Israel and America are working hard to deter other actors from taking advantage of the situation. In the long run, it also makes it much harder to achieve a two-state solution, which I support and which the vast majority of Americans support, and which Hamas does not.

We also talked about my meetings with the families of the hostages. I shared how I was moved by the stories of families of hostages held by Hamas whom I met in Israel and in the United States, and I discussed the need to locate and secure the release of all hostages held by Hamas through all means possible.

Finally, I encouraged Israeli leaders to do all they can to support the Senate's comprehensive package, including robust humanitarian assistance for Gaza, so that innocent civilians, who have nothing to do with Hamas, can get the food, water, and necessities they need.

At every point during my conversation with Israeli leaders, one idea remained constant: We will stand strong with Israel. We will support Israel's right to defend themselves, and we will work hard to pass emergency assistance for Israel and Ukraine and humanitarian assistance for Gaza and the Indo-Pacific as soon as we can.

#### JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, finally, on judges, last night, the Senate reached a major milestone. We confirmed our 100th woman and our 150th judge overall to the Federal bench since Democrats took the majority. It is not only double the amount confirmed by President Trump in all his 4 years, it is significantly more women than any full term of any President.

We are going to hold more votes today. We will begin by confirming Ramon Reyes, Jr., as district judge for the Eastern District of New York, who will become only the second Hispanic man to sit on the Eastern District. We will also advance highly qualified judges and nominees—other ones—in the afternoon.

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 Republican leader is recognized.

#### SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the challenges facing America and our allies today are not an a la carte menu of projects we can address at our leisure.

No. The most dangerous threats we face are all linked together—all linked together.

Take it from the author of the last administration's National Security Strategy. Russia, Iran, and China "see the U.S. as weak and in decline" and are willing "to put aside their differences to collude against American interests." They are extraordinarily willing.

Finland is investigating a case of suspected sabotage by a Chinese ship against an undersea communications cable and gas line connecting the newest member of NATO to Estonia—one of the alliance's most stalwart backers of Ukraine.

Putin's Russia is reportedly helping Iran develop a space launch vehicle—a critical step toward building intercontinental ballistic missiles. In return, Iran isn't just sending Russia kamikaze drones to kill Ukrainians; it is helping build an entire drone factory—a drone factory—on Russian soil.

A Russia state energy company is reportedly providing China with highly enriched uranium. China is swarming social media platforms with pro-Hamas propaganda and protecting both Iran and Russia in the U.N. Security Council.

America doesn't have the luxury of facing these threats individually. Our ability to contend with complex, simultaneous threats is exactly what our adversaries are testing: a Russian war in Europe, Chinese aggression in Asia, Iran-backed terror in the Middle East, and a southern border that is dangerously lacking in credible enforcement. This is the reality we face right now. The Biden administration's supplemental request falls short of adequately addressing all of these linked threats.

Let me explain again what this moment actually requires.

In Europe, the administration needs to provide a clear strategy for a Ukrainian victory. That means prioritizing the lethal military capabilities Ukraine needs right now—no more half measures, no more hesitation.

As former Secretary of State Pompeo put it last week, Americans should be "accelerating the flow of weapons and ammunition to Kyiv" because abandoning Ukraine would bolster our adversaries.

We should be empowering Agency inspectors general to continue the unprecedented oversight and accountability work we have built into U.S. assistance since the beginning of Putin's escalation last year. We should continue to invest in expanding America's defense industrial base both to replace capabilities Ukraine is using with newer for our own use and to ramp up production of the ones Israel, Taiwan, and our Indo-Pacific allies and partners need.

In Israel's case, it is especially important that we take stringent measures to ensure no humanitarian assist-

ance bound for the people of Gaza can be intercepted by Hamas terrorists.

I have said before, for any of this supplemental security funding to pass the Senate, we will also need to implement serious policy changes at the southern border. Senate Republicans will not rubberstamp the Biden administration's bailout for a problem it created. We are focused on policies to slow the flow—slow the flow—of illegal migration and secure the border.

