

supplemental action to meet serious, connected threats to America's national security.

As I have said from the outset, our work needs to address four urgent challenges: Putin's war on a sovereign democracy in Europe; the terror campaign against Israel and U.S. forces in the Middle East; China's aggressive escalation against Taiwan and peaceful nations in the Indo-Pacific; and the Biden administration's continuing failure to contend with the crisis at our southern border.

Senate Republicans' focus on securing the border didn't just begin this fall. We have watched for 3 years as the border descended into chaos on President Biden's watch. And for 3 years, we have urged his administration to fulfill even its most basic responsibility to enforce our immigration laws.

Anyone who suggests that Senate Republicans are injecting the issue of border security into this discussion at the last minute either isn't serious or hasn't been paying attention.

Continuing to pretend that upholding American sovereignty is any less urgent than helping our allies and partners defend theirs is reckless. Borders in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona are every bit as inviolable as those in Ukraine, Israel, and the Indo-Pacific. And the sooner our Democratic colleagues realize it, the sooner we can deliver on urgent national security priorities.

Now, needless to say, America's adversaries aren't waiting for us to get serious about our own security. In the South China Sea, for example, the PRC is increasingly using aggressive posturing and outright force to disrupt peace, stability, and lawful maritime commerce.

Beijing now greets lawful passage in international waters with threatening, unsafe conduct and hyperventilating bluster and continues to undermine the long-established territorial claims of sovereign nations throughout Southeast Asia.

Unfortunately, China is not the only adversary stepping up its aggression in the maritime domain. Iran and its network of terrorists continue to illustrate the failures of the Biden administration's deterrence in dangerous detail. On Sunday, a U.S. Navy destroyer and Israeli-flagged commercial vessels came under fire from the same Houthi rebels this administration had inexplicably taken off—off—its list of terror organizations when it took office. This was, of course, a concession to Iran.

Of course, terrorist violence at sea is only the latest in a laundry list of Iran-backed attempts to kill Americans in the region since October 7. At least 77 times, Tehran's proxies have used lethal force against U.S. personnel in Iraq and in Syria, just since October 7.

By any objective standard, the Biden administration's response has been woefully inadequate. Tehran remains

demonstrably undeterred. As President Obama's former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta put it last week: "I would be much more aggressive."

So effective deterrence requires both capabilities and credibility. And America can't hope to deter our adversaries if we signal hesitation and fear of escalation.

Consider the enemy we are up against. One of Hamas's top terrorists in Gaza told the media recently that the slaughter of Israelis on October 7 was "just a rehearsal"—a bloody rehearsal that left 1,200 innocent people dead and hundreds more in terrorist captivity.

These savages—savages—mean what they say about erasing Israel from the map. But this is not just Israel's fight. Today, at least eight Americans are still being held hostage in Gaza. And if Iran and its proxies get their way, there will be more Americans killed and captured.

This is not—not—a time to go soft on terror. This is not a time to put constraints on Israel. This is a time to support your friends and stand up to your adversaries.

As the Senate considers urgent national security for priorities, our adversaries in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East are watching closely what we do.

#### ANTI-SEMITISM

Mr. President, now, on another matter, in the 59 days since October 7, an alarming surge in anti-Semitic hate has swept the world. And the United States, unfortunately, has not been exempt.

On Sunday, an angry mob descended on a Philadelphia restaurant co-owned by an Israeli-born Jew. Protesters demanded that customers boycott it, and outrageously charged the business and its proprietors with genocide.

Unfortunately, this is hardly an isolated incident. Across social media, leftwing activists have whipped followers into a frenzy about proclaiming the urgent need to boycott hundreds of American businesses for the alleged crime of supporting Israel's right to exist.

They have committed acts of violence and vandalism, including against the homes of Members of Congress.

Anti-Semitic online mobs are insisting that organizations that do business in Israel are complicit in ethnic cleansing.

Unfortunately, these situations seem most often to flare up on the campuses of elite universities. This week, a prominent Harvard alumnus penned an open letter to Harvard's president cataloging that institution's continued insanity when it comes to Israel's right to self-defense.

