

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 300 Ex.]

YEAS—51

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

NAYS—47

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

NOT VOTING—2

Ernst	Scott (SC)
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The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 47.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Charlotte A. Burrows, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for a term expiring July 1, 2028 (Reappointment).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

BIDENOMICS

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I rise today, really, to speak on behalf of the American people that I represent—and those are my great West Virginians—but Americans all across the country—many, many of whom have been left behind in President Biden's pursuit of Bidenomics and who are directly feeling the scars that his administrative policies have left on the American dream.

American families are experiencing ever-increasing financial pressure due to the state of our Nation's economy, which is jeopardizing our ability to succeed. And it is jeopardizing our ability to feel confident.

It is simply unfair that Americans are compromised at every turn due to inflation—increased interest rates, costly regulations, and tax hikes on essential items that we all need to live.

But not only is this unfair, but for a country as strong and resourceful as our country is, it is unacceptable.

So let's just take a quick refresher on what exactly Bidenomics means. What began as sort of an ambiguous term to recognize the economic policies of this administration has quickly come to mean one thing: You are spending more and getting less.

It means that we see inflation reach a 40-year high and remain persistently above the Fed's target rate and pre-Biden administration levels. It also means that mortgage rates would reach and remain at a 30-year record and that interest rates would rise at the fastest pace over the last four decades.

It is just truly astounding that the difference in interest that Americans are paying now, compared to what they were paying just last year. Look at some of your statements, and you will see it. The Fed aggressively raised interest rates 11 times between early 2022 and now, from nearly zero to 5.5 percent in less than 2 years.

The historic increase comes at a cost. It comes at a cost that Americans have to pay and is making that dream of affording a home, buying a new car, or building a business seemingly impossible.

Bidenomics means that consumer prices are skyrocketing, and it means that everything from groceries to energy to gasoline will stay at nearly unaffordable levels.

Well, we just saw it last week with the Halloween candy. I saw several comparisons of how much more Halloween candy was this year than last. And you know what? We are going to see it again when we all gather at Thanksgiving and we look at the cost of providing a family meal.

President Biden refers to Bidenomics as an "investment in America." But the reality is Bidenomics is making sure that Americans have nothing left to invest. Nor do they have anything in their savings accounts. We see lots of studies on this. We can't invest in our small businesses, not investing in repairing and replacing your home, and, certainly, not investing in the future of our families.

I hear about this from West Virginians every single time I go home, which is every weekend. I had the opportunity to hear the story of a gentleman who owns a bus company that operates in West Virginia.

The challenges his business is facing come from all levels. He owns 38 buses, but not all of them are operational. In addition to elevated fuel costs, he cannot find enough drivers. So workforce shortages are everywhere, and lingering supply chain issues have hampered his ability to conduct much needed maintenance. He said that even

when he gets a bus rolling and the group asks: Let's stop for some food—I think often, when we see a bus stopping for food and we are wanting to get some food at the same restaurant, we keep going because we know what that means—but he says, often he as the driver of the bus is often met by restaurant owners in the parking lot who say that their staffing shortages are preventing them from being able to provide service to the passengers.

And that is just one interaction, but it proves the multifaceted challenges created by Bidenomics, the growing negative impact that these policies have made, and the handcuffs that are being placed on business owners that prevent them from doing their jobs.

Sustained high inflation and interest rates mean that operating costs are at levels where, even if prices are raised, business owners can't reinvest into their business or hire to maintain a good workforce.

And because they are forced to raise prices, those costs are passed on to the consumer who continues to make difficult choices about how they will spend their money.

Additionally, I hear from West Virginians who are facing difficulties as they are beginning to start their adult lives. They have graduated from school; they have got a job; maybe gotten married, thinking about maybe starting a family and a life together. But due to rising interest rates, high inflation, and stagnated wages, they are unable to do so. It is unaffordable.

These are children who came of age in the time of economic success, who saw how their parents were able to provide for them, but they are unable to use that blueprint now because of Bidenomics.

This shows the direct damage, I think, that the President and his policies have inflicted on the American people and the American dream and the disadvantages that some of our children will continue to grapple with if we do not change course soon.

