

whether it is to be dog handlers, whether it is to help make sure that there is straw for teams in certain locations, the Iditarod Air Force—which is an all-volunteer Air Force that helps move everything along the way—the veterinarians who come from all around the country to volunteer a week of their time to make sure that the dogs' care is taken care of, those in the communities who come out, who sponsor gourmet meals for the first-place person to come into Cripple, or in Unalakleet, the pizza place that is called Peace on Earth, where if I want to make sure that a particular musher gets a nice, hot pizza when they come into Unalakleet, I can call up. They will write a nice message on the box and give it to the musher when they come in—so it is everybody coming together to make this extraordinary event possible.

Nothing better captures the grit, the determination, the ruggedness, the perseverance, the spirit, or just the sheer audacity of Alaskans. So I am delighted to be able to come and celebrate Dallas Seavey and the Iditarod once again.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

#### AMERICORPS WEEK

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, volunteerism and service have long defined the very heart of the American spirit.

It was Alexis de Tocqueville, in the middle of the 19th century, at really the dawn of the modern American Republic, who observed that it was the willingness to take initiative, to get engaged, to roll up your sleeves and get to work helping to build your community that distinguished the people of this new continent from the Old World. And I will say I have seen it myself.

I am here to celebrate the 30th anniversary of America's national service program, something called AmeriCorps. It was created in a bipartisan effort at the end of the George W. Bush administration and at the beginning of the Bill Clinton administration. There was a concerted bipartisan effort to recognize that models around the country that showed the impact on young Americans of spending a year of their lives in service to others were worth expanding and replicating.

This week, actually, happens to be AmeriCorps Week—March 10 to March 16—and we are celebrating 30 years of service.

I have just introduced a bipartisan and bicameral resolution with Senator CASSIDY, Congresswoman MATSUI, and Congressman GRAVES. And, as I mentioned, AmeriCorps has been bipartisan from the start, and I look forward to continuing its future in a bipartisan way.

I have long had a connection to AmeriCorps, going back to one of the first national direct AmeriCorps programs that I ran with the "I Have a Dream" Foundation in the mid-1990s.

When I was working for "I Have a Dream," we had 150 AmeriCorps members serving in 10 cities, doing after-school programming and summer programming for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. It is one of many ways in which young Americans participating in AmeriCorps have contributed to their community, have developed their skills, and have earned money for college.

Years later, when I was a county executive, I launched the New Castle County Emergency Services Corps to help strengthen the volunteer fire service in my home community. There are dozens of volunteer fire companies in Delaware, and they have often served as the backbone not just of the first responder community but of every community.

I grew up in a very small town named Hockessin, and that siren going off in the middle of the night from our volunteer fire company was a reminder to me of the call that is at the very foundation of our Nation, to get up in the middle of the night, to jump in your truck, and to drive down to the fire hall and to take on the risk of serving and saving your neighbor.

Recruiting, training, and supporting AmeriCorps members through the "I Have a Dream" Program was one of the most rewarding opportunities in my life. I, actually, for many years, served on the commission that directs and oversees AmeriCorps in Delaware, and it was through that service that I met my wife.

Over 1 million Americans have served in AmeriCorps since 1994. Delaware, today, alone has more than 361 traditional AmeriCorps members and more than 900 AmeriCorps seniors, and they do a wide range of things: from tutoring children to responding to disasters, improving and rebuilding housing, helping veterans, and much more.

Let me briefly mention two currently serving members of AmeriCorps in Delaware:

Sharron, an adult literacy instructor who works with Literacy Delaware, teaches English to our newest Americans. She spoke of the joy an immigrant mother felt when the school administrator called to tell her about her son—and to communicate something positive about his progress in school—and she could understand everything for the first time, as she was coming to master English without an interpreter.

Shristi, an academic coach at TeenSHARP, a college access program for underrepresented high school students, spoke of how fulfilling it was to help young men and women in Delaware, just as she herself had benefited from similar mentoring and tutoring.

These two examples are a reminder of what more than 1 million AmeriCorps members over 30 years have experienced—that service brings America together. It helps us bridge our divides.

