

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, here again, this is unfortunate. We have a small handful of people who have negotiated this thing behind closed doors. They have agreed to what they have agreed to. They have taken out things that they themselves have found controversial.

So, apparently, it is not the hermetically sealed chamber that it is purported to be and has been purported to be just moments ago by my friend and distinguished colleague, the Senator from Washington. And yet we are told that the cake is sufficiently baked, and not for their purposes but for ours. When we want to make a change to it, when we even want to have a debate about it, we are shut down. We are told: Sorry, no dice. That cannot happen.

That is unacceptable.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, there is also a measure in this legislation—a measure calling for \$2.5 million to be set aside for outdoor recreation purposes—funding kayaking and slalom facilities in Franklin, NH.

These sound like fun activities. They are fun activities. I mean, who doesn't like those kinds of activities? I think most of us could agree this is completely inappropriate. And it is an unnecessary use of Federal taxpayer dollars. This ought to be funded solely at the State and local level or with private funding and not here.

To that end, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to reprint the joint explanatory statement to accompany H.R. 4366, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024, that was printed in yesterday's RECORD with the following changes and that this amended version be considered the joint explanatory statement to accompany H.R. 4366:

[T]he removal of a Senate Community Development Fund project that would provide \$2,500,000 to the city of Franklin, NH for outdoor recreation, in THUD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. LEE. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. Madam President, here today, since I have been in the Senate, which has been a little over 5 years, I think I have been the most steadfast voice in terms of, whatever we want to do here, we shouldn't be borrowing it from our kids and our grandkids.

Any of you up there listening, it is a sad state of affairs in the sense that, just a little over 5 years ago, we were

\$18 trillion in debt, borrowing at the tune of about a trillion dollars a year to backfill for all the things we want to do here, and ask you and your kids to pay for it. To me, that is a bad business plan.

Sadly, it gets even worse. Over these 5 years, instead of a trillion dollars annually, it is now a trillion dollars every 6 months. For those of you who are good at math, take current interest rates and apply that to \$34 trillion—soon to be \$35 trillion, if it has not already crossed that threshold. That is a big figure with a lot of zeroes behind it. To put it in perspective, the interest on that alone is going to be about what we spend on defense in the next year or the discretionary side of our budget.

How we have ever gotten there, I don't know.

We are going to be considering another package tomorrow or Friday that takes the whole process of doing budgets, asking: Do you really need it? Aren't there some places that we could surely get back to where we don't spend more than we take in, because when we don't, we are borrowing every penny of it. And, on every dollar that we spend here, 5 years ago, it was about 20 cents of that dollar that we had to borrow. Now it is 30 cents. The arithmetic—the numbers—don't just go away.

It will be the single biggest thing all of you—this country—has to deal with over the next 5 to 10 years, and it is just starting to get to the point where it is going to, literally, break the back of the American public. Sooner or later, you won't have people lending us that money. Sooner or later, it is going to crowd out almost everything we do here, and it is shameful, in my mind.

I want to focus on one, actually, small part of it, but what is symbolic of what shouldn't be happening here: earmarks. Earmarks are justified because we ought to be able to maybe do it better here and should have input in it, and not let the executive branch do that. But to me, that would be valid if, in fact, we were balancing our budget in the first place.

Until we get total fiscal reform here and at least start to turn it around to where the deficits get smaller, the debt is never going to get smaller because, in general, if you take out a loan, imagine if you told your banker: I just want to pay interest only for as long as I have that loan.

They would laugh you out of the office.

So when it comes to earmarks, this bill is filled with them. It wasn't too many years ago that we got rid of them. Then the House started doing them again—both sides of the aisle. We are elective here, if you want to do it or not. But to me, that is fine, but not in the context that it is new money. For every earmark, you have to lend us the money or maybe somebody overseas. Who knows who will do it down the road?

It has a lot of other stuff in it that you are not going to like in terms of

policy that goes along with the spending. It is no wonder to me that Americans say: What is going on here?

How are we going to change it? We are not going to change it until you demand it. Two simple things: term limits and a balanced budget amendment. Then it would run like your households and most other governments around our own country.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to strike the joint explanatory statement to accompany H.R. 4366, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024, that was printed in yesterday's RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

#### NOMINATION OF MOSHE Z. MARVIT

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I support the nomination of Moshe Marvit to be a Member of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission.

Mr. Marvit is currently a supervisory attorney-advisor in the Commission's Pittsburgh field office, where he has served since 2012. In this role, he writes decisions for administrative law judges and mediates cases between mine operators and the Mine Safety and Health Administration.

Prior to working at the Commission, Mr. Marvit was in private practice where he represented the United Steelworkers and employees in pension and discrimination matters. Mr. Marvit has written extensively on labor law, including co-authoring a book titled "Why Labor Organizing Should Be a Civil Right," which explains the historical importance of the American labor movement, provides data on how current law fails to deter employer abuses, and compares U.S. labor protections to those of other developed nations.

Mr. Marvit has a B.A. in philosophy from the Pennsylvania State University, an M.A. in political science from the University of Chicago, an M.A. in history from Carnegie Mellon University, and a J.D. from the Chicago-Kent College of Law.

Mr. Marvit is a well-qualified nominee strongly supported by the United Mine Workers of America and the United Steelworkers, and I urge my colleagues to support his nomination.

#### VOTE ON MARVIT NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Marvit nomination?

Mr. DURBIN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas and nays have been requested.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Alabama (Mrs. BRITT).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 71 Ex.]

