

The question is, do we care enough about these African Americans, their families, and their future to make an unpopular—to some—decision to move forward to make America a healthier, safer place to live? I hope we do.

I don't want any more families to experience the suffering that I went through and families do every day.

The Biden administration has an incredible track record of taking on big challenges and delivering. It has launched the Cancer Moonshot, created a new Federal research Agency, ARPA-H, to accelerate cures for patients. President Biden has taken on the gun lobby and Big Pharma and secured important victories with the passage last year of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act and the Inflation Reduction Act.

Now is the time to do the same against Big Tobacco, which is responsible for nearly half a million deaths per year. I urge the Biden administration to look carefully at the proposal from the FDA and swiftly finalize its rules on menthol and flavored cigars, which will save lives and reduce suffering, especially for communities of color.

This is an issue that is personal to many Americans. We didn't choose it. Addiction led our family members to face illness and sometimes death. Are we going to do something for the next generation of African Americans who are being harassed in the advertising and marketing of this product to the detriment of their future?

I hope that President Biden will do that.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican whip.

#### BORDER SECURITY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, later today, the Senate will take a vote on whether or not to move to consideration of the national security supplemental bill. And make no mistake, this vote will fail. Not because Republicans oppose supporting our national security interests overseas but because Democrats are refusing to take seriously the national security crisis here at home.

From the beginning, Republicans have made it clear that any national security supplemental would have to address one of the biggest threats to our national security, the out-of-control illegal immigration at our southern border.

And when I say "out of control," just look at the numbers. Yesterday, 12,000 people were apprehended at our southern border trying to come into our country illegally—not including the "got-aways," not including the unknowns—over 12,000 people, which, I think, is an alltime, one-day high. Most ever. In history.

And think about that annualized. We are now talking about on the order of 4 million people annually coming across our southern border, being released into the country, coming across illegally.

When is this a crisis? This is a crisis. It is a humanitarian crisis. It has been that for a long time. But now—now it is a national security crisis because among those 12,000 people are some pretty unsavory characters.

There are people who are coming here for a better life, but there are a lot of people who are being apprehended now at our southern border. Some of whom are on the Terrorist Watchlist.

This is a crisis that needs to be dealt with, and it seems to be falling on deaf ears at the White House and among my colleagues here, Democratic colleagues in the U.S. Senate.

We have put forward meaningful ideas and solutions about how to deal with this, and yet crickets. Nobody seems to want to confront what is a major, major debacle at our southern border.

That is 12,000, one day—a new American record of people trying to come into this country illegally. Why? Because this administration doesn't seem to care or want to do anything about stopping or reducing that flow across our southern border.

It is a staggering number. And just to put it in perspective, Jeh Johnson, who was the Department of Homeland Security Secretary to President Obama, once said that a thousand a day would overwhelm the system—a thousand a day. He went on to say: I can't even comprehend what 4,000 a day would look like.

Yesterday was 12,000. Now, if you sustain that rate, annualize that rate, as I said, you are talking about 4 million people annually being released into this country.

And you have heard from countless now, not just Members on my side of the aisle or overcrowded communities on the southern border or members of the Customs and Border Patrol who are underwhelmed and underresourced and undermanned down there to deal with this crisis.

But you are hearing from cities in the interior of this country—large cities—who are complaining about not being able to deliver basic services to their constituents now because they are having to deal with a migrant inflow into their communities—New York City being one notable example. The mayor of New York City says he would have to freeze hiring police officers, he would have to close libraries, and cut education funding to keep up with this massive, massive inflow of people who are coming into this country who need to be cared for.

So let me just say, this is not an extraneous issue, which is what the Democrat leader suggested last week. Border security is a national security issue, and anyone who thinks that our Nation can be secure while we have hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants pouring over our southern border each month needs to think again.

