

This was an unforced error by the Judicial Conference. I hope they will reconsider, and I hope district courts throughout the country will instead weigh what is best for their jurisdictions, not half-baked “guidance” that just does Washington Democrats’ bidding.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

(The remarks of Mr. DURBIN pertaining to the submission of S. 3961 are printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

Mr. DURBIN. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

PRESIDENT BIDEN’S BUDGET

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, President Biden released his budget on Monday, and, predictably, it was filled with the same old, tired, tax-and-spending proposals—so much spending and so many taxes.

All told, the President’s budget raises taxes by a staggering \$5 trillion. You heard that right—\$5 trillion. His corporate tax hike and capital gains tax proposals would both raise rates higher than those in communist China.

Many small businesses would see a hefty tax hike under the President’s proposal, and most Americans would see an income tax hike, as his budget would allow current income tax rates to expire after 2025—so much for the President’s commitment to not raising taxes for anyone making under \$400,000.

Something President Biden and Democrats never seem to understand is that raising taxes has consequences. The corporate tax hike that President Biden would like you to believe will be borne by CEOs and CFOs—in fact, that tax hike would hit working Americans hard.

Studies have shown that workers bear a huge percentage of the burden of corporate income taxes. Impacts aren’t just limited to workers employed by corporations. Corporate tax hikes can hit all Americans in the form of higher prices for goods and services.

Or take President Biden’s proposed tax hike on gas and oil, which would be on top—on top—of the energy tax hikes he has already imposed. Taxing energy can drive up the cost of Americans’ energy bills and make it more expensive every time Americans have to fill up their cars—not exactly a desirable outcome when Americans have already seen huge increases in energy prices under President Biden.

As I said, all of those tax hikes are accompanied by a lot of new spending proposals as President Biden continues his mission to increase the size—and the intrusiveness—of the Federal Government. His budget includes massive new spending programs and big increases for government departments and Agencies like the IRS.

Yet even as the President uses budget gimmicks and accounting tricks to blow through the nondefense spending cap for 2025, he makes no attempt to use any of his budgeting sleight of

hand to address the serious readiness problems facing our military.

The President spent ample time in his State of the Union Address talking about the dangerous world in which we live, and he is right. Yet his budget makes little attempt to ensure that our military is equipped to meet that dangerous world. We have military services well below their recruitment targets. We are behind on shipbuilding and ship maintenance. There is a persistent pilot shortage. In a number of cases, we have too few mission-capable aircraft. And we are not doing an adequate job of maintaining the kind of supply we need of munitions. Yet President Biden is happy to blow through the nondefense spending cap but can’t find an extra dollar in his budget for our military. It says a lot about the President’s priorities.

It is also worth noting that the President’s budget makes absolutely no attempt to ensure that Social Security is protected for current and future retirees. With Social Security on track to run out of money to pay full benefits in 2033, you would think that the President would be focused on safeguarding this program rather than creating new government programs that have to be funded. But, clearly, you would be wrong.

This year, the interest on our national debt is projected to cost more than any government expenditure except Social Security. Let me just repeat that. This year, the interest on our national debt is projected to cost more than any government expenditure except Social Security. That is just the interest on our debt. When the interest alone on your national debt is the second highest line item in your budget, you know you are on an unsustainable fiscal path. And it is the height of fiscal irresponsibility for the President to be proposing massive new government programs when we are going into debt just to afford the ones we already have.

I could go on. I could talk about the President’s request for \$8 billion to hire an additional 50,000 Americans for his Climate Corps, like so-called “climate resilience workers,” or I could talk about the President’s attempt to force American taxpayers to pay for abortions or the eye-wateringly large funding increase the President wants for the IRS.

But I will stop here. And I hope—I hope—my colleagues will agree that, for the sake of the American people, the President’s budget should be dead on arrival here in the Congress.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 7511

Mr. BUDD. Mr. President, there have been more than 9 million illegal alien border crossings on President Biden’s watch. At the same time, there has been a 57-percent decrease in arrests of criminal illegal aliens and a 67-percent decrease in deportation of criminal aliens.

This complete lack of enforcement of existing law has caused unimaginable human suffering across our country. One such tragedy occurred last month in Athens, GA. An illegal alien from Venezuela brutally murdered 22-year-old nursing student Laken Riley on the campus of the University of Georgia. What makes this story all the more devastating was that the killer could have been stopped but wasn’t.

