

game between the University of Connecticut and the University of Oklahoma, attended by 29,619 fans;

Whereas the Crossover at Kinnick event was the first ever NCAA women's basketball game to be played outdoors in a football stadium;

Whereas women athletes at the collegiate level are important role models for young athletes, particularly women and girls, by serving as examples of what can be achieved by pursuing one's dreams through participation in athletics;

Whereas participation in sports helps foster confidence, self-discipline, leadership, and teamwork in young girls;

Whereas the achievements of the Iowa women's basketball program are an inspiration for Iowans and women athletes everywhere; and

Whereas Iowans and University of Iowa alumni across the country are proud of the history made at the Crossover at Kinnick event: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the University of Iowa women's basketball players, coaches, and support staff in setting the NCAA women's basketball attendance record at the Crossover at Kinnick event;

(2) recognizes and celebrates the impact of this record-setting event on young women athletes across the country; and

(3) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate send 1 copy of this resolution to the following individuals:

(A) University of Iowa President Barbara Wilson.

(B) University of Iowa Interim Athletic Director Beth Goetz.

(C) University of Iowa Women's Basketball Coach Lisa Bluder.

Mr. MERKLEY. 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.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

The Senator from Colorado.

UKRAINE

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I would like to start by thanking the Presiding Officer for being here at this late hour and for the staff who are here, the pages who are here, the others who are here late at night before the holidays. Thank you for being here and for your service. And I think we are coming to a point—maybe not tonight but in the next 24 hours—when we are going to conclude our business here for the moment or at least temporarily conclude our business.

I wanted to come to the floor because one of the things that I feel very strongly about that we have not yet done is to pass the Ukraine funding, which I think is essential for Ukraine, essential for our own national security, and essential for Western democracy.

I really believe that. I think it is of that importance, and I believe we should have gotten to a bipartisan agreement on this long ago. I think

that we should have gotten it through the House of Representatives long ago. But I am not in charge of the Senate; I am not in charge of the House of Representatives. I am just one person in this body—like the Presiding Officer is—and sometimes democracy moves more slowly than one would like, certainly than I would like.

I feel more optimistic today than I did last week about the prospects of our getting to the point where we have that bipartisan vote and where we can send a piece of legislation over to the House to fund this. The House is not going to start it, we know that, because of the politics over there.

This body is the body that needs to lead and has, I think, a moral responsibility to lead. But for all those reasons, I wanted to come here tonight and say that I was going to lift my hold on the FAA, which is something that I have held up through the course of these negotiations as a way of keeping us here, to be really honest with you.

I don't think we would have come back probably from our departure last week if we didn't have the unfinished business of the FAA to do, and while the FAA is unrelated to the Ukraine funding, it was a must-pass bill, and it is a must-pass bill. We need to pass that bill.

And it was something that could force us to come back here to continue to have the debate, to continue to have the negotiations, to listen to each other on this important issue and the other issues that we have got to deal with this week, including the judges we are confirming—hopefully, a judge from Colorado.

I have been out here before on the floor to explain why I care so much about this. I was out here when we were passing what is called a continuing resolution here in, I think it was September, which is a temporary budget that is used to operate the Federal Government in the absence of what we should do, which is have a real budget.

Sometimes we pass these things called continuing resolutions to kind of keep the lights on in this place, which I sometimes call the land of flickering lights because the standard of success at the end of the year often is whether we have kept these lights flickering for another year. That is not the standard that I wish for our Congress. It is not a standard that I wish for our democracy or for our country.

That is sometimes the standard here, but every now and then, we surprise ourselves. Every now and then, the people who have been in this Chamber have taken on a responsibility for leadership. That has really made a difference in the world. That has made a difference not just to our country but to the entire world and especially to the free world, to democracy.

I have been out here and talked—I won't do it at length tonight—about my mom's own circumstances. She is—well, I won't say how old she is today,

but you can do the math. She was born in 1938 in Warsaw, Poland—born a Polish Jew at the worst possible moment in human history to be born a Jew on this planet and in the worst possible place a person could ask to be born, in a city that was going to shortly experience the horrific invasion of Nazi troops sent there by Adolf Hitler to exterminate the Jews of Europe and many other people who lived in Eastern Europe at that time.