For reasons I do not understand, President Biden continues to travel the country to try to claim credit and convince people that the state of the economy is good for them. The President has the right, certainly, to take that credit. But my question is, Why would he want to do it? I don't think he has done his own grocery shopping lately. And anytime you are in the grocery store, you can see what is going on.

So truth be told, I think he is selling us—he is trying to sell us a false bill of goods, one that the American people are not buying because, you know what? There again, they can't afford to. They can't afford to.

Recent polls show that 76 percent of Americans think that our country is on the wrong track, and 66 percent—that is two-thirds of all Americans—rate our Nation's economy as bad. These numbers shouldn't surprise any of us, as Americans are continuing to feel the squeeze.

American workers are continually becoming increasingly concerned that they won't have enough to retire as they had originally planned. The optimism of our small business owners is continuing to decline and the credit card debt is rising, and it is being carried by Americans as it hits a new record of over \$1 trillion.

On top of all of this, the disappointing October jobs report saw unemployment rise and manufacturing decline. So Americans are concerned—deservedly so.

One thing is clear: Our country cannot continue on the path that Bidenomics has led us. It makes no sense to continue to focus Federal time and resources to push burdensome ESG government policies—that is environment, social, and corporate government policies—instead of promoting pro-growth policies to help bring the United States out of the difficult reality that our people are finding themselves in. Americans remember times of past economic success. The progress that was generated by lowering taxes, supporting small businesses, and investing in American energy and technology.

Our Republican colleagues and I continue to craft solutions that we believe will promote fiscal responsibility, cut redtape, cut Executive overreach, and unleash the American energy that we have right here at home. Each of these areas is of vital importance to our economy and would provide the relief that American families need at a time when they need it the most.

I encourage President Biden and my colleagues to heed the calls of the American people who face challenges in their pocketbooks every single day, every single trip they make to the grocery store, every time they fill up their gas tank, every time they look at their checkbook. The focus should be on them, not on the President and the empty pursuit of Bidenomics.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, last winter a restaurant and a bakery near Omaha NE, well, they both closed their doors. The restaurant owner said: We have to close. There is no way around it. The owner simply couldn't keep up with food and labor costs that were going through the roof, costs that have been catapulting higher and higher ever since President Biden implemented his so-called Bidenomics agenda.

The bakery owner, well, she had a similar story as she closed her doors. She said that rising costs made it impossible to continue. Inflation took a sledgehammer to those small businesses as well as the livelihoods of their owners and their employees. That is Bidenomics in Nebraska.

Starting and sustaining a family business is already a massive undertaking. That work, combined with the burden of oppressive inflation, becomes

too heavy for some families to carry. And the coming months may add even more to that heavy load.

As we close in on the winter season, days are getting colder; days are getting darker; and that means that many family-owned shops—well, they are going to lose significant business. Fewer customers are going to venture out to shop at small businesses and they will do it for fewer hours during the day and that is going to cut down on the amount of profit that these businesses make.

But not only that, while profit decreases, costs will go up. Because it is colder, small businesses will spend more of their money on energy bills to heat the buildings. Winter in Nebraska, well, it can pose challenges for family-owned businesses every year. And this year, that is especially the case.

Since President Biden took office, energy prices have risen by 44 percent. The burden of a higher energy bill during the winter months is 44 percent heavier. Fuel oil is 51 percent more expensive. That is an astounding number. Electricity has gotten 26 percent more expensive, and natural gas, well, it is 22 percent more expensive.

This winter, there may be Nebraska businesses that follow in the footsteps of that Omaha restaurant and that Omaha bakery, losing so much money to inflation that they are going to be forced to close up shop.

Spending hundreds more dollars on basic business necessities is unsustainable for a family-owned business, and that is Bidenomics in Nebraska.

Inflation burdens businesses, but that is not where it stops. Inflation is costing the average Nebraska household \$988 a month. That is almost \$12,000 more a year. Families are paying more for everything, from eggs to gas to their mortgage payments, and this October—for the second year in a row—candy. Candy inflation hit double digits. When buying Halloween candy contributes to a middle-class family's financial struggle, we have got a serious problem. And that is Bidenomics in Nebraska.

Nebraskans know Bidenomics isn't working and so do the American people. In a New York Times poll this weekend, 81 percent of respondents said that the economy is less than good. Over half said that economic conditions are poor. Our economy is sick, and this administration is making it sicker with every reckless financial decision.