The month of October, 240,988 individuals were encountered at our south-

ern border. That was the highest October number ever recorded. But on top of that, the month of October saw an average of 1,000 "got-aways" per day, individuals the Border Patrol saw but was unable to apprehend. That is 30,000 unidentified individuals entering our country in just 1 month—30,000.

And there is no telling how many unknown "got-aways"—these are known "got-aways"—how many unknown "got-aways" there were during that same period. And there is no question that some of those "got-aways" were dangerous individuals who should not be entering the country.

During fiscal year 2023, there were 169 individuals on the Terrorist Watchlist who were apprehended attempting to illegally cross our southern border. That was fiscal year 2023, which ended September 30, 169 in 1 year.

Well, if the numbers continue to ramp up—and you look at the daily numbers we are encountering now, you know that number is going to go up significantly as well. Because why? People have figured out, you want to get into the United States, come across our southern border.

And thousands of what are known as—what we call special interest aliens, those individuals who may pose a threat to the United States, have been apprehended trying to illegally cross our southern border over the past 2 years.

Then there have been the criminals who are trying to make their way into the United States, and those range from drug traffickers to child predators. One border reporter noted last month:

Border Patrol's Del Rio Sector has arrested at least 21 child sex predators crossing illegally since the new fiscal year began on October 1.

Twenty-one child sex predators in a single sector of our southern border.

And, again, all of these numbers I am mentioning only refer to individuals who have actually been apprehended. With 30,000 unknown individuals entering the United States in October alone, there is no telling how many terrorists, how many criminals, how many other dangerous individuals have made their way into our country without our knowledge.

So I think it is fair to say that the issue of border security is not "extraneous" but is, in fact, fundamental to our national security and something that the Democrat leader ought to realize.

Indeed the fact that New York City, as I mentioned, is currently facing across-the-board cuts to its city services, including a staggering 13.5-percent cut to its police force—to its police force—as a result of the migrant crisis should be all the information the majority leader needs to realize that our current situation is not sustainable, even without the national security risk imposed by unchecked illegal immigration.

Now, I support aid to Israel, Taiwan, and Ukraine, and I believe it is in our

national security interest to support these allies. So I want to see us take up this national security supplemental, but national security begins at home. And we can't pass a bill to advance American interests abroad while ignoring the national security crisis at our own border. We owe the American people better than that.

And the Democrat leader needs to understand the Republicans are serious. We have said all along that this national security supplemental must address the national security crisis at our border, and we will continue to hold that principle.

And while we recognize that in a negotiation, neither side will get everything it wants, the final border security component in this supplemental must have real teeth. Cosmetic measures are not acceptable. We can't afford anything less than real solutions to our Nation's border crisis.

Ten thousand-plus individuals were encountered at our southern border on Sunday, another 10,000 on Monday. It went up to 11,000. And as I said yesterday, now 12,000 in a single day. Things are getting worse, not better. We have an obligation to do everything we can to get this crisis under control—this administration, as I said, something they have had no interest in doing.

So I will vote against moving the supplemental while it lacks serious border security policy changes, and I hope that today's failed vote will clearly demonstrate to our Democratic colleagues that there will be no national security supplemental without the kind of border security measures that we need to keep our Nation secure.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. 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.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 25

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 25 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I further ask consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, Americans have a constitutional right to own a firearm. Every day people across Wyoming responsibly use their Second Amendment rights to keep and to bear arms. Today is about defending those rights against those on the other side of the aisle who wish to take them away from us.

Democrats are demanding that the American people give up their liberty. The Democrat legislation takes away a right, and it does not provide Americans security. Democrats want Washington to ban rifles and pistols because of the way they look. To do this, they describe semiautomatic rifles as assault rifles. They aren't. Any farmer, rancher, or outdoorsman in Wyoming can tell you. These rifles work the same way as popular shotguns and other rifles used for hunting and for personal protection. Instead of facing these facts, Democrats stick to demonizing rifles and disrespecting gun owners.

