

the U.S. Cyber Command, has been very clear about the need to preserve section 702.

Earlier this year, he summed up its importance rather succinctly when he said that “702 saves lives and protects the homeland.”

That is what we are focused on at the moment when it comes to funding the vast national security threats we do face: saving lives and protecting the homeland. That is true, I believe, of the war in Ukraine. It is in our Nation’s national interest, I believe. It is true in the war being fought by Israel for its survival in the Middle East. It is true for China’s saber-rattling in the Indo-Pacific. And it is true for the crisis we face at the border.

Achieving our definition of success in each of these situations will require far more than just money. It will require reliable and timely information or intelligence, and we simply will not have access to that if 702 were to expire.

It is absolutely imperative that Congress reauthorize section 702 before the end of the year. And I know we have the time, if we only have the will to get it done.

This is a priority for members on both sides of the aisle and both sides of the Capitol. This is not a partisan issue. It is the ultimate nonpartisan issue. And we have seen a number of constructive proposals to preserve and modernize this authority while enhancing privacy protections.

I understand concerns about abusing these various authorities against Americans, something that is illegal, something that should be investigated and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

But just because a few rogue actors have misbehaved is no reason to relinquish this necessary tool when it comes to foreign actors who wish us ill.

As Congress continues working to address the range of national security threats that our country faces, reauthorizing section 702 must be a top priority.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 379.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Micah W.J. Smith, of Hawaii, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 379, Micah W.J. Smith, of Hawaii, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Tina Smith, Alex Padilla, Jack Reed, Patty Murray, Christopher A. Coons, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mazie Hirono, Peter Welch, Richard Blumenthal, Jeanne Shaheen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Chris Van Hollen, Brian Schatz, John W. Hickenlooper, Robert P. Casey, Jr.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 378.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Jamel Semper, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 378, Jamel Semper, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Tina Smith, Alex Padilla, Jack Reed, Patty Murray, Christopher A. Coons, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mazie K. Hirono, Peter Welch, Richard Blumenthal, Jeanne Shaheen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Chris Van Hollen, Brian Schatz, John W. Hickenlooper, Robert P. Casey, Jr.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 377.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Shanlyn A.S. Park, of Hawaii, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 377, Shanlyn A.S. Park, of Hawaii, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Tina Smith, Alex Padilla, Jack Reed, Patty Murray, Christopher A. Coons, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mazie K. Hirono, Peter Welch, Richard Blumenthal, Jeanne Shaheen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Chris Van Hollen, Brian Schatz, John W. Hickenlooper, Robert P. Casey, Jr.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 223.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Irma Carrillo Ramirez, of Texas, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 223, Irma Carrillo Ramirez, of Texas, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit.

Charles E. Schumer, Christopher A. Coons, Alex Padilla, Mazie Hirono, Benjamin L. Cardin, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Peter Welch, Michael F. Bennet, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Martin Heinrich, Jeanne Shaheen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Tina Smith, Ben Ray Lujan, Jack Reed, Gary C. Peters.

Mr. SCHUMER. Finally, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions filed today, November 27, be waived.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection.

Mr. SCHUMER. 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.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam 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.

TIKTOK

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, over the past 52 days, we have watched a horrifying propaganda campaign take over our social media platforms.

Anti-Israel sentiment and support for Hamas terrorism has gone mainstream,

and even Biden administration officials like Jake Sullivan admit that Hamas is using popular online platforms to push propaganda. Of course, TikTok is the enabler-in-chief in this regard.

Here are some stats for you: Between October 23 and 30, videos with the "StandWithPalestine" hashtag received 285 million views globally, while videos with "StandWithIsrael" hashtag received just 64 million views.

Now, keep in mind, these stats reflect the online discourse surrounding the deadliest massacre of Jews since the Holocaust 3 weeks after it happened. Everyone has seen the pictures and videos of what Hamas had done. We knew that they were holding innocent people and families and children hostage.

It is terrible enough on its own, but we know that it is also a symptom of a very serious disease. We have seen more than enough evidence to suggest that TikTok's executives are manipulating user sentiment with Israel. Why would they do this? Because leveraging the anti-Israel cause is in the best interest of their handlers in the Chinese Communist Party.

By silencing Americans and those who are pro-Israel and other westerners who counter anti-Semitic propaganda, they can ingratiate themselves with the Arab world and undermine the United States as the global superpower and chief mediator in the Middle East.

They know that by doing this, they are normalizing terrorism and genocide, but it puts the CCP and their partners in the new "axis of evil" even one step closer to global domination, and that is their goal. Russia, China, Iran, North Korea—that "axis of evil"—they intend to push themselves to global domination. So going after Israel, going after pro-Israel, allowing anti-Semitic conversations to be carried out, they are OK with that. They look at it and say: small price to pay for us to be able to get our way.

Well, I have looked through the past few weeks of coverage of the role of TikTok and how they have played into this, and I came across story after story defending the platform and the firehose of pro-terrorist content that it promotes. And, of course, you are going to have story after story defending TikTok—of course—because it is OK with them to promote terrorism and to promote genocide.

Lately, those same mainstream media outlets have all been obsessed with context, and I think we can all benefit from understanding the context around what is happening with this content that is online.

Here is the context: The context is, the Chinese Communist Party has complete control over what does and does not go viral on TikTok.

A Forbes investigation into TikTok and ByteDance—and ByteDance is the Beijing company that owns TikTok, the CCP board member of ByteDance.

So the Forbes investigation into TikTok and ByteDance revealed that a

ByteDance tool, which is run by TikTok staff in China, is tracking mentions of what it considers to be "sensitive words." They do this across the company's products.

Now, some of these sensitive words may be things that are anti-CCP, anti-positions of the CCP, anti-Xi Jinping or anti-Mao. Those are considered sensitive. They draw the attention, and they get labeled by the staff as "sensitive words" that are forbidden or that must be killed or that are prohibited. In other words, TikTok is censoring the speech, and they are, in part, blocking some posts from ever being seen. This is why you have the hundreds of millions who are seeing pro-Hamas posts and the tens of millions who are seeing a pro-Israel post.

There is something else that we should all be aware of. And parents, listen up on this. The tool also tracks every time one of these words comes up. So if you are repeatedly posting something that is pro-Israel, that gets tracked every time. Also, it is recording who said it, so your identity is revealed, and where you are located. Think about that—who you are, where you are located, what you are saying. That is surveillance and tracking.

Now, as this Chamber is aware, Senator BLUMENTHAL and I and others at Commerce and Judiciary Committees have had lots of hearings on these social media platforms. And at one of the hearings, we had TikTok's CEO come before Congress, and he told lawmakers, under oath, that his platform does not promote or remove content at the request of the Chinese Government.

What we now know? That is false. They are doing this.

But word lists in ByteDance's "sensitive words" tool deal directly with content that Beijing wants to silence, including language critical of China's Government, their military, their history.

Simply tracking speech isn't enough for communist China. They are using these tools to control dissent. In April of this year, Joe Biden's own Department of Justice announced that they were investigating the CCP's use of social media platforms to hunt people down and silence them.

They charged 40 officers of China's national police with orchestrating transnational repression schemes against Chinese dissidents living—get this—living in the United States. There, again, they are coming after our citizens, trying to censor, trying to control, trying to manipulate.

If TikTok's bias pushed their algorithm in the other direction, Congress would have already banned it in the United States. Instead, the vast majority of the left and their friends in the media are treating the pervasiveness of this pro-Hamas, pro-terrorist, pro-murder sentiment like the latest viral phenomenon.

The best, most recent example of this is the appalling popularity of Osama bin Laden's letter to America. This