AmeriCorps has organized, for decades now, an annual 9/11 Day of Service that brings people of all backgrounds

together to be reminded of what citizenship means in our Nation: service to others.

As we reflect on 30 years, I think it needs to be a call for all of us to engage in the work of service; to take up the challenge of reauthorizing, strengthening, and expanding AmeriCorps as a program; and to recognize that the best thing we can do for our Nation is to get committed to each other through national service.

Congratulations to all who have served in AmeriCorps over the last 30 years and to the millions more Americans whose future will be enlivened, brightened, and strengthened through the opportunity to serve.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following Senators be permitted to speak prior to the scheduled vote: YOUNG for up to 5 minutes, BARRASSO for up to 7 minutes, STABENOW for up to 5 minutes, and CARDIN for up to 3 minutes.

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

#### BORDER SECURITY

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, during his State of the Union Address last week, President Biden spoke about solving the ongoing humanitarian crisis at our southern border, and he mentioned the name of Laken Riley. Laken Riley, as my colleagues know, lost her life—lost her life—because of that humanitarian crisis.

Laken was a 22-year-old college student. She was murdered by an illegal alien last month. The illegal alien had been previously cited for theft and shoplifting but was released.

Those who knew her described Laken as a shining light and kindhearted. Her calling in life was to care for others, and she was on her way to answering that calling, studying nursing at Augusta University, when she was murdered—murdered by a Venezuelan national who crossed our border illegally.

To Laken's family and friends: Your fellow Americans grieve with you. We are saddened by your loss. We pray and we hope that, in time, you will find comfort. We should all find comfort in the example that Laken leaves behind.

But let me not be the first to say—let me add my voice to the chorus of voices in emphasizing that words of condolence are not enough. It is far better for us to honor Laken's life by doing everything—everything—within our power to ensure that no other family endures this or a similar tragedy.

So to President Biden, who said after his speech that he shouldn't have referred to Laken's murderer as an "illegal," and to any of my colleagues who are offended by the use of that term: Let us dispense with misplaced outrage. Let's stop playing political word games. Let's speak as plainly as possible. The man who killed Laken Riley broke the law when he walked across our southern border. He shouldn't have been in our country. He was an illegal

immigrant. Had our border not been broken, had our immigration laws not been continually ignored, he wouldn't have been in Georgia, and Laken Riley would still be alive.

The man who killed Laken Riley was arrested in El Paso. He was then welcomed into the country with little obligation other than to follow the honor system, to show up for an appointment with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which he failed to do.

This is but one ripple in a wave—a wave—of illegal immigrants drawn toward and allowed into our border by design. In his first 100 days in office, President Biden signed 94 Executive orders to dismantle—dismantle—his predecessor's border policies for the simple reason that those policies actually reduced illegal immigration. He ended the “Remain in Mexico” policy. He scaled back border enforcement. He revived catch-and-release. He halted deportations. He allowed title 42 to sunset. He abused our parole system, allowing millions of people into this country without proper vetting, overwhelming not just our law enforcement and communities along the border but also cities far from it, cities in my home State of Indiana. Last December alone, 300,000 people were processed at the southern border—an alltime high.

Mr. President, I would request 2 more minutes.

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

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, 9 million illegal immigrants have crossed our border during President Biden's Presidency. If only those among us would have spent as much time worrying about securing our southern border as they do about finding inoffensive terms to describe the man who illegally crossed it and then murdered Laken Riley.

For over 3 years, I have urged the Biden administration to reverse its border policies. Record levels of illegal crossings are a national security issue. We know that. But they are also a crime and drug use issue in the State of Indiana and across the country, tragically evidenced by Laken Riley's death. The chaos this administration's policies have caused isn't confined to Texas, nor is it confined to Arizona. Every State is a border State.

I appreciate the good-faith efforts of some of my colleagues—Senator LANKFORD most notably but others—to find bipartisan solutions to strengthen our border security. I will remain hopeful that we in Congress can find the path to improving our border security laws and to actually enforcing them. But the occupant of the Oval Office is not powerless to act.