At Princeton, a faculty group recently signed a letter invoking academic freedom as a shield for students around the country to have parroted terrorist propaganda. Of course, in the same document, the professors found room to hurl their own accusation of "apartheid" at Israel.

American higher education has become the epicenter of an alarming wave of hatred toward Jews. Luckily, there are glimmers of hope. At Franciscan University in Ohio, administrators created an expedited transfer process to welcome students facing anti-Semitic threats at other schools. Catholic friars in rural Appalachia are eager to accept Jewish students that the Ivy League is failing to protect.

But, unfortunately, stories like these are few and far between. It's especially alarming to see anti-Semitic hatred bleeding into secondary education as well.

Last month, an organization known as The People's Forum helped organize a massive anti-Israel protest and walkout at schools in New York City. The group, which has direct ties to both domestic radical activists and state propagandists in Beijing, is creating toolkits and posters to facilitate such events at other schools.

As I have said before, I am a strong supporter of freedom of speech. Our Nation gives hateful people the right to say appalling things. But it also gives people with a moral compass the right to condemn them in the strongest possible terms.

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. THUNE. 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.

The Republican whip.

#### BIDENOMICS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, \$11,434—that is how much more a typical family has to spend today to maintain the same standard of living they had at the beginning of the Biden administration—\$11,434. That is a lot of money. Needless to say, it is money that a lot of Americans don't have.

Nearly 3 years of high inflation has taken its toll. Americans are exhausted from constant price hikes, and they are struggling to keep pace with the huge increase in their cost of living.

One recent news story noted:

Since early 2020, prices have risen about as much as they had in the full 10 years preceding the health emergency.

Let me just repeat that.

Since early 2020, prices have risen about as much as they had in the full 10 years preceding the health emergency.

In other words, we have had 10 years of price increases packed into the last 4 years. The lion's share of those increases has occurred during the Biden administration. Since President Biden took office, the price of groceries has risen by almost 21 percent, gas prices have risen by 54.8 percent, electric bills are up almost 25 percent, car repairs and maintenance are up 26.5 percent, rent is up 18 percent, and the list goes on. Unfortunately, at this point, it is

clear that today's high prices are here to stay.

Inflation didn't come out of nowhere. Inflation is the result of too many dollars chasing too few goods and services. That is exactly the situation the Biden administration and Democrats helped create in 2021.

The President's first major piece of legislation was a massive and partisan \$1.9 trillion spending bill filled with unnecessary spending and handouts to Democrat interest groups. The bill flooded the economy with unnecessary government money, and the economy overheated as a result—no big surprise there. Almost 3 years down the road, we are still dealing with the inflation crisis the President and Democrats helped create. So it should come as no surprise that the President's "Bidenomics" pitch—his attempt to sell the American people on his economic record—is falling flat, even among members of his own party.

A substantial majority of Americans have a negative view of the economy. Fifty-five percent of voters say they are worse off financially under President Biden, and a large percentage are cutting back on spending to make ends meet.

President Biden claims that "Bidenomics is just another way of saying 'the American Dream.'" Well, for a lot of Americans, Bidenomics has proved to be less dream and more nightmare because the reality is that under Bidenomics, working Americans are struggling to get by. They are tapping into their savings. They are taking on more debt. They are falling behind on car payments or other bills.

Increasingly, one key measure of the American dream, which is owning your own home, is out of reach for many Americans. The higher interest rates the Federal Reserve was forced to put in place to help rein in President Biden's inflation crisis has meant more expensive mortgages, which, combined with higher home prices, have eroded home buyers' purchasing power.

A recent NBC news article reported:

[I]n late 2020, the monthly mortgage payment on a typical, newly sold home was around \$1,100 in principal and interest. It's now about twice that.

It is now about twice that.

On the car-buying front, Americans are facing loan rates last seen, as one article noted, during the great recession.

And soaring credit card interest rates are making it difficult for Americans to afford their credit card bills much less make progress in paying them off, a situation not helped, of course, by the fact that many Americans have had to turn to their credit cards to help them get by—get by—under Bidenflation. Under the Biden administration, Americans can't catch a break.