So how on Earth was this tragedy even allowed to take place? Well, here is the timeline. The killer illegally entered the United States in September of 2022 in El Paso, TX. He was caught, but then he was paroled into the country. He then made his way to New York City, where he was arrested for child endangerment in 2023, but then he was released. He then fled to Georgia, where he committed several petty crimes like theft and shoplifting. He was not detained by ICE. Then came the tragedy of February 22, where he preyed on an innocent young woman jogging around a university campus.

This was allowed to take place because of the open border policies of President Biden. It took place because executive Agencies are given discretion to determine what crimes trigger a detainer to be issued to take an illegal alien into custody. The “discretion loophole” has got to be closed. And that is why we are here today: to make sure these tragedies never happen again.

In Laken’s honor, Senator KATIE BRITT of Alabama and I have teamed up to introduce the Laken Riley Act. This bill would require ICE to issue detainers and take into custody illegal aliens who commit crimes like theft and shoplifting. The legislation also empowers state attorneys general to sue the Secretary of Homeland Security for taking actions on immigration that harm their States or their citizens.

The bottom line: If this bill were in place before February 22, Laken Riley would be alive today.

The House of Representatives passed this bill last week in a bipartisan—again, a bipartisan—vote of 251 to 70, including 37 Democrats. In a time of division and polarization, the Laken Riley Act brought both sides together.

It is our hope that we can learn from this horrific situation and make some positive change. So let’s pass the Laken Riley Act today.

Mr. President, I would like to yield to my colleague from Indiana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President, on February 22, a 22-year-old nursing student

named Laken Riley went for a morning run on a popular trail. Despite doing everything right—informing her friends of her expected return time and sharing her location with them—Laken never made it home. Her life was stolen by an illegal alien who should have never been in the country.

The President's open border policies are solely behind it. Remember, before he came in, we were at record lows. Now, we are at record highs. We are even talking about categories we didn't have before, like "got-aways." It is a national security risk that has come into this country when, currently, monthly, 50,000 to 60,000 people never confront the Border Patrol—not to mention the 200,000 to 300,000 who do.

This individual had been arrested in New York for a felony. The loss of Laken Riley was an avoidable tragedy inflicted by President Biden and his policies. These policies allow illegal aliens like Laken Riley's killer to roam free even after committing crimes.

The Laken Riley Act demands the immediate deportation of illegal aliens when they are arrested for a crime. It makes sense.

For those with concerns about due process, remember, we are talking about individuals with zero legal right to be in the United States in the first place. Retainers for ICE deportation should already be issued in these cases but aren't, in many cases, due to sanctuary city status.

We should honor Laken Riley's memory by assuring that no other family ever has to endure this heartache.

Pass the Laken Riley Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BUDD. Mr. President, I would like to further yield to my colleague from Kansas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, I would like to start by thanking Senator BUDD for leading this very important issue to the Senate floor.

We rise today to honor and pay our respects to the late Laken Riley and her family and to mourn with her family.

Today, we call on this Chamber to come together to ensure this never happens again.

Laken Hope Riley. Laken Hope Riley was a beautiful young woman in the prime of her life. She was brutally murdered in broad daylight while jogging on the University of Georgia's campus.

Her alleged murderer, a Venezuelan illegal alien, was one of 2 million people paroled by Joe Biden—one of 2 million. Ironically, he was welcomed here on United States soil by this President and his egregious open border policies.

He was stopped by the U.S. Border Patrol in 2022 when he crossed into Texas illegally, but because of the Biden administration's unlawful mass

parole of illegal aliens, he was permitted into our country. From Texas, he moved to New York, where he was arrested by the New York Police Department last year for acting in a manner to injure a child and for a motor vehicle violation. But he was quickly released and never turned over to ICE for deportation. Instead, he was released by police before a detainer could ever be issued by DHS, and he was allowed to roam freely.

Then he journeyed on to Athens, GA. And now we understand that the alleged assailant was a member of a violent Venezuelan gang.

How can we ever identify who those people are when 10,000 people are crossing our border every day? How can the Border Patrol possibly vet these people in a proper manner?

Just like so many other unvetted migrants living in the country right now, this man was handed the American dream—the American dream that Laken Riley should be living right now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BUDD. Mr. President, it is for the reasons articulated by my friend and colleague from Kansas and my friend and colleague from Indiana that, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 341, H.R. 7511; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The majority whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, the death of Laken Riley was a horrible crime—horrible crime—and a heartbreaking loss. This 22-year-old American nursing student at Augusta University in Georgia, I am certain, would have made America a better place with her life and contribution to our country. But, instead, she was taken from us on February 22, 2024.