At times, President Biden presents himself as a border hawk, waiting on Republicans to give him the tools to end the crisis he created. We should note: The President has routinely pushed the constitutional limits of his office in pursuit of political and policy goals, but now—now—he claims, when

it comes to the border crisis, he is hemmed in from taking action by Congress.

Despite the tough talk, we regular Americans would be forgiven for concluding that this administration wants the crisis on our southern border to continue.

Prove us wrong, Mr. President. Fixing the border begins with you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

#### ISRAEL

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, every year on this floor, a Senator reads George Washington's Farewell Address. This year, Senator CARDIN, who is retiring from this body, was given the honor of reading the address. It is so that we in the Senate remember the lessons from George Washington.

So let's reflect on what is in George Washington's Farewell Address, and it is this quote:

Foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government.

Well, the majority leader of the U.S. Senate certainly knows that because 4 years ago, he quoted these very same words. Yet he ignored them totally today in this body, when it comes to our ally Israel.

Hours ago, the senior Senator from New York crossed the line by calling for a new government in Israel. Let's be clear: Israel is a democracy. It makes its own choice about who they want to lead them. It doesn't need to have a Senator from New York's interference.

The Senator also made the outrageous statement that the Prime Minister of Israel—in the words of the Senator from New York—is an “obstacle to peace.”

This is exactly backward. It is the terrorists, the rapists, the murderers of Hamas who are the obstacles to peace.

Let us be clear: Demonizing our friends is not going to protect them from the brutality of Hamas. It only works to alienate our allies and puts our common goals of peace further out of reach.

Israel deserves an ally that the people of Israel can trust, most especially when they are battling terrorism.

The Senators on both sides of the aisle in this body have affirmed that Israel has every right to defend itself. We must also respect Israel's right as a democracy to choose its own destiny.

#### STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. President, now, on a separate matter, I come to the floor to speak about President Biden's State of the Union speech. The speech is likely a preview of his 2024 acceptance speech at the Democrat convention this summer in Chicago.

From start to finish, it was the angriest, most partisan, most divisive, and most vindictive State of the Union that I can recall.

President Biden used his most important speech in 50 years to launch a di-

rect attack on half of America. He shouted, lied about them, belittled their concerns. And if people had the gall to disagree with him, he screamed that they were the enemies of democracy.

President Biden said all of this to hide his disastrous record of failures.

Three years ago, President Biden said:

Without unity, there is . . . only bitterness and fury.

Last Thursday night, what we saw from President Biden was bitterness and fury.

To me, this was an insult to every American. The President showed no respect for the American people, for our institutions, or for the truth. Instead, we heard an hour of dismissals, denials, distortions, and deceptive spin.

President Biden has only himself to blame. It is his disastrous policies that caused us to be in the mess that we find ourselves.

President Biden said:

The state of our union is strong and getting stronger.

Well, that may be his opinion, but it is not what the American people believe. Prices are up 18 percent today compared to the day that he took office.

President Biden said he needs new laws to secure the border. That is not true, either. President Biden has the power to secure the border, and he knows it. He simply lacks the backbone.

During his first 100 days, the President took 94 Executive actions that threw our border wide open. He stopped building the wall. He turned “detain and deport” into “catch and release.” And more than 9 million illegal immigrants have poured across our southern border since Joe Biden became President.

Now, that includes hundreds of terror suspects and thousands of hardened criminals. This is dangerous for our country. Yet Joe Biden can't say that.

Since his speech last Thursday, he has spent more time groveling for using the term “illegal” immigrant than apologizing for not knowing the name of Laken Riley. People all across the country remember her as the 24-year-old nursing student who was murdered by an illegal immigrant.

President Biden also claimed our global alliances are stronger than they ever were. That is not true. Since Joe Biden became President, America has lost its standing in the world. Our allies don't trust us. Our enemies don't fear us.

By every metric, we are worse off today than we were the day Joe Biden took office. Seven in 10 Americans say that our Nation is heading in the wrong direction. No amount of scolding or lecturing by the President is going to change that. No amount of yelling will cover up President Biden's endless failures to lower prices.

Yelling by President Biden is not going to restore confidence in the