America's strategic goals are crystal clear: degrade Russian military strength and prevent major war in Europe; reestablish credible deterrence against Iran and its terrorist networks; grow our defense industrial base to equip our military and our allies in the Indo-Pacific to raise the costs of Chinese aggression; and restore real border security right here at home. That is exactly what the Senate should be focused on.

#### ANTI-SEMITISM

Now, Mr. President, on another matter, since October 7, a nationwide reckoning with the ancient scourge of anti-Semitism has centered on America's most elite academic institutions, and the eye of the storm has been a cadre of the country's most radical leftist faculty.

Recently, the University of California's Ethnic Studies Faculty Council released a letter condemning Israel as a "globally acknowledged apartheid." The council called the UC system's official response, which correctly identified the butchery committed by Hamas and Palestinian Islamic jihad as terrorism, irresponsible, and it claimed for itself the mantle of moral—moral—authority.

Well, of course, tenured Marxists do not have to worry much about real-world consequences, but university administrators, recruiters, fundraisers, and students—well, they do.

So, in response to this faculty group's terrorist propaganda, one member of the University of California's Board of Regents published a strongly worded letter of his own. Here is what he said:

Let me be crystal clear with no ifs, ands, or buts—I . . . will do everything in my power to protect our Jewish students, and for that matter, everyone . . . from your inflammatory and out of touch rhetoric.

Unfortunately, too many other administrators have been unable or unwilling to speak with such moral clarity, and the consequences for their institutions are actually piling up.

The billionaire philanthropist who just a few years ago made the biggest donation in the history of Penn's Wharton School is now leading a revolt among influential donors that stretches across the Ivy League. He has pledged to close his checkbook, and by one account, he is talking to "half of Wall Street," urging them to do likewise. One prominent national law firm has gone as far as setting up a legal assistance hotline for students experiencing anti-Semitism on campus.

Apparently, the most successful alumni of the most elite schools in America want nothing—nothing—to do with institutions that aid or abet anti-Semitism. Well, good for them. Good for them.

And it is not just private funding on the line. This week, the Secretary of Education called a play from his Republican predecessor's playbook and told major universities that he was willing to use title VI of the Civil Rights Act to withhold Federal funds if they permit anti-Semitic discrimination on their campuses. Of course, the Secretary couldn't help but couch his warning in "both sides" rhetoric about Islamophobia, as has been the Biden administration's practice in the past month.

Well, tomorrow, our colleagues on the HELP Committee will convene a roundtable discussion addressing the topic at hand: a glaring rise in anti-Semitic hate on campuses. I am very grateful to Ranking Member CASSIDY for leading this effort to highlight the legal responsibility universities have to protect Jewish students.

As our former colleague, the president of the University of Florida, put it without hesitation after October 7, "our Constitution protects the rights of people to make abject idiots of themselves."

Fortunately, the Constitution also protects our right to condemn these people in the strongest possible terms.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

#### JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, over the past 2 years, something profound has taken place on this Senate floor. We have been building one of the most important accomplishments of the Biden era's administration: the confirmation of highly qualified, independent, even-handed judges to the Federal bench.

This week, the Senate will confirm the 150th lifetime judge since President Biden took office. This is a historic slate of judges who I believe will rule with reason and restraint. These judges respect the rule of law, adhere to precedent, and, above all, answer only to the U.S. Constitution.

Some Senate Republicans, including their leader, have not been shy in criticizing these nominees. According to the minority leader's retelling of history, under the former President, Senate Republicans "spent 4 years confirming staggeringly qualified and incredibly brilliant men and women to the courts." I would like to set the record straight.

For each judicial nominee who comes before the Senate, the American Bar Association conducts a nonpartisan peer review and ranks their qualifications. Those rankings are based on integrity, professional competence, and judicial temperament.

During the Trump administration, Senate Republicans confirmed eight—eight—Trump nominees who were