Just in Ukraine and Poland at that time, there were 16 million people who were killed. They were killed by Hitler and killed by Stalin. The people in that region remember that experience like it was yesterday because it was. In human events, it was yesterday.

My mom, as I said, is still alive. She can't believe she has lived long enough to see another shooting war break out in Europe, as she put it, but here we are. There is a reason why she can't believe it. I mean, part of it is that the freedom she experienced and my grandparents experienced and aunt, who is the only other person who survived the war in this country, were unimaginable to them because of what they had gone through in Warsaw.

They were separated during the war. My mother was told that her parents had been killed, and she believed they had died. Then they were reunited after the war, and they went to Stockholm, Sweden, for a year after they spent about a year or two behind the Iron Curtain, because, of course, the Soviet Union had come in and taken over Poland after the war was over—had come in and taken over Warsaw after the war was over.

Warsaw had been completely destroyed. More than 99 percent of its buildings were destroyed. Millions of people who lived in and around Warsaw had been killed. There was literally nothing left. It was rubble. It was rubble.

Like many human beings who have experienced ethnic cleansing and ethnic battles like these, my mom and her parents probably never imagined that there could be a world where disputes could be resolved in some other way besides violence, besides political violence.

Yet, after they stayed there for a couple of years, they realized they wanted something better than what they had, so they went to Stockholm, Sweden, for a year. They lived there. They started their small business again, which was an art dealership that they had in Warsaw, a gallery. Then they moved to Mexico City, and then they were fortunate enough to be allowed to come to the United States of America, and they immigrated.

My mother was the only person in the family who could speak any English. I think she was about 11 years old. Even today, she speaks Swedish and Polish and Spanish and English, but then, she was the only person in the family who could speak any English. She was the only person in her

family who knew how to register herself in school, so she did. She registered herself in the New York City public schools. She graduated from Hunter College High School.

I have never met anybody in my State—I have met a lot of immigrants all throughout Colorado and all throughout this country, and I tell people sometimes that I still haven't met anybody who has a stronger accent than my grandparents had. They didn't think they had an accent, but they had an unbelievably strong Polish accent.

Their joy at being Americans was not because this country was perfect, not because this country was exceptional in some sense that confers the idea of perfection, but because it was a country that could correct its imperfections without resorting to violence and that they, as recent citizens to this country, as immigrants to this country, as people with strong accents and their Jewish heritage, could contribute to the United States of America when they arrived here, and they could help address the imperfections we had.

All they wanted to do was fit into the country. I think they made a real contribution to this country. The country is stronger because they were here, and they benefited a lot.

That was an era where there is no dispute about American leadership after considerable American failure, because there was a period of time when these Halls of Congress ignored the plight of the Jews in Europe and ignored that the Holocaust was going on. They knew it. They knew about the death camps, and there was nothing they did about it until the Japanese attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor, and then we entered the war. We never looked back, and the world never looked back. We became the arsenal of democracy. We supplied England and Europe with the—or Europe, England, and the allies with the materiel they needed to fight the war.

Our economy was growing substantially after the Great Depression. As the arsenal dropped, we built those weapons here. We manufactured those weapons here. We sent them over to the UK in particular for them to deploy on the battlefields of Europe, and we won that war. The United States literally saved my grandparents' lives and my mother's life.

Then, after the war, the question was, What will be done with the rubble of Europe? What will be done with the communities and cities and towns and rural areas that literally were smashed into smithereens by Hitler's tanks?

We are now, in some ways, living in—not in some ways but actually living in the tyranny of the Soviet Union behind the Iron Curtain, without the freedoms that people had in Western Europe.

There is too much to talk about tonight, and I won't do it, but we engaged in a process of trying to win the peace after we had won the war. That was what the Marshall Plan was all about—the reconstruction of Europe, the re-

construction of Japan, decisions that were made on this floor by human beings in many ways just like us who had the vision to make some hard decisions, the consequences of which would last for generations. They had exactly the same concerns we have here today, I think, probably. They weren't able to predict the future, but they knew what it meant to be on the right side of history, and they were on the right side of history.

The Marshall Plan began what was an era of institution building. They created the multilateral organizations that we still have, the rule of law, international law, the law of nations, the notion that any country's sovereignty shouldn't be attacked by another country.