A suspect has been arrested and may, ultimately, be tried for this crime. That is as it should be. That is how we follow the law in the United States.

But when you look at the request before us, it gives me pause. We can all agree that noncitizens who are convicted of violent crimes should be detained and removed from the United States. Sadly, the measure before us does nothing to address this issue.

Under current law in the United States of America, noncitizens who enter the country illegally, violate the terms of their status, or have their visas revoked can be detained by officials from Immigration and Customs Enforcement—better known as ICE—as they should be. Current law also requires the detention of individuals with serious criminal convictions and those who have committed murder, rape, or

any—any—crime of violence or theft offense with a term of imprisonment of at least 1 year, as they should be.

The law also gives ICE the discretion to detain or release a noncitizen in any case where a noncitizen has been charged with a crime, as they should be. To make this decision, ICE must assess the individual circumstances of the case and ensure the Agency's limited resources are used effectively to focus on protecting our national security and public safety, as they should be.

Remember, the vast majority of Republicans, including the sponsors of this measure, recently blocked a national security supplemental bill that would have given ICE more funding to detain undocumented immigrants who might pose a threat to our country.

The sweeping approach in the bill before us would eliminate the Agency's discretion to prioritize the most dangerous individuals and require ICE to treat those arrested for shoplifting the same as those convicted of violent crimes. Let me repeat that—require ICE to treat those arrested for shoplifting the same as those convicted of violent crimes. This would overwhelm ICE's capacity and facilities and make our Nation less, not more, safe.

For example, this proposal before us would require ICE to detain every immigrant who is arrested for shoplifting, even if the charges are ultimately dropped and don't lead to a conviction. Remember, this bill does not require a charge or a conviction. Tell me, does it make sense to treat a noncitizen arrested for shoplifting the same as someone convicted of murder? I think we all know the answer to that question.

This bill goes into another area which hasn't been discussed much—which is hard to imagine—but this bill would grant State attorneys general the standing to sue Federal immigration authorities if a State disagrees with immigration enforcement decisions made by the Federal Government. I think, on its face, it is unconstitutional.

For example, this bill would give a State attorney general the standing to challenge the use of parole authority—for example, like Uniting for Ukraine, which allowed Ukrainians to flee Putin's war to come to the United States—if a State can prove it had an impact of \$100 for the Federal Government to make that decision.

Laken Riley's murder was a tragedy. We must do everything we can to prevent crimes like this from happening. But this legislation would make our system less safe.

The reality is that most immigrants in the United States are law-abiding individuals who are seeking a better life in this country. Many studies have shown that immigrants are less likely to commit crimes than U.S. citizens.

Mr. President, you know personally from your own experience in Congress that it has been more than 30 years

since we have seriously considered an immigration reform bill. We had a chance, didn't we, just a few weeks ago? There was a bipartisan group—and the White House was part of it—that wanted to sit down and change the immigration and border security laws of the United States.

The Republican effort in this regard was led by JAMES LANKFORD, a conservative, respected Republican from Oklahoma, and on our side, Senators MURPHY and SINEMA, who negotiated for weeks, week after week, to come up with a proposal. The notion was to finally address the border security of the United States in a comprehensive, bipartisan, realistic way. It was controversial. There were some parts of it that I didn't care for at all. But I thought this was a good-faith, bipartisan effort.

We were assured that because the Republican Senators had chosen Senator LANKFORD as their negotiator, that it at least would entertain some support on the Republican side. We called the measure on the floor, and it failed because the Republicans would not join the Democrats in engaging in this bipartisan effort.

The issues raised this morning by Senator BUDD could have been resolved, perhaps, if we would have had that kind of bipartisan negotiation, but it didn't happen.

I had my concerns about the deal, but it certainly should have moved forward.

When it came to a vote, the vast majority of Republicans opposed it at the request of former President Donald Trump, who urged a "no" vote, who wanted the measure to stop and not be considered and moved forward and said:

Go ahead and blame me for it.

Well, I am blaming you for it, and I am blaming those who stepped away from this bipartisan opportunity.

Donald Trump has made clear that he does not want a solution to our challenges at the border; he wants an issue for the November election. So we stepped away from it—the only realistic chance to have a bipartisan solution.

