

brilliance belonging to the Palestinian people and was a symbol of another great Palestinian life full of promise;

Whereas Palestinian children, Israeli children, children in the United States, and those all across the globe deserve to live in peace and be free from discrimination, hate crimes, and violence; and

Whereas the recent Israel-Gaza conflict has had a particularly devastating impact on children in the region, including at one point resulting in a Palestinian child dying every 10 minutes, according to the World Health Organization; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate recognizes that—

(1) the United States lost the beautiful light of Wadee Alfayoumi because of hate;

(2) it is the duty of elected officials and media to tell the truth without dehumanizing rhetoric when informing the public of factual information;

(3) freedom of speech and peaceful protest are constitutionally protected and a fundamental cornerstone of democracy; and

(4) the United States has zero tolerance for hate crimes, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and anti-Palestinian and anti-Arab discrimination.

SENATE RESOLUTION 590—DESIGNATING MARCH 15, 2024, AS “LONG COVID AWARENESS DAY”

Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. SMITH, Mr. CASEY, and Ms. BALDWIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 590

Whereas Long COVID is a systemic and often debilitating and disabling long-term outcome of an acute COVID-19 infection;

Whereas Long COVID has the potential to worsen pre-existing health conditions and can cause death months to years after an acute COVID-19 infection;

Whereas there are more than 200 documented Long COVID symptoms, which can vary from person to person and can include fatigue, cognitive impairment, muscle or joint pain, shortness of breath, heart palpitations, sleep difficulties, mood changes, and damage to organ systems and tissue;

Whereas Long COVID can trigger other infection-associated chronic conditions such as postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome and other forms of dysautonomia, mast cell activation syndrome, fibromyalgia, myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome, and many others;

Whereas there is no single diagnostic test or protocol to confirm a Long COVID diagnosis;

Whereas many providers are unprepared to identify, diagnose, or treat Long COVID due to a lack of education and information, and some providers refrain from making a Long COVID diagnosis at all;

Whereas, according to estimates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there are 22,000,000 adults and 1,000,000 children currently living with Long COVID in the United States, and there are likely more;

Whereas Long COVID disproportionately affects racial and ethnic minorities, women, the elderly, people with disabilities, and those with lower incomes;

Whereas the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Justice have issued guidance clarifying that Long COVID can be considered a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.);

Whereas Long COVID has had a devastating financial impact on individuals and

on the overall economy with an estimated economic cost of \$3,700,000,000,000 due to reduced quality of life, lost earnings, and direct medical care spending for those who suffer from Long COVID;

Whereas people with Long COVID are 10 percent less likely to be employed and those who are employed work 50 percent fewer hours than people without Long COVID;

Whereas there may be as many as 4,000,000 fewer workers in the United States workforce due to the impact of the disease;

Whereas there are no approved cures for Long COVID, and most of the treatments involve addressing individual symptoms using established therapies; and

Whereas investing in Long COVID research and promoting the development of treatment and diagnostic tools remain priorities to improve the quality of life for those impacted by Long COVID; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 15, 2024, as “Long COVID Awareness Day”;

(2) recognizes patients and their families and caregivers who are affected by Long COVID;

(3) commends the work of doctors and researchers who continue to advance the study of Long COVID; and

(4) encourages relevant Federal agencies—

(A) to expand research efforts to develop effective treatments, diagnostics, and cures;

(B) to publish information on Long COVID to educate the public and providers about the impact of the condition; and

(C) to make every effort to ensure that patients and their families and caregivers receive adequate support and care.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I have five requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet in open and closed session during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 14, 2024, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 14, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 14, 2024, at 10:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 14, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is au-

thorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 14, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the privileges of the floor be extended for the balance of the day for my intern, Lucas Rigsby.

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

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the following law clerks of the Senate Judiciary Committee be granted floor privileges until March 21, 2024: Casey Adams, Hannah Auten, Anna Pollard, and Patrick Reyes.

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

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the following members of my staff be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the Congress: Natasha Kieval, Cassandra Worthington, Nicole Comisky, and Ryan Smith.

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

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL IN THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER FOR A CEREMONY TO PRESENT THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL COLLECTIVELY TO THE 23D HEADQUARTERS SPECIAL TROOPS AND THE 3133D SIGNAL SERVICES COMPANY, KNOWN COLLECTIVELY AS THE “GHOST ARMY”

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H. Con. Res. 84, which was received from the House and I understand is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 84) authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal collectively to the 23d Headquarters Special Troops and the 3133d Signal Services Company, known collectively as the “Ghost Army”, in recognition of unique and highly distinguished service during World War II.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I further ask that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 84) was agreed to.

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, MARCH 15,
2024

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned to convene for a pro forma session only, with no business being conducted, at 9:25 a.m. on Friday, March 15; that when the Senate adjourns on Friday, it stand adjourned until 3 p.m. on Tuesday, March 19; that on Tuesday, following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Berner nomination postcloture; further, that if any nominations are confirmed during Tuesday's session, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; finally, that the cloture motions filed during today's session ripen on Wednesday, March 20.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order following the remarks of my friend from Iowa, Senator GRASSLEY.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor to give an update on my oversight work. I often speak on the floor about the importance of oversight. Now, my remarks today have some history that goes back from now back to 8 years ago, so it might not seem very important today, but I speak so the Defense Department won't make the same blunder they made over that period of time. That blunder I am talking about is the mess-up with the JEDI contract, a cloud contract.