All of that came out of that era when my mom was a little girl, and it lasted for a long time in Europe. It lasted until 2 years ago when Vladimir Putin decided to invade Ukraine. You could argue that it lasted until he had a trial run when he invaded Crimea a decade before. Until that time, every country in Europe and around Europe had respected the international arrangements that were created in the wake of the rubble of World War II because people knew how horrible the outcomes were in World War II. They knew how many lives had been lost. They knew the destruction of humanity, the destruction of churches and synagogues and people's faiths, entire religions and languages.

People still had the memory of World War I, too, and that was the point of those institutions, that was the point of the commitment to the rule of law, and that was the point of establishing democracy in the international organizations I am talking about but also in all these countries as well that were on this side of the Iron Curtain.

Over time, over those decades, our economies grew stronger, the democracies grew stronger. Ultimately, the Berlin Wall fell. There were people in the 1990s who were writing that this was the end of history, that liberal democracy had triumphed over any other form of human organization, that capitalism had triumphed over any other form of economic organization.

We have learned a lot since then. We have learned a lot since we were attacked on 9/11 and a response that led us to two wars that lasted for 20 years in the Middle East and then Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine, of a free country on the border of Russia.

The Presiding Officer is on the Intelligence Committee now. It is an excellent place to serve together.

Before you got on there, it was really interesting to be there—not because you weren't there. It has gotten better because you have been there. But it was fascinating to be there in the lead-up to this war because we had the opportunity to see Putin make one mistake after another because of who he is, obviously, but also because of the totalitarian nature of his society.

You know, when you live in a totalitarian society and you are the person at the top, nobody is going to tell you that what you are doing is crazy if they want to live very long. Nobody is going to tell you that what you are trying to do is wrong.

I think one of the huge mistakes he made was imagining that all the money he had spent on his army, trying to strengthen his army, had been spent well when much of it was lost to corruption. Much of it created actually a weak army instead of a strong army. How do we know that today? We know that today because the Ukrainian people have basically smashed Putin's army.

Let me tell you something. He didn't know that was going to happen. He did not know that was going to happen 2 years ago. Two years ago, he had no idea that the Ukrainian people would fight to the death. He didn't know that.

We did. Our intelligence agencies sometimes make mistakes in their analysis of intelligence or in the intelligence they collect but not on this subject because they know the history of Ukraine; they know the history of the Ukrainian people; they know what they went through in World War II.

They know what they went through in World War I. They know what they have been through in the last eon in that part of the world, and what they said was: They will never give up. They will never give up.

Putin didn't know that. It turns out the intelligence community was right about that.

They said: Well, we hope that free societies around the world will rally to the cause. And I don't think that is really an intelligence assessment, the assessment of our democracies. There has been a lot of worry—I have had a lot of worry; I have talked about it on this floor a lot—about the state of democracy both here and abroad. We are living in a time where there are all kinds of forces that are tearing at democracy at here and abroad. And there are politicians here and abroad who are claiming that democracy is not important or that democracy can't deliver for the American people or anybody else.

That is not uncommon in human history. The reason I think it is happening here—there are a bunch of reasons, but a main reason is kind of the age-old reason, which is when people start to lose a sense of opportunity for themselves and their family. When they are working really hard and they can't get ahead; when they feel like they can't afford to work because childcare is so expensive, healthcare is so expensive. Higher education is going to mean a lifetime sentence in your parents' basement because of the amount of loans you are going to take out. Those kinds of things tear at people. When that kind of opportunity seems lost or obscure, that is when people show up all throughout human history, and they say: I alone can fix

it. You don't need a democracy; you don't need the rule of law. You should expect your public sector and your private sector to be hopelessly corrupt, hopelessly bankrupt. That is a dark vision. It is not an unusual vision in those circumstances.

But just at the moment when we worry—we fear for our democracy—what we saw as a result of the courage and the bravery of the Ukrainian people, the skill of the Ukrainian soldiers and military, a country that—I still don't understand it—a country that was able to basically disable Putin's navy without any navy of their own and open up the shipping lanes in the Black Sea so people all over the world could benefit from grain that was otherwise not going to be exported—people all over the world in free countries saw this courage and said: We need to show up for the Ukrainian people. We need to do more for the Ukrainian people because they are in a fight that is our fight, and they are carrying off this fight in a way that they should be proud of and we should be proud of, that inspires us.

