

country. It would devastate families who are relying on these facilities to serve their loved ones, and it would devastate the seniors who urgently need care.

After the release of this proposed rule in September, I joined the rest of the Nebraska Federal delegation in sending a letter to CMS Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure opposing these new standards. We have never received a response.

So I plan to introduce legislation that would prevent these misguided standards from going into effect. My bill would also establish an advisory panel on the nursing home workforce. The panel would host members representing various stakeholders, including members from rural areas and underserved areas.

The Biden administration must hear from voices outside the big cities on the coasts. This proposed rule is a one-size-fits-all attempt at a solution, but the so-called solution simply doesn't fit. It is a misguided mandate that will prove destructive for communities that most need the care.

I am going to keep fighting for our rural communities and for the seniors who rely on long-term care facilities, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same by joining me in support of this legislation to protect nursing homes and to protect the Americans they serve.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PETERS). The majority leader.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 263.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Loren L. AliKhan, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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. 263, Loren L. AliKhan, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard Blumenthal, Margaret Wood Hassan, Mark Kelly, Jack Reed, John W. Hickenlooper, Elizabeth Warren, Tammy Duckworth, Jeff Merkley, Richard J. Durbin, Jeanne Shaheen, Benjamin L. Cardin, Mazie Hirono, Tina Smith, Edward J. Markey, Tim Kaine, Tammy Baldwin.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 144.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Elizabeth H. Richard, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Career Minister, to be Coordinator for Counterterrorism, with the rank and status of Ambassador at Large.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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. 144, Elizabeth H. Richard, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Career Minister, to be Coordinator for Counterterrorism, with the rank and status of Ambassador at Large.

Charles E. Schumer, Robert Menendez, Benjamin L. Cardin, Christopher Murphy, Richard Blumenthal, Jeanne Shaheen, Alex Padilla, Tim Kaine, Richard J. Durbin, Catherine Cortez Masto, Sheldon Whitehouse, Christopher A. Coons, Margaret Wood Hassan, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Debbie Stabenow, Raphael G. Warnock, Tammy Duckworth.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions filed today, November 30, be waived.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

BORDER SECURITY

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, the United States has a long history of standing for freedom and self-determination.

From the 1940s through the 2010s, under President Trump, our Nation has stood with Israel, in defense of Israel. We were there in 1948 when Israel became a country. We stood with them through the Six-Day War and the Yom Kippur War, the Camp David peace talks, negotiations with the PLO, two intifadas, and multiple attempts to implement a two-state solution.

Under President Reagan, we fought the spread of communism across multiple continents because we understand that the unchecked spread of Marxist influence will threaten our very survival. This wasn't just ideological saber rattling. The Soviets had a staggering number of nuclear warheads at their disposal. It was important to eliminate as many of those as we could. Reagan was remarkably clear-eyed about this.

Again, it wasn't a question of politics. It was a matter of recognizing the danger and then finding a way to neutralize that danger. We accepted that it was our duty to protect global security because no one else had the power or the resolve to do that.

And since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2014, the United States has been a leading provider of aid to the Ukrainians because Vladimir Putin has the same propensity toward violence and conquest that motivated his predecessors.

This is also why we have fought so hard to provide our partners in Taiwan with the weapons and funding they need to defend themselves against communist Chinese aggression.

Over the past 3 years, our reputation—our Nation's reputation—as a champion of freedom has become tarnished by Joe Biden's foreign policy and his policy of appeasement. Nothing has been more damaging than his refusal to protect our sovereignty here at home. A strong border is the most basic element of our national defense. It is what guarantees our right to exist as a country, and Joe Biden has abandoned it entirely.

When he took office and declared law and order obsolete, he didn't just invite millions of migrants across our border; he invited the new axis of evil—Russia, China, Iran, North Korea—to declare open season on their neighbors. China became more aggressive toward Taiwan. Putin invaded Ukraine. And Hamas violated a ceasefire and slaughtered Israelis in their beds.

The Biden administration's response has only made things worse. They exploited the plight of the Ukrainians as

a distraction from their own terrible policies. They have all but ignored China's human rights violations. And, to date, they put more pressure on Israel than on Hamas to lay down arms.

Joe Biden's attempts to curry favor with the new axis of evil won't keep us safe because these nations aren't here to make friends. Their goal—the goal of that axis of evil—is to exploit our weaknesses until it becomes impossible for us to fight back.

This is a battle over borders, and, if we want to win, we need to lead by example and reassert our right to exist as a sovereign nation. We should start by securing our very own border.