The parable of the vineyard tells us about corrupt tenants who tried to steal someone's harvest and keep it for themselves. It is especially bad, then, when public officials try to take the fruit of the taxpayers' vineyard for private gain. We can't ignore this sort of corruption or it will surely get worse.

The 2019 planned Joint Enterprise Defense Infrastructure contract—otherwise known as JEDI—was an attempt to move the entire Defense Department to cloud, meaning cloud computing, which happened to be a very, very expensive project. It was around \$10 billion and was ultimately canceled, as it should have been.

Ten billion dollars is a lot of tempting fruit, even by Washington, DC, standards. Early on, there were allegations that various Defense Department officials were helping the big corporation of Amazon behind the scenes to gain a contracting advantage. The allegations caused the inspector general of the Department of Defense to review the matter.

My oversight work started in 2019. My oversight has centered on conflicts of interest on the one hand, and on the other hand, the inspector general's review. It is a good-government oversight inquiry.

I know Amazon didn't end up getting this particular contract, but that doesn't matter to my oversight and what I am telling you today. Even attempted efforts to steer a government contract need to be exposed. That is what the taxpayers deserve.

Sally Donnelly, a key person in my investigation—happened to be a close adviser to then-Secretary of Defense James Mattis and former Amazon consultant—is a central figure. Let me make it very clear. Sally Donnelly was a close adviser to the Secretary of Defense and a former Amazon consultant. So that is the central figure of what I am talking about today.

Throughout her time at the Defense Department, Donnelly received payments from the sale of her consulting business, which she sold right before she entered government service. She didn't disclose precisely who purchased her firm to either the Defense Department, which she should have, or to the inspector general, even when asked the identity under oath.

In late 2022, I obtained new evidence the inspector general failed to obtain during its investigation. That evidence was that the actual name of the company that purchased Donnelly's firm was VMAP—an acronym, V-M-A-P. This company was a portfolio company of C5 Capital, an Amazon-linked company.

The Defense Department inspector general claimed in its 2020 report that it found no evidence that Donnelly “had an ongoing or undisclosed financial relationship with C5 Capital or Amazon and its affiliates that would have required her to recuse.” The evidence appears to show otherwise. There was a financial relationship. Why the inspector general didn't find out about it, I don't know.

In two letters last year, I continued to press Donnelly and her then-business partner, Andre Pienaar, the CEO of C5 Capital, for answers. Now, as you might expect, both have refused to cooperate with my oversight inquiry.

The inspector general report also claimed to have found no evidence that Donnelly had any role in the JEDI contract or violated any of her ethical obligations.

For additional transparency, we need to look at Defense Department records from 2017 and 2018, when Donnelly worked there, so you are going to hear a lot of quotes from emails I got.

These records appear to show Donnelly working behind the scenes to favor Amazon. Some of this information was included in the inspector general's report. However, much of it was not included even though the inspector general had access to these government records.

Kevin Sweeney, then-chief of staff to Secretary of Defense Mattis, told the inspector general that he thought Donnelly invited an Amazon vice president responsible for public sector sales to a London dinner with Secretary Mattis in March of 2017. This dinner was shortly after Donnelly began working for the Secretary of Defense. That Amazon executive, Teresa Carlson, used the dinner to invite the Secretary to later meet Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos.

Secretary Mattis also revealed it was Donnelly who suggested he travel to meet tech leaders, including Amazon.

Now, following that London dinner, Donnelly repeatedly pushed for the meeting between Bezos and Mattis. The inspector general report deflected by saying the Secretary's chief of staff, not Donnelly, scheduled his meetings. But that report cuts out part of an email showing that the chief of staff deferred to Donnelly on whether the Secretary should meet with Amazon's CEO.

The inspector general's report also omitted a part of Donnelly's email where she said the Secretary should meet Bezos because he was “the genius of our age.”

The inspector general's report omitted another email from an Amazon official asking Donnelly for guidance on the Secretary of Defense's Seattle visit to Amazon and what “landmines we should avoid.” That same email asked Donnelly to “put a bug in some ears” to help Amazon counter challenges from the Defense Department's Chief Information Officer.

Donnelly responded on her government email with inside advice, telling the Amazon official to emphasize “security security security of [the] cloud.”

Now, just 3 days before the visit to Seattle, a DOD official emailed Donnelly the agenda for Amazon's presentation, which included a “cloud overview” by the same Amazon official that had asked her for advice.

An email sent from another Department of Defense official to Donnelly shortly after the Secretary's visit noted that discussion of cloud technology was the centerpiece of meetings with Amazon and other tech leaders.

Donnelly also was informed by a DOD official traveling with the Secretary, on the very day of the Secretary's visit with Amazon's CEO, on August 10, 2017, that the visit “seemed to morph into an Amazon Web Services sales pitch.”

A followup email from that same official informed her that after the visit, the Secretary of Defense was “99.9% there in terms of going to the cloud.”

Despite all of this, when asked whether the Defense Department cloud