And people all over the world, citizens living in democracies all over the world, called up their elected officials and said: Do more, do more, do more. And the United States found itself, once again, in a position that no other country in the world can occupy, which is the leader of the free world, the leader of every democracy around the world. And we put together a coalition of countries, largely led by NATO, that has supported the Ukrainian people through this fight for the last 2 years.

It has been amazing to see it. I think it has given us confidence in our own democracy. I think it has given the Europeans confidence in their democracy and the democracies in Southeast Asia as well and in Australia, New Zealand, and places all over the world that have supported this fight and have been reminded how much more excellent it is to live in a free society; to live in a place that is committed to the rule of law, that is committed to fair dealing and not to corruption.

That is not a place like where my poor mother and grandparents lived, where might made right; where there was no rule of law; where whether you survived or whether you didn't survive, whether you survived or whether you perished, was a matter of luck, not something you could ever predict.

That has been a noble fight. It is not a fight any of us would have wanted, but Putin is a lot weaker today than he was 2 years ago. The Russian Army is a lot weaker today than it was 2 years ago. They are not a pushover. They have dangerous nuclear and chemical weapons that we have to worry about. But they are in worse shape today than they were 2 years ago.

The Ukrainian people have succeeded beyond anyone's wildest dreams. I mentioned the intelligence agency reports. You know, one thing they got totally wrong was they thought Kyiv

would be invaded in 72 hours, that the political leadership would be killed or overcome. And President Zelenskyy is still there fighting to this day.

I remember, Mr. President, when we had our first Zoom call with President Zelenskyy. It was sort of funny. It was back in—I think COVID was still going on, maybe. And I can remember there was a guy sitting in for him, just like on any regular Zoom call you would have, only he was sitting in for the President of Ukraine. And the President of Ukraine had some pretty serious business that he had to conduct; and, finally, when the meeting was ready to be started, all of a sudden, there he was. There he was. And he said to us on that day—the first day I ever heard him talk personally—again, it was on Zoom. He said: We are fighting to live our lives the way you live your lives. That is how he put it, and it was very simple. That is what we are fighting for. And he hasn't changed that tune for the last 2 years. That has been his focus.

He told us the other day that if we fail to continue to fund the Ukrainian people, that they will lose. He said that if we fund the Ukrainian people and their military, they can win. They can win.

I think they can win.

He said that if we don't fund them, they will lose. But he said: But we will never stop fighting. We will never stop fighting because the Ukrainian people love freedom. And that is the difference between us and Vladimir Putin. And that is the difference between us and the Russian army.

I would say, how dare anybody bet against the Ukrainian army or the Ukrainian people after what they have done? They have taken back half the territory that Putin stole from them. Nobody would have said they could do that. They have done that.

I mentioned what they had done to his navy in the Black Sea—without even a navy. They have won battle after battle after battle that nobody thought they would have won. And now they are in a difficult winter on the frontlines. And it is sort of a stasis, which is not surprising. I have heard people out here say that that is somehow a failure for the Ukrainian armed forces and the Ukrainian people. And it is hard for me to see how that is anything but a success—an extraordinary success.

We don't know what is going to happen after this winter when the next fighting season comes, but I would never bet against the Ukrainian people's ingenuity or their military's toughness or their society's resolve. I would never bet against freedom. I would never bet against democracy. That is the bet we have here. That is the choice that we have to make.

It is a choice where our folks are not involved in the fighting. Our folks are not giving their lives in this fight, in this battle for democracy. But we are giving our treasure. We are giving our

intelligence in this fight because this fight is as important for us as it is for Ukraine. I don't mean that rhetorically; I mean that literally.

When I hear the isolationist people in this Chamber talking about their desire not to continue funding Ukraine, I want to say to them—and, in fact, I do say to them—even if I accepted your premise, which I don't, but let's say I accept your isolationist premise that this is a moment in human history when we shouldn't support the Ukrainians because we have things that we have to do at home instead of things that we have to do in Ukraine, do you think that Putin will stop just because we decide to stop? Do you think Putin will just give up because we have given up? Do you think that the war will just come to an end, or do you think that Putin will roll back through the territory that the Ukrainians have seized from his army?

