

its history represented by a Black man and a Jew—that to have Rabbi Berg here representing The Temple's civil rights commitments in history—The Temple, which in 1958, as you know, Mr. President, was bombed by White supremacists in an attempt at vengeance for Rabbi Jacob Rothschild's alliance with civil rights leaders and Dr. King in the American South—it is particularly powerful to have Rabbi Berg here with us this morning.

He leads, of course, the congregation where I was bar mitzvahed. We are grateful for Rabbi Berg's spiritual leadership.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. WARNOCK. Mr. President, it is my honor and joy to join you in welcoming our good friend Rabbi Peter Berg to the U.S. Senate today.

Rabbi Berg, thank you so very much for your inspiring prayer. It lifts, before all of us, our highest ideals and reminds us of the important work that we are called to do together.

It is always great to see you. As I often say, every Baptist preacher needs a rabbi. And Peter Berg is not only the rabbi at The Temple; he is my rabbi. And he is my friend.

For more than 15 years, Rabbi Berg has led The Temple, Atlanta's largest and one of its most historic synagogues. Its history is so very important not just for Atlanta's Jewish community but for my own church, the Ebenezer Baptist Church, where Dr. King served and, indeed, for the entire city of Atlanta. You are such an important leader in our country.

For more than 50 years, Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church, led by Dr. King, has had a special relationship with The Temple. After Dr. King won the Nobel Peace Prize, some folks in Atlanta didn't want to celebrate it. They weren't certain that that was worthy of recognition. But it was Rabbi Jacob Rothschild, The Temple's then-senior rabbi and a champion for civil rights himself, who helped to bring the city together to commemorate that important moment in the movement for Georgians. It was an interracial dinner, and that, in and of itself, was a movement forward at a time of deep divisions and some of the darkest hours of our country.

And the special relationship has sustained to the present day, where Rabbi Peter Berg, who is the fifth senior rabbi in The Temple's history, and I, the fifth senior pastor in the history of Ebenezer Baptist Church, have carried on that tradition of ecumenical, spiritual friendship. And that friendship is genuine.

As you know, Rabbi, we have done a lot of important work together, and I am so grateful for the long history of friendship between our two congregations. This past March, I was honored to have you to serve as the guest preacher for Ebenezer's 138th anniversary, and you preached with all the fire of any Baptist preacher I know.

In fact, every year, our congregations come together to observe the MLK holiday, and we worship and we work together as one beloved community.

But beyond the doors of your congregation, Rabbi Berg has been a stalwart champion for change in Georgia. He and I have served together on too many occasions to count—from the Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students to Faith in Public Life, Faith Forces Against Gun Violence, the Georgia Interfaith Public Policy Center; our work together addressing the issue of mass incarceration in our country; standing up against bigotry, racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia. Wherever hatred rears its ugly head, we have spoken time and time again together, as one voice. And because of that intersection of faith and justice, you will see Rabbi Berg and you will hear his voice time and time again.

We don't have enough time for me to run through all of Rabbi Berg's accolades, of which there are many. Time and time again, he has been recognized as one of the most influential spiritual leaders in our State and in our Nation.

So on behalf of the State of Georgia, I join Senator OSSOFF in uplifting our appreciation for Rabbi Berg, who has been a source of counsel and a partner in making what Congressman Lewis called "good trouble."

And so during this season of Hanukkah and during this season of Advent, I lift the words of Isaiah, who said that "the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light."

May our lights continue to shine in this world.

Rabbi Berg, I am so blessed to have you as a spiritual brother.

With that, I yield floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

UKRAINE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, earlier this morning, Senator MCCONNELL and I welcomed Ukrainian President Zelenskyy to the U.S. Senate, his third visit to the U.S. Capitol. It was a very powerful, enlightening, and positive meeting.

President Zelenskyy's message was direct: Ukraine will win the war against Russia if more aid is approved. But his message to the contrary was also true: If no more aid is approved, Putin will win.

It is that simple. Ukraine, the West, the U.S. strength as a credible ally are all hanging in the balance right now. Also, President Zelenskyy urged that we need to pass this aid quickly because if we don't pass it quickly, it will send a signal to the whole world that we are abandoning Ukraine and could start a snowball cascading to Ukraine's detriment and to our detriment.