President Biden has spent a lot of time talking about giving families "a little bit of breathing room." But the reality of Bidenomics is that a lot of families have seen their breathing

room disappear. Perhaps the President should remember that before he gives another speech touting his economic record.

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. MANCHIN. 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.

#### INFLATION REDUCTION ACT

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today, I can say, out of frustration, out of anger, out of disappointment that our administration is continuing to break the law that we all passed and that President Biden signed, knowing full well what was in it. I am talking about the Inflation Reduction Act, the IRA. The reason I am saying this is because, in putting this bill together, at the time that we did, I made sure that everyone involved had to sign off on it. The President, the majority leader, and the Speaker knew exactly what was in the bill and the purpose of the bill.

I still believe that the purpose of this bill was done in the right, proper way. I think it was a transformative bill, if we could just stay within the guidelines of how the bill was written. It is not left to interpretation, but they have interpreted.

They are trying to, basically, implement a piece of legislation that they couldn't get passed, and I have said this. The purpose of the bill had three purposes. The first on the Inflation Reduction Act was to reduce our debt. We all talked about that.

We have \$33.8 trillion in debt today, and if everything that we do does not take that into account and we do not think about our children and grandchildren and future generations, what we are leaving them is untenable. Something has to be done. So that piece of legislation had debt reduction in it—debt reduction.

It is also based on securing our energy. When the Ukraine war broke out, we were not energy secure. We couldn't help our allies over in Europe, and basically energy was weaponized by Putin. He used it as a weapon, which was very harmful to our allies. Basically, I said this: If you can't help the people who are willing to fight and die for the cause you believe in and we all believe in—the freedoms and democracy that we cherish—then they are not going to be there when you need them.

The third thing was to bring manufacturing back to America, the building blocks that we need. And transportation is a major building block of how we deliver our goods, how we basically take care of our lives, how we secure our own jobs, and how we are able to pay for our own way through this wonderful world of ours, but it also runs our economy.

And I still believe the intent and the ability of the IRA to work as we hoped, the level of investment that we have been seeing from the IRA is transformative. We have never seen this fight. People have been predicting us to fall into a recession, if you will, with high inflation, and we have been able to stave that off because we had this piece of legislation that has given us kind of a shot in the arm that nowhere else in the world has had.

But here is the problem we are running into. It really, truly seems from my standpoint—because we in my Energy Committee wrote the bill, unknown to most any American for over 3 months before it was introduced, and it was done because of the war in Ukraine. It was done because we were not secure.

Let me talk to you about transportation. They want to move to electric vehicles sooner than what we are prepared to do. The building blocks that you need is to basically have total, absolute self-reliance on your transportation mode. Up until this piece of legislation or the intent of the administration, we were able to take care of basically our planes, trains, automobiles and everything in between. We could do that with American ingenuity, manufactured in America or reliable countries. We never had to rely on foreign supply chains that were unreliable, such as China, such as Russia, such as Iran, such as North Korea. But because of the political desires of trying to transform the transportation mode that we weren't able to basically secure ourselves, this is what is happening.

If President Biden were still a Member of this body and if he were Senator Biden, I guarantee you, he would be absolutely incensed at what is happening, in any administration, with a piece of legislation that he worked so hard on, that he basically cosigned or signed off on as something he believed in, watching it be completely shredded. And that is what is happening.

Since the administration seems to have forgotten, I am going to remind everyone what we agreed to. This was on a phone call that I had with the President, with the Speaker, and with the majority leader at the time before the bill was signed.

I said this is a \$687 billion bill—\$687 billion in revenue—and \$384 billion of that bill would be invested in energy security while also improving our environment—energy security. That means we would be producing more energy and be more self-secured than at any time. And right now I can say that it has worked absolutely the way it was intended to. We are producing more energy in this country today than ever before. We are producing more oil and gas, and we are doing it cleaner than anywhere else in the world. And we are producing LNG to help our foreign allies. So we are doing exactly what we intended to do with this piece of legislation. That was \$384 billion.