Do you think that Putin will block the grain shipments in the Black Sea that are so important to feeding people around the world and stopping famine around the world?

Do you think that he will threaten Eastern Europe? Do you think that he will never give up?

If you believe that—and the odds are not even 50–50 that that stuff is true; it is 100 percent what is going to happen. If you believe that and you are an isolationist, you should be for continuing this funding because we want to keep our people out of this fight and because it has given us the opportunity to rebuild our military and our defense. And that is not a small thing because 90 percent of the money that we have sent to Ukraine has been spent here rearming the United States, restarting factories and supply lines that we are going to need to project strength throughout the world. That is not a bad thing; that is a good thing. That is what Ronald Reagan meant when he said, "Peace through strength."

That is what he meant when he went up and said, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall," because you can't bottle up the human spirit and because your economy is getting crushed because you can't outcompete the United States in terms of our expenditures. We are in exactly the same position today.

I really believe this: that the Ukrainian people can win on this battlefield. And that is not just from casually reading the newspaper; that is from being a member of the Intelligence Committee; that is seeing the intelligence that you are seeing. I don't know if they will win. I believe they can win. I think they have a chance to win. I think Putin thinks he could lose on that battlefield. On that battlefield, he thinks he could lose. And the battlefield he is counting on winning on is the battlefield of Capitol Hill, the battlefield of Western democracy.

You don't have to take my word for it. He says it almost every day. He says: They are going to lose patience. He says: Their attention span is too short.

It doesn't help that there are some American politicians, including a former President, who seem to be rooting for his success, who seem to be rooting against the Ukrainian people, who seem to be rooting against democracy. That certainly doesn't help, but even if you don't accept that, there is a reason that he believes that—because it is hard to sustain these efforts in a democracy. He doesn't have the inconvenience of a democracy. He has a totalitarian society that will do what he says it is going to do. We have a democracy where people stand for election, where sometimes people might say 2 years is enough or a stalemate on the frontlines isn't good enough or we have too much to do here to spend just a little bit more money to reequip our defense capabilities as well as to support Ukraine.

He is counting on that. He is counting on winning on this battlefield. He is counting on the fact that there have been some elections in Europe where there have been people who have been elected who have the same sort of isolationist temperament that some people have here. We can't let that happen. We cannot let that happen.

The Presiding Officer was there when I first addressed our caucus on this question. For me, this is personal. I didn't go through it. Obviously, I didn't go through what my mother went through. But nobody can escape history, and I think no one can escape history. It is really important for us to learn history, and it is really important for us to understand the stakes at this moment and what it looks like to be invisible to this Chamber; to be fighting on that freezing frontline and not knowing whether we are going to come through with the ammunition; to be suffering through another cold snap when your heat has been blown up by the Russians and not knowing whether the humanitarian aid is going to come; to be a politician in some Western European capital and wondering whether the United States is going to continue to provide the exquisite and capable leadership that has been provided by this Nation, in a bipartisan way, over the last 2 years. Those are the things that are at stake as we are meeting here tonight.

In the course of human events, it is really easy to lose patience; it is really easy to have a short attention span, certainly a shorter attention span than a dictator who is acting out the imperialist impulses of Peter the Great, which Putin is, or who is going to be there, whether we leave or whether we don't leave, on the border of Ukraine for the rest of his life, one way or another, and he thinks for the rest of Russia's existence because that is how he thinks.

So I am not here to say that we are going to end the Russian ambition for Ukraine, but I am here to say we have a chance to win this battle for democracy for us and for Ukraine, and we should. If somebody had set out 2 years

ago or 5 years ago or 10 years ago to say, "Let's have a plan to spend 5 percent of the DOD's budget, restart our defense capabilities in the United States of America, expose the weakness of Putin's Army, make Xi Jinping have to think once or twice or three times or four times about the advisability of invading Taiwan because of the chance that free countries around the world would all come together in support of a country that had been invaded" or if we had said "Please give us a strategy for the amount of money that we have spent and for the \$90 billion that is in this request," there is no way we would have been as successful as the Ukrainians have been.