If Ukraine falls, it will be a historic and colossal tragedy. If Russia is victorious, future generations will remember this as a moment of shame for the

West, for the United States, and for those in the Senate who sought to block it.

This is a moment when a friend in need called on our help. We must rise to the occasion. If we abandon Ukraine to the dark forces of autocracy, we will all pay a price. The price won't be tomorrow, meaning next week, but it will be in the months and years ahead but will be an awful price. And everyone who voted against aid to Ukraine will have to live with it.

This is a time for Republicans to be serious about reaching an agreement. "Serious" is the word we are saying to our Republican colleagues. It is not a time for one side to demand maximalist, fringe policies that they know are unrealistic and then say "our way or the highway."

If our Republican colleagues want an agreement on the border, they must meet us at the middle. They need to show us they are serious. So far, when they just ask for H.R. 2—or something like it—they are not showing seriousness.

There are two words to describe Democrats right now. Just like the Republican word should be they need to be "serious," the two words that describe Democrats right now: "still trying." We are still trying to find a good-faith compromise with Republicans, but they must do the same.

Now, last night, I got on the phone with Speaker JOHNSON and urged him to keep the House in session to give the supplemental a chance to come together. I told him that the House should stay in session because over the past 24 hours, I have been alarmed to see some of the same Republicans in the House—and now a good number in the Senate—who had previously demanded action on the border are now suggesting there is no urgency to act before Christmas. After months of saying the border is a crisis, that we must get something done yesterday, many Republicans now seemingly prefer to go home rather than pass a bill.

If Republicans are serious about getting something done on the border, then why are so many of them in such a hurry to leave for the winter break? Has the border simply been an excuse to kill funding for Ukraine?

By Republicans being unwilling to budge on H.R. 2 and getting ready to rush out of town, unfortunately, it may seem the case that these are both excuses, and they really want to kill funding for Ukraine and never had any intention of passing it. That is not true of all Republicans but too many—enough simply to hold us up right now from getting something done.

Do Republicans not realize how thrilled Putin must be right now seeing the gridlock? Russian state TV is even running segments on how great it is for Russia that Congress can't pass Ukraine funding.

Think about that. Putin's allies on Russian state TV are running segments right now on how great it is for Russia that aid to Ukraine is stalled.

Democrats remain committed to finding a realistic, bipartisan agreement on securing the southern border. We will not accept Donald Trump's cruel border policies as envisioned in H.R. 2, which even Speaker JOHNSON has reminded his colleagues didn't get a single Democratic vote in the Senate. But if Republicans show they are serious about meeting us in the middle, we are willing to meet them in the middle.

I hope my Republican colleagues take to heart President Zelenskyy's warnings: The one person happy right now about the gridlock in Congress is Vladimir Putin. He is delighting in the fact that Donald Trump's border policies are sabotaging military aid to Ukraine.

I urge my Republican colleagues to show they are serious about getting a supplemental package done. Democrats are still trying, and we will continue to work with Republicans in good faith in the coming days.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. President, now, on the NDAA, the Senate will move forward on the annual Defense Authorization Act, moving us closer to passing this bill for the 62nd year in a row.

Both sides have done terrific work these past few months getting the NDAA over the finish line. The Senate passed our version of the NDAA with a strong 86-to-11 vote back in July. That is a good bipartisan vote, majorities of both parties supporting it. And over the past few weeks, conferees have done commendable work reconciling the Senate and House version. And I am pleased that the conference has reported a strong defense bill that contains many of the policies the Senate passed back in July.

We are making major strides to outcompete the Chinese Government by approving President Biden's trilateral U.S., U.K., and Australia nuclear submarine agreement. This historic agreement will create a new fleet of nuclear-powered submarines to counter the Chinese Communist Party's influence in the Pacific. And AUKUS, in general, will be a critical part of ensuring stability in that region. We have worked all year long to get it passed through Congress, and I applaud my colleagues on both sides for their efforts.