#### YEAS—50

Baldwin	Heinrich	Reed
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Kaine	Schatz
Brown	Kelly	Schumer
Butler	King	Shaheen
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Smith
Cardin	Lujan	Stabenow
Carper	Manchin	Tester
Casey	Markey	Van Hollen
Coons	Menendez	Warner
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warnock
Duckworth	Murphy	Warren
Durbin	Murray	Welch
Fetterman	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Padilla	Wyden
Hassan	Peters	

#### NAYS—49

Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blackburn	Hagerty	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Collins	Lankford	Sinema
Cornyn	Lee	Sullivan
Cotton	Lummis	Thune
Cramer	Marshall	Tillis
Crapo	McConnell	Tuberville
Cruz	Moran	Vance
Daines	Mullin	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Young
Fischer	Paul	
Graham	Ricketts	

#### NOT VOTING—1

Britt

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

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

The 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. 456, Cathy Ann Harris, of Maryland, to be Chairman of the Merit Systems Protection Board.

Charles E. Schumer, Gary C. Peters, Tim Kaine, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Catherine Cortez Masto, Margaret Wood Hassan, Jeanne Shaheen, Tammy Duckworth, Tina Smith, Christopher A. Coons, Chris Van Hollen, Mark R. Warner, Amy Klobuchar, Elizabeth Warren, Alex Padilla, Brian Schatz, Mark Kelly.

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 Cathy Ann Harris, of Maryland, to be Chairman of the Merit Systems Protection Board, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Alabama (Mrs. BRITT).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 48, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 72 Ex.]

#### YEAS—51

Baldwin	Heinrich	Reed
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Kaine	Schatz
Brown	Kelly	Schumer
Butler	King	Shaheen
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Sinema
Cardin	Lujan	Smith
Carper	Manchin	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Fetterman	Ossoff	Welch
Gillibrand	Padilla	Whitehouse
Hassan	Peters	Wyden

#### NAYS—48

Barrasso	Graham	Paul
Blackburn	Grassley	Ricketts
Boozman	Hagerty	Risch
Braun	Hawley	Romney
Budd	Hoeven	Rounds
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Cassidy	Johnson	Schmitt
Collins	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lee	Sullivan
Cramer	Lummis	Thune
Crapo	Marshall	Tillis
Cruz	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	Moran	Vance
Ernst	Mullin	Wicker
Fischer	Murkowski	Young

#### NOT VOTING—1

Britt

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BUTLER). On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 48, and the motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Cathy Ann Harris, of Maryland, to be Chairman of the Merit Systems Protection Board.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

#### STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, tomorrow night, we will have the annual State of the Union Message from the President of the United States. Each year, Members of Congress are given a ticket to invite a guest to the State of the Union. I have invited several people over the years whom I will never forget. One of them, 15 years ago, was a woman in military uniform who came to see us from her hospital room. She had just been shot down in her helicopter over Iraq, and there she was a few weeks later as my guest at the State of the Union. Her name was TAMMY DUCKWORTH. Now she is my colleague in the U.S. Senate. So you never know what might happen when a Member of Congress offers an invitation to the State of the Union.

Tomorrow night, I am going to have a special guest and a special friend. I am hosting an extraordinary resident of my State, Dr. Zaher Sahloul. Dr. Sahloul is a critical care specialist at Advocate Christ Medical Center at Saint Anthony's Hospital.

He is an associate professor of clinical medicine at the University of Illinois in Chicago, but he is much, much more than that.

Dr. Sahloul has a long history of leading timely and often dangerous medical missions to some of the most desperate parts of the world, including recently a trip to Gaza. You see, Dr. Sahloul is the president of MedGlobal, a nonprofit that provides critical medical services in areas of crisis all over the world. His work was recently featured on "60 Minutes."

Before that, he led the Syrian American Medical Society, which led similar lifesaving missions. Through these efforts, he and other volunteer doctors have provided urgent care to desperate populations, including in Syria, Ukraine, Yemen, and Bangladesh. In fact, in 2017, when the Burmese military was attacking that country's Rohingya population with unspeakable cruelty, Dr. Sahloul and his colleagues helped the war-weary refugees who were fleeing into Bangladesh.

I had a chance to visit him and witness those efforts firsthand at one such camp in the Bangladeshi city of Cox's Bazar. I will never forget walking through that sea of humanity, desperate humanity, and seeing what Dr. Sahloul and his colleagues were doing to bring basic dignity and basic medical care to this traumatized population. It was truly heroic.

And what he and his colleagues similarly have done in Syria, with barrel bombs falling from the sky, or in Ukraine or in Gaza, has been equally moving. It is no wonder he has been awarded the Gandhi Award for Peace, the Heartland Alliance Kovler Center Dr. Robert Kirschner's Award for Global Activism, and UNICEF Chicago's Shine a Light on Global Refugee Crisis annual humanitarian award.

I believe that Dr. Sahloul epitomizes humanity's goodness during times of conflict and trauma. And it is my honor to have him as my guest tomorrow night. His most recent work in Gaza is a stark reminder of the dire humanitarian needs facing us in the unfolding crisis that started with the horrific October 7 Hamas attack on Israel.

He shared with me and several of my colleagues deeply troubling stories of innocent people caught in this conflict who are in desperate need of basic medical attention and supplies. Operations and amputations occurring using vinegar as an antiseptic or Tylenol for anesthesia in the amputation of children's limbs, expectant mothers without safe medical facilities to give birth.

The United States has started airdropping emergency supplies into Gaza. It is a relatively small step, but