So this is an easy choice, I think, for us to make, and it is a very important choice for us to make. We cannot allow Putin to win on our dysfunctional battlefield.

I am going to finish just by observing that there are colleagues here who have said that they don't want to support this effort unless we deal with the situation at the border and unless we deal with immigration as part of this.

By the way, I would mention that one of those people is not the leader of the Republican caucus, MITCH MCCONNELL. I don't think there is anyone in America who believes more fiercely in the duty that the American people have and this Congress, as the representative of the American people, to fund Ukraine than Senator MCCONNELL. I want to say that. I want to thank him for his steadfastness because it has made a difference so far, and I think it will make a difference if we can get this over the finish line.

But there are some colleagues on the other side who have said they are unwilling to give their votes here unless we address the border. I would not have attached immigration to this debate. This debate is hard enough without introducing another issue that we have had so much difficulty grappling with. But I think what we have discovered in the course of this discussion is something that the Presiding Officer has made clear as a Senator from a border State; that the American people do not want our border policy dictated by transnational gangs. The American people do not want decisions made by smuggling enterprises that are violating people's human rights, that are dragging people all over the globe to come to the southern border of the United States. The American people want to make the decisions for our border and for our immigration policy.

The President has said that our border is broken. The Secretary of Homeland Security has said that our border is broken. I spent 2 days in the Tucson sector on the border, and it needs a lot of work, and it probably needs changes of policy and money. There is a reason President Biden put \$14 billion in the supplemental for the border. That is more money than is in the supplemental for Israel.

So I would not have attached this to the Ukraine deal, but I understand the

motivations of people who have attached it, and I believe that we can carry out a negotiation on this topic that helps to improve our border and improve our immigration system on behalf of the American people.

We have a lot more that we need to do on immigration than we are going to be able to do in this negotiation and as part of the Gang of 8, who passed the last comprehensive immigration bill that passed the U.S. Senate; that got 68 votes; that had a pathway to citizenship for the 11 million people who were undocumented in this country; that had the most progressive DREAM Act that anybody had ever written, much less passed, in the Senate; that had all of the visa issues that are so important to our universities, to our businesses, to our farmers and ranchers, to our farmworkers, to our ski resorts—all of them. There was \$40 billion of border security in that bill that would have allowed us to see every inch of the border.

We are a long way from getting to those policies issues, but I hope that this debate and discussion will lead to more bipartisan cooperation in the coming years—months and years—to remind us of something that I think we have forgotten for the moment, which is that immigration is an incredible strength of the United States of America.

We have many headwinds in this country—the lack of quality of our education system, especially for kids living in poverty; our healthcare system, which costs twice as much as any industrialized country's in the world. We have to fix those. We have our massive income inequality, and we have to fix that. All of those things would strengthen our democracy.

And we have to fix our immigration system. Immigration has been responsible for literally a third of our economic growth throughout our entire history. Immigration is how we get new talent and new ideas. Immigration is how my mom and her parents came to this country. Immigration is a dynamic force for good that countries like China don't have the benefit of. There is nobody crossing the Gobi Desert to get to Beijing, and there is a reason for that. There is a reason for that. It is because they want the same thing that President Zelenskyy wants. It is because they want the same thing that the Ukrainian people want: free speech, freedom of religion, freedom of the press, the opportunity to lend their talents to improving the society in which they live—no matter where they come from, no matter what language they speak, no matter what religion they have—for the benefit of their children and to know that their children are protected from political violence.

We have a democratic way of resolving our differences and resolving our disputes. We live in a moment when there is a sort of a monopoly on wisdom and cable television stations at night that are telling you there is only

one way to think about any issue like immigration or like Ukraine, when that is not actually the way this is supposed to work.

The Founders of this country did not create this country thinking we would agree with each other. It was the opposite. They knew what a society was in which everybody agreed with each other. That was a society where there was a tyrant in charge to tell you what to think and to tell you what to believe, like Putin's Russia, like Xi's China, like Iran, like North Korea. They knew exactly what those places were like. They knew that humans had lots of differences, experiences, and attitudes, but they knew that, in a society that was run by a tyrant, you weren't free to express those.