As I have said repeatedly, we began the month of December with three major goals here in the Senate before the end of the year: First, we had to end the unprecedented monthslong and destructive blockade of hundreds of military nominees. We have done that. Second, we needed to pass the NDAA as we have for decades on a bipartisan basis. We are on track to do that this week. And, finally, most difficult of all, we must reach an agreement with Republicans on the national security supplemental.

Democrats' attitude on the supplemental can be boiled down two words: We are "still trying." We want to get something done. We hope our Repub-

lican colleagues are serious—serious—about getting something done too.

INFLATION REDUCTION ACT

Mr. President, on the Inflation Reduction Act accomplishments, this morning, the American people received more proof that the Biden and Democratic agenda is working.

The Labor Department reported today that year-over-year inflation in November slowed down to 3.1 percent. At the beginning of this year, it was more than double, at 6.4 percent.

And remember, last summer, before we passed the Inflation Reduction Act and the CHIPS and Science Act, inflation was over 9 percent—from 9 percent all the way down to 3.1 percent. We have made big progress. Meanwhile, the labor market remains strong. Jobs are up, higher than they were before the pandemic. And listen to this: Investment in manufacturing construction—manufacturing construction, plants that will turn out goods that we can consume here and export—is at a 20-year high, more than double its highest under the previous administration.

There is a lot of talk from the previous President about jobs. He did very little. This administration, with what we have done, is really producing jobs, jobs, jobs.

No one should be surprised. Thanks to the Democratic work on the IRA, 2023 has been a banner year for American job creation and for American manufacturing; at the same time, getting inflation and the costs to American families down.

In 2023, dozens of companies have announced new investments in the United States, resulting in hundreds of green new clean energy projects and creating tens of thousands of new, good-paying jobs.

And that is just 2023. The Inflation Reduction Act is projected to create another 1.5 million jobs over the next decade.

According to the White House, private companies have announced more than 600 billion in investments across the country, many spurred by the IRA—the Inflation Reduction Act.

And it is not just through manufacturing that the Democratic agenda is paying dividends. In a few short weeks, seniors, for the first time, will have a cap on how much they pay for prescription drugs, thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act.

This is life-changing news for seniors across the country. Never again will a horrible diagnosis mean \$10,000 or more to get the drug you need to survive. Thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act, insulin is also capped at \$35 a month for seniors on Medicaid, and vaccines are now free.

Let me repeat that. Vaccines are free, improving healthcare across America and helping people be healthy without having to pay for it, in terms of things they can't afford.

Drugmakers are penalized if they raise prices faster than inflation. The

administration is negotiating right now for better prices for 10 of the highest cost, most commonly used drugs in Medicare.

And because ACA premiums are becoming more affordable, this year we are seeing a record number of Americans sign up for healthcare on the individual marketplaces.

It takes a lot of work, but the Democrats' agenda is paying off. Costs are coming down. Jobs and opportunities are going up. And while there is a lot of work to do, the American economy is on the right track.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

UKRAINE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this morning, the Senate welcomed Ukraine's inspirational and determined President Zelenskyy to the Capitol.

For nearly 2 years, the people of Ukraine have defied the world's expectations. They have ground down the world's second most powerful military, and they have confounded Putin's aggressive, imperialist aspirations. At every step of the way, America's commitment and support has provided critical fuel for Ukraine's resistance and helped European allies wake up from a holiday from history.

Now, our allies are awake. They are investing in collective defense, and clear majorities of Americans understand the importance of America's continuing to lead as the arsenal of democracy.

I have been a staunch supporter of Ukraine's fight to take back its land, liberate its people, and restore its sovereignty since the beginning of Russia's invasion way back in 2014. Our Ukrainian friends' cause is just, and if the West continues to stand with them, they can win.

But let's be absolutely clear: Ukraine's cause hasn't always been popular here in Washington.

In 2021, Republicans recommended that the Biden administration step up assistance to help Ukraine deter renewed Russian threats, and the administration seemed to think Ukraine was a frozen conflict and a distraction from other priorities. In early 2022, as the gravity of Putin's plans came into focus, Republicans urged the President to expedite shipments of critical weapons systems to stop Russia's advance, but his administration's unfounded fear of escalating the conflict repeatedly kept decisive capabilities out of Ukrainian hands at critical moments.

When Russian troops crossed the border and the administration first came