Democrat's ban on assault weapons is an assault on lawful gun owners. There is a contradiction at the center of the gun control debate. Democrats want to enact new laws on law-abiding citizens. At the same time, they ignore the lawbreakers. Almost every single page of the bill that is in front of us today adds new restrictions and new burdens on people who follow the law. It tells what you can buy, what you can't buy. It bans more than 205 rifles, shotguns, and pistols by name.

Republicans reject these unjustified and unconstitutional restrictions. Democrat's bumper-sticker solution to ban guns is not about safety; it is about restricting lawful gun ownership. It is about trying to label responsible gun owners as criminals. Democrats are the party of defunding the police and disarming the American people.

None of this makes our streets safer. None of this slows the crimewave in America. None of this solves the mental health crisis in our country. The focus should be on mental health, on school safety, and stricter enforcement of current laws. We want Americans to be safe in their communities, their homes, and their schools.

The legislation that the majority leader is proposing that is before us today goes way beyond that. I oppose any policies that jeopardize the Second Amendment rights of the people of Wyoming and people across this country. The Second Amendment is freedom's essential safeguard. Without it, there can be no liberty, and there can be no security.

So, Mr. President, I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. I know that the Senator from Alabama wants to speak. Could I ask the Senator from Alabama how long he wants to speak for?

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Ten minutes.

Mr. SCHUMER. Well, we want to all speak seriatim, and I thought I was going to speak before this.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I yield.

Mr. SCHUMER. Would the Senator yield also to Senator DURBIN after me; is that all right?

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I yield.

Mr. SCHUMER. Thank you.

Mr. President, I just heard, unfortunately, our Senator from Wyoming object. Here are the facts: The scourge of

gun violence in America is a national crisis. The American people are sick and tired of enduring one mass shooting after another. They are sick and tired of vigils and moments of silence for family, friends, classmates, coworkers.

Today, Democrats move to pass the assault weapons ban to help rid our streets of these deadly weapons. I want to thank my colleagues who support this measure, particularly Senator DURBIN, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, as well as Senators MURPHY and BLUMENTHAL and WARNOCK, who organized today's efforts with me.

We already have a decade's worth of proof that a ban on military-style assault works and saves lives, plain and simple. After I led the passage of the assault weapons ban—I carried the bill in the House as a Congressman, alongside our late colleague Senator Feinstein, who carried it in the Senate. What happened? America saw a significant decrease in mass shootings and in gun deaths—a decrease.

Unsurprisingly, when that ban lapsed, there was a sudden and dramatic spike in mass shootings and deaths from those shootings. We must change that. We still feel the unquenchable suffering of the families of Sandy Hook, where 11 years ago next week 26 innocent lives were cut short by an automatic weapon. I still see the pictures of those little children, and I still remember—because I speak to them fairly recently—the parents who have a hole in their hearts forever because some madman with an assault weapon was able to kill 26 of them, one after the other.

We still feel the agony of places like Buffalo, where a year-and-a-half ago a gunman murdered 10 people in cold blood at a Tops grocery store. I was at that grocery store a few days later. I still feel their pain. We feel the pain of Uvalde, Las Vegas, El Paso. The list sadly goes on and on and on.

And we also take action today because of tragedies like the Long Island Rail Road massacre that happened 30 years ago tomorrow in my own backyard, the innocent people who lost their lives at the Maryland train station. It was the 533 train filled with commuters heading home from work—so many injured, six killed. My heart still sinks. And I will never forget hearing that news, the river of blood in the aisles of the commuter railroad train, just horrible.

By passing the assault weapons ban today, we can help save lives, get these weapons off our streets, and prevent future tragedies. So today Republicans face a choice, as they do every day. We want to say to our Republican friends: Stand with families fearing for their lives or stand with the gun lobby and block this assault weapons ban.

Just look at what happened the last time both sides worked together on commonsense gun safety measures. We did something many believed to be impossible. Under the leadership of Senator MURPHY, Senator DURBIN, Senator