Here, they thought the genius of what they were setting up would be a result of the disagreements we have, not of the agreements we have. They thought, out of those disagreements, like on this Senate floor, we would create more imaginative and more durable results than any King or tyrant could come up with on their own. That was the idea.

I would say to the pages who are here: This may sound like some big philosophical thing, but I will bet the same thing is true for you. The worst decisions I make are the decisions I make at home, alone in my basement, not consulting with someone else's point of view, not consulting with someone else's experience or perspective. That is why there are 100 Members of the Senate—2 from every State. It is so that we can have that disagreement and we can have that discussion, and that is why people want to come to this country. It is because they know how rare that is in human societies, and that is why Ukraine is leading this fight on behalf of the rest of us and why they will never give up.

I will say again that President Zelenskyy was clear when he came here. He said: With your help, we can win. Without your help, we will lose. But even if you don't help us, we are not going to give up because the Ukrainian people love freedom and we are going to continue to fight for freedom.

Mr. President, I mentioned at the beginning of this speech that I was lifting my hold on the FAA because I felt like, even though I am deeply disappointed that we haven't passed this Ukraine funding and we haven't come yet to an agreement, I think we have made progress in the negotiations.

I had the chance to consult with both the majority leader and the Republican leader. I know they have put out a joint statement tonight saying that we had made progress and saying that they were committed to having the Senate move quickly and, I hope, decisively in January on this issue. I think that is the best we are going to get out of this tonight.

I hope it gives us a chance over the next few weeks for all of us to consider

the example of people who have come before us and who have served in this Chamber, who themselves had no monopoly on wisdom—people who were fallible but who took a risk on the future and understood that nobody else can play the role the United States of America can play. That was true on the way into World War II. That was true on the way out of World War II. And it is just as true today.

I have found it amazing when we have been in the company of President Zelenskyy because you feel like you are in the company of the Ukrainian people, and you feel like you are in the company of the Ukrainian soldiers, for the reasons that I said earlier about why he is in this fight. But it is an amazing thing about human events that, 3 years ago, he was a television star of some kind or other, and, today, he is the President of a country that has been attacked by a tyrant, invaded by a tyrant.

He is not a tall guy. He is not a strong guy. And the literal weight of the world is on his shoulders. And the literal weight of the world is on the Ukrainian people's shoulders, and it is on their military's shoulders.

We can help lift that burden from them. We can't take that burden away from them, nor should we. They are the ones who are fighting on the frontlines, and they will be. But we should help lift that burden from them because their burden is our burden and because nobody else on this planet is situated in the same way as the United States, has the same moral responsibility that we have, and has the capability to lend the kind of support we can lend. Because the Ukrainian people have showed up and done their job, it is time for us to show up and do our job.

In January, let's tell Vladimir Putin that he lost—he lost—the battle on this battlefield, and that he is going to lose the battle in Ukraine as well.

I just want to thank the floor staff tonight for enduring this and the pages for enduring this. I want to thank you for all of your work during this entire year.

I wish everybody a happy holiday.

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.

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

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

NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, you, the Senator from Colorado, have voiced increased optimism in getting a supplemental done, and I agree with the Senator from Colorado. This won't be easy, but we will keep working because this is so important to our country and to the world.

I read a statement that Senator MCCONNELL and I issued a few hours ago, a joint statement regarding supplemental national security legislation:

Bipartisan border security negotiations are essential to the Senate's efforts to address critical national security priorities. Our colleagues are making encouraging progress on this front.

Challenging issues remain, but we are committed to addressing needs at the southern border and to helping allies and partners confront serious threats in Israel, Ukraine and the Indo-Pacific. The Senate will not let these national security challenges go unanswered.

As negotiators work through remaining issues, it is our hope that their efforts will allow the Senate to take swift action on the national security supplemental early in the new year.

In the time remaining this year, Senate and administration negotiators will continue to work in good faith toward finalizing their agreement.

Now I will move to pass the extension of the reauthorizing of the FAA. It is critical we extend this funding as so many Americans travel for the holidays. It is going to give us more time for a long-term funding measure in the new year, so passing FAA funding tonight is good news.

AIRPORT AND AIRWAY EXTENSION ACT OF 2023, PART II

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 6503, which was received from the House.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 6503) to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous 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 PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 6503) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 445, John David Russell, of Oklahoma, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of