Since January 2021, this administration has been trigger-happy with heavy-handed regulations, instead of listening to people and putting a stop to these outrageous levels of inflation.

We know how to heal the economy. It is just a matter of getting it done. The administration has got to stop with its reckless spending. The President needs to reverse course on damaging regulations like his ineffective Inflation Reduction Act, and he certainly needs to refrain from passing more of it.

We need to unleash American energy so our economy can breathe again. Bidenomics means sky-high prices, hollowed-out savings, and costly interest rates. We can combat it with less spending, less regulation, and more American energy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. SCHMITT. Madam President, the Biden administration is constantly trying to sell Americans that the economy is improving. They offer miniscule morsels of improvement. The big picture shows an economy that is struggling mightily, and Americans are struggling along with it.

The Biden administration wants to tout Bidenomics as a success. Young Americans, families, elderly Americans, and everyone in between are being crushed under the weight of economic stagnation. According to the New York Times, 81 percent of Americans rated economic conditions as "fair" or "poor." CBS News states that 66 percent of Americans rate the national economy as "bad." ABC News has a poll that says 76 percent of Americans say the country is headed in the wrong direction. About two in three Americans say their household expenses have risen in the last year, but only one in four says their income has increased in the same period, according to an AP poll.

Higher prices, stagnant wages, and skyrocketing interest rates are hammering the American people across all demographics.

Typically, young Americans are looking to buy a house, condo, or property, and build some equity. It is a staple of building a fiscally healthy future and the foundation of the American dream. Not only can young people not afford homes with the current obscene interest rates, they can barely afford to keep their heads above water.

While Biden tries to distract young voters with his climate alarmism and that the Earth is going to boil, it is actually Biden's woeful mismanagement of the economy that is the real existential threat to the economy, the real existential threat to the American dream, the real existential threat to their future. Furthermore, it is Biden's insane energy policies that have stifled domestic energy production and made everything more expensive.

For families, it is even tougher in this economy. Household goods and food costs are more expensive now. Families are dipping into their savings and incurring more expenses and credit card debt, which is now at record levels.

Overall prices have risen 17 percent and are costing the average American household \$940 more per month. For elderly Americans who are retired or who are about to retire, this economy poses a dire threat. Higher prices on everything doesn't bode well for those on a fixed income, and with people dipping into their retirement savings just

to cover the costs, it doesn't bode well for those hoping to retire soon either.

It turns out that, when you spend trillions and trillions and trillions of dollars you don't have and declare war on domestic energy production, inflation runs rampant. The cost of everything goes up. That is what Americans are living through. They don't need slogans. They are not buying it. No matter how many times he says Bidenomics is working, the American people are struggling with higher costs, and they know it is not.

The antidote to the Bidenomics' poison is clear: Stop deficit spending. Become energy dominant to ease the burden on working families.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The Senator from Nebraska.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING AND BORDER SECURITY

Mr. RICKETTS. Madam President, our Nation is facing many challenges at this point. Yet, this week, the majority leader doesn't have us addressing them. Look around this room. There is nobody here.

We should be voting Monday through Friday until we get our work done. We have a national debt that is almost \$34 trillion. That is \$256,000 per household. That is about equal to a second mortgage for homeowners in Nebraska.

We also have a humanitarian and security crisis at our southern border. I was just down there for the fourth time. What I saw was a humanitarian disgrace. Record numbers of illegal immigrants are crossing the border. Children are being trafficked. People are dying. Cartels are profiting. The Biden administration is directly responsible for this humanitarian crisis. They should be ashamed of themselves.

The Biden administration's policies are also creating a major security crisis. A record number of encounters with individuals on the Terror Watchlist has gone on when that number used to be in the single digits just in the past few years.

Washington has an important role in dealing with these challenges. The ideal time to address them is through the appropriations process. As we all know, Congress must pass 12 appropriations bills every year, and this would avoid a government shutdown. This year, for the first time in 5 years, the Senate Appropriations Committee passed out all 12 of those appropriations bills. The first 2 came out on June 22, and the other 10 came in July.

For months, the majority leader has refused to bring those bills to the floor for votes. We could have been amending those bills, debating those bills, and then voting on those bills. Instead, he has played games with the Senate's calendar to try and force a false choice between a shutdown and more Big Government spending.