In fiscal year 2023, the Border Patrol recorded more than 3.2 million enforcement actions along our southern border. In addition, we caught 151 known and suspected terrorists trying to illegally enter our country.

The Senate will have an opportunity to address this before the year ends, but I fear my Democratic colleagues will block those efforts or, worse, offer a half-baked solution and call it a job well done.

The majority leader insists that the issue of border security is just too partisan, and the majority whip insists that since we let the issue of border security go unattended for 30-plus years, we can afford to let it go just a little bit longer.

This is absolutely nonsense. I think it is also dangerous. If Joe Biden refuses to defend the sovereignty of his own country, our adversaries will assume they can act as aggressively as they want without any meaningful resistance from the United States.

If we refuse to defend ourselves, how can we be effective in defending Israel, our strongest ally in the Middle East?

Israel's sovereignty has been established across thousands of years of history, and still Hamas denies Israel's right to exist. That is how they justified violating the ceasefire and declaring war on the world's Jewish community, and it is frightening to see so many people in this country defending that decision. Every one of those individuals should watch the videos that we have watched from the GoPro cameras of those Hamas terrorists. It is revolting.

No peace plan is possible until Hamas is eliminated and the Palestinians recognize Israel's right to exist. To make this happen, we need to set an example by securing our own borders and then passing a stand-alone and straightforward aid package to help Israel do the same.

We all know that giving humanitarian aid to Gaza at this point means letting it go to terrorists. I would ask the majority leader and my Democratic colleagues to give Israel this funding without attaching dangerous conditions that will force them to undermine their own security.

Ensuring a free and sovereign Ukraine is also an important element of our foreign policy, but how can we

speak with any real authority about Ukrainian self-determination while holding ourselves to a lower standard?

When Putin attacked, the United States backed Ukraine with our words and our actions because we knew that if we didn't, millions of people would pay the price for our appeasement. We have a historic obligation to Ukraine, and continuing to send aid will serve as a powerful deterrent.

The American people understand how important it is to maintain that pressure on Russia and Vladimir Putin, but they don't think they should have to sacrifice their own security to do it. They also are very concerned about the total lack of transparency surrounding these aid packages.

Here is a stat. Since February of 2022, the United States has approved \$113 billion in total aid responding to Putin's war. This includes defense items sent via the Presidential draw-down authority, with no oversight. It is imperative that we have oversight and transparency around every single dollar that is going into Ukraine.

The reason? Right now Americans can't afford to spend even one more cent on gas or groceries, thanks to Joe Biden's Bidenomics. So they need to see that their money is actually going to be accounted for and that it is actually going to make a difference. We owe them a full accounting of how their money is being spent in Ukraine, how long we will maintain the flow of aid, and when they can expect to see us match those efforts here at home with our own border security plan. They also want to know: What is the strategy, and how are we going to make certain that Vladimir Putin does not win?

Joe Biden's actions speak much louder than his words. For 3 years now, he has projected nothing but weakness. He has sent a parade of diplomats to legitimize relations with the Chinese Communist Party. He has enabled Iran and its terrorist proxies—Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis, ISIS Iraq, ISIS in Syria—and he has sent billions upon billions of dollars in security aid overseas without giving a second thought to securing our own border.

At the height of the Cold War, Reagan said:

[I]f history teaches anything, it teaches that simpleminded appeasement or wishful thinking about our adversaries is folly. It means the betrayal of our past [and] the squandering of our freedom.

There is a lot of wisdom in that. We need to think about that history. Thousands of innocent people have already paid the ultimate price because Joe Biden has refused to heed that warning.

It is time to abandon this failed strategy of appeasement. It is time to project strength and resolve. It is time for our allies to know that they are our allies, that they can count on us. It is time for our enemies to fear us. It is time for us to make certain that we get an aid package—an aid package—to Israel. It is time for us to secure our

southern border. It is time for us to know who is coming into this country and why they are coming into this country.

If Joe Biden doesn't act to secure our border and defend our right to exist as a free and independent country, we are going to see the violence that threatens the sovereignty of Israel, Ukraine, and Taiwan bleed onto American soil, and no level of negotiation or appeasement will be able to stop it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the recorded vote begin immediately.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The assistant bill 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Irma Carrillo Ramirez, of Texas, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 80, nays 17, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 325 Ex.]

YEAS—80

Baldwin	Capito	Cruz
Barrasso	Cardin	Duckworth
Bennet	Carper	Durbin
Blumenthal	Casey	Ernst
Booker	Cassidy	Fischer
Boozman	Collins	Gillibrand
Brown	Coons	Graham
Budd	Cornyn	Grassley
Butler	Cortez Masto	Hagerty
Cantwell	Cotton	Hassan