I urge my colleagues to reject Donald Trump's advice. Let's get back to the table. Let's consider the issues raised by the Senator this morning and other issues that are important and make a bipartisan decision to move forward to solve this problem.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BUDD. Mr. President, I am deeply disappointed in my Democratic colleagues for objecting to a bill that, had it been in place, Laken Riley's life would have been spared. The Democratic Party's commitment to open borders is causing otherwise preventable tragedies to occur again and again and again.

But while we are here, let me address some of the counterarguments that we have heard.

One contention is that this bill would apply to individuals merely accused of a crime, robbing them of due process. Well, the fact that illegal aliens are freely roaming around the country in and of itself is illegal. If they then commit another crime, authorities are well within their rights to detain them.

The law that this bill would strengthen already requires detention for those who have been involved in various acts, such as drug trafficking, prostitution, and other vices, regardless of whether or not they have been convicted.

Opponents of this bill don't just have a problem with this bill; they have a problem with well-established laws on the books.

Another argument that I have heard is that this bill would violate the Constitution's standing requirements to file lawsuits.

The Supreme Court in the United States v. Texas provided a clear roadmap for Congress to authorize lawsuits against the executive branch for failing to enforce the law. The bill follows that roadmap and upholds the Constitution's separation of powers.

The bill authorizes a state attorney general or other authorized officer to bring a lawsuit against executive branch officials for failure to enforce immigration laws in a manner that harms such State or its residents. The bill authorizes a Federal court to grant appropriate injunctive relief. This bill does not prejudice the result of any case or tie a judge's hands. The bill simply ensures that States are given their day in court to protect their citizens against the harmful, lawless, open border policies of the Biden administration.

I simply don't believe that another American family needs to experience a tragedy like the one that befell the Riley family. I am going to continue to work with my colleague from Alabama, Senator BRITT, and all my colleagues to push this legislation until it passes this Chamber.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

NOMINATION OF DENNIS HANKINS

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, it has been almost a year since President Biden nominated Dennis Hankins to be the U.S. Ambassador to Haiti. In that time, Haiti has gone from a tenuous political situation into a security and humanitarian catastrophe.

Vicious gangs, armed largely with weapons trafficked from the United States, have plunged the country into chaos. They have burned government buildings. They have attacked police stations. While the Prime Minister was out of the country to facilitate an international peacekeeping mission, gangs led a massive jailbreak, releasing nearly 4,000 prisoners. Mr. President, 15,000 Haitians have been forced to flee their homes. Almost half of the population is facing a food insecurity crisis. And this is within a very short

distance of the United States of America. Thousands have been murdered, hundreds kidnapped. According to U.N. officials, gangs have used collective rapes to instill fear, punish, subjugate, and inflict pain.

We are on the verge of having a failed state roughly 800 miles from our shores.

Secretary Blinken was in Kingston this week to help broker a political agreement with other partners in the region—an agreement for a political path forward that includes the creation of a transitional Presidential council following the resignation of the Prime Minister.

I am pleased that we are finally voting on Ambassador Hankins' nomination so he can start doing the job he was nominated for, but it has taken us way too long to get to this point. I am pleased that we are voting on his nomination. It should have been done well before now.

I mentioned this week my meeting with General Richardson, our SOUTHCOM commander, as to how critical it is in our hemisphere and around the world to have confirmed Ambassadors to speak on behalf of America.

We want to have a strong voice on what is happening in Haiti, but how can we have that if we don't take advantage of having a confirmed Ambassador? I am glad we are correcting that today. This nomination has been held up for reasons that have nothing to do with Haiti and nothing to do with the qualifications or experience of the nominee.

U.S. leadership matters, especially in a country so close to our border. We need Senate-confirmed Ambassadors on the ground who can work with Haitian leaders and diplomats in the region to lay the groundwork for a transitional unity government.

We need someone who understands the depths of the humanitarian suffering, which, if not addressed, will lead to thousands of Haitians seeking refuge at our southern border.

Most importantly, we need someone who can help coordinate once the Kenyan-led Multinational Security Support Mission is in place, which will be critical to restoring security. We need that multinational security force in place, but we need our voice to make sure they can be successful.

In Haiti—in this region and throughout the world—we need to have confirmed Ambassadors. Ambassador Hankins has more than two decades of Foreign Service experience. He has served in some of the most complex, crisis-prone situations in the world, including in Haiti.

In 2015, he was confirmed as Ambassador to Guinea by unanimous consent—unanimous consent. He was previously confirmed. He has the experience and the vision to guide this process forward and advance U.S. national interests.

I want to call on my colleagues to support the administration's outstanding funding request for Haiti. Not