As a result, we have missed the deadline for regular order. The short-term bill that we passed, which funds the government, runs out on November 17. That is just a little over a week from

today. Once again, we are on the brink of another government shutdown, and the majority leader is still playing the same games.

We should be debating. We should be amending. We should be voting on legislation to fund the government and secure our border right now. Instead, we have spent the entire week voting on nominations for a few blue State judges and the employment for someone to the National Institutes of Health.

If that weren't bad enough, once again, the majority leader will be sending us home on Thursday afternoon for the weekend. The majority leader should have kept us in session Monday through Friday every week until all appropriations bills had passed. Instead, he chose to recess early or start voting late, week after week after week. He could have canceled our October State work period, like the House did. Many of my colleagues joined me in asking him to do so. He did not. The September shutdown face-off proved that there is no time to waste.

Most Americans work Monday through Friday. In Nebraska, many of my constituents work longer hours than that. The U.S. Senate should work Monday through Friday. I know it is a crazy idea, but we could be here all week like normal Americans. We could work 8 a.m. until 5 or 6 p.m. like most Americans do. We should remain in DC until we complete our work of funding the government and securing the border. It is not a radical idea to suggest that we should have an open government and a closed border.

So I will close with this: Let's vote. Let's do what it takes to get the job done for our constituents. I am committed to working with my colleagues to deliver meaningful results. Nebraskans and Americans across the country deserve no less.

NOMINATION OF CHARLOTTE A. BURROWS

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I support the nomination of Charlotte Burrows to be a Member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, EEOC. Charlotte Burrows has been a member of the EEOC since 2015. She was first confirmed by the Senate by a vote of 93-2. When she was renominated in 2019, the Senate confirmed her by voice vote. I look forward to her being confirmed a third time.

Charlotte Burrows is dedicated to ensuring that the EEOC plays a critical role in addressing systemic discrimination and advancing equal opportunity. Her priorities include advancing pay equity, preventing unlawful retaliation and harassment, addressing the use of artificial intelligence and other tech tools in employment decisions, and protecting vulnerable workers, including people with disabilities, older workers, temporary workers, and low-wage workers.

During her tenure as Chair, Ms. Burrows has helped rebuild the EEOC and its capacity to enforce Federal anti-discrimination laws—restoring staffing

levels to meet the public demand for agency services. Under Ms. Burrows' leadership, the EEOC has secured more than \$500 million in monetary relief for some 38,000 victims of employment discrimination, and the EEOC has filed over 140 employment discrimination lawsuits in fiscal year 2023, a 50-percent increase over fiscal year 2022.

Chair Burrows is committed to ensuring that workers are aware of their rights and employers are aware of their responsibilities. To help accomplish this goal, in fiscal year 2022, EEOC conducted over 3,300 outreach and training events and provided more than 225,000 people nationwide with information about their rights and responsibilities in the workplace. In order to reach more vulnerable workers, the EEOC conducted 1,000 outreach events for vulnerable workers that reached nearly 80,000 individuals. Often, these events were in partnership with local organizations that know these vulnerable and underserved communities the best.

During her time as Chair, she has overseen the implementation of the Pregnant Worker's Fairness Act, including advancing a bipartisan proposed rule to implement this important and much-needed law. She has also advanced a much-needed proposal to update harassment guidance and issued technical assistance on practices to prevent harassment in the Federal workplace. She has updated EEOC resources related to individuals with visual disabilities and employment protections for Americans with disabilities.

Further, she launched the Artificial Intelligence and Algorithmic Fairness Initiative in 2021 to ensure that these systems are used in ways that reflect values of fairness and equality. The main goal of the Chair's initiative is to assist applicants, workers, employers, and vendors to understand how Federal equal employment opportunity laws apply to these new technologies. Under her leadership, the EEOC is working to address potentially harmful uses of this technology in the workforce.

Chair Burrows' dedication to improving the lives of working families and making sure they receive the wages and benefits they deserve make her the right person to lead this agency. I thank her for her service, and I strongly support her nomination to continue as Chair of the EEOC.

Mr. RICKETTS. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

VOTE ON BURROWS NOMINATION

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote occur immediately.

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

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

Ms. CANTWELL. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?