

The fact that he is not doing this indicates that he and those who stand with him in this body are not acting in good faith. They are not negotiating in good faith. They cannot—must not—be deemed to be good-faith negotiators on this issue. Why? Because he refuses to enforce the laws that he has.

If for the sake of tightening some language here or there in yet-to-be-seen, yet-to-be-understood ways—in ways some have described as ambiguous and uncertain—if that is the primary thing we are getting, is the tightening of the asylum standard, but we might also be limiting the ability of the current or a future President to halt the abuse of asylum and parole, then we can't do this. We shouldn't be doing this at all. It sends the wrong message.

Look, the bottom line is this: I think we are back to the point where maybe we ought to just try to pass these separately. If you can get Ukraine supplemental aid passed, fine. Go at it. If you can somehow come up with a deal that actually closes the border security gaps and actually forces the President's hand and places some accountability on him, then I will consider that, too. I may even vote for it if it does the job, notwithstanding the fact I have concerns about sending another \$62 billion to a country where we have already spent \$113 billion—\$900 per U.S. taxpayer. But I would consider it if it actually fixed the problem.

I think there are ways to do it. One good way to start as a starting point is to take border security language already passed by the House of Representatives. I know people have said: Well, that can't pass here. Well, we don't know that because we never tried attaching that to other legislation, like the Ukraine-Israel supplemental aid package. Then add to that border security measures that would tie the expenditure of this \$62 billion that is supposed to go to Ukraine—tie the release of that in phased packages over the next year—or whatever the increment is—to the achievement of certain border security metrics, goals. They can bring that down to what they themselves have said is tolerable.

I believe the Border Patrol has said they maxed out when they get about 500 daily migrant encounters. If we could reduce it down to that and the administration starts enforcing the law and actually starts refusing to let people in after they can no longer process them and reinstates the migrate protection protocols—the “Remain in Mexico” program—that will help bring this down to less than 500 migrant encounters per day. If you phased the release of the Ukraine funding under the legislation that way, then Members of both parties could have some assurance that this might make a difference.

But, alas, there is no provision in this, no provision being negotiated. It is stunning to me that there isn't. There should be. The reason I say that is because we have had countless con-

versations within the Senate Republican conference where Member after Member after Member will propose something like that.

My friend and colleague, the senior Senator from North Dakota, JOHN HOEVEN, is one of the first to raise the idea and has been among the most impassioned advocates for it, saying: Let's tie the Ukraine funding to the achievement of certain border security metrics and other border security measures we might add to it. That will give everybody the confidence that we need that this will make an actual difference.

I believe he was the first one to suggest it. He has probably made that argument as often as or more often than any other Member of the conference, but he is not alone. I think I have heard dozens of Republican Senators say something similar. It is true. I have heard maybe one or two—three at the most—Republican Senators express reservations with that, but many multiples of that speak out, saying: Yes, this would be a good thing. Yes, this could bring a lot of us on board.

Yet, regrettably, my friend from Oklahoma was instructed not to even seek that. Why? Why do that? If we can't even tie the expenditure of the Ukraine funds, which we know the administration cares about dearly for reasons I cannot comprehend. He cares so much more about Ukraine's border security than ours. I understand his desire to stop Vladimir Putin. Vladimir Putin is a bad guy.

I wish he would recognize, by the way, the things we could do with energy policy that might help in that direction. If the United States had been exporting this whole time large quantities of LNG, maybe that would help, because Russia is funding this war and so many other things through its hegemony of the European energy market. There are all sorts of things we could do to help him.

He remains concerned about this and wants to spend more and more money on military aid to Ukraine. But if he really cares as much as he does about Ukraine and he wants to get that funding done, I strongly advise him to consider an option like what I just described.

Let us tie the release of the Ukraine funding. Let it be rolled out in staggered phases as the Biden administration achieves certain border security metrics and restores confidence—the confidence not just of Members of the Senate and the House but of the American people. I think that might work.

If something like that gets packaged right and contains the right reforms, it might even get my vote. I am not somebody who is eager to vote for that, but I really want to secure the border because America is a less safe place every day Joe Biden continues to enrich drug cartels and subject women and children to sex slavery and indentured servitude.

We have a duty here to make sure we pass good laws and to make sure those

laws are enforced as they are supposed to be. When they don't enforce them, we shouldn't reward them by funding every pet project that the incumbent administration deems important. Sometimes we need to insist that they do their jobs. If we reward bad behavior, we are going to get more bad things, and it will be dangerous for the American people.

I believe in this country. I believe in the American dream. That dream is becoming more distant every day lawlessness prevails. We can restore it. We can recapture it. But we do have to insist that our border be secure. It is not. May we make it secure once again is my entire endeavor in giving these remarks tonight.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HASSAN). The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO PASTOR CHRIS HARRIS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, during this week when we remember the staggering number of loved ones we have lost to gun violence, I want to acknowledge a spiritual and community leader who is working to end the terrible cycle of gun violence in Chicago.

Pastor Chris Harris is pastor of Bright Star Church in Chicago's storied Bronzeville neighborhood and senior pastor of St. James Church in the City's historic Roseland-West Pullman community. He is a leader of creative vision, compassion, and action. And when it comes to ending gun violence, Pastor Harris has no time for hand-wringing or finger-pointing or political scapegoating.

One of his frequent admonitions is: “Say nothing about violence and trauma until you do something about violence and trauma.” As one of the most passionate and charismatic leaders in our community, both his words and his actions have helped to turn lives around. Fifteen years ago, Pastor Harris founded a nonprofit organization called Bright Star Community Outreach.

Its purpose is not simply to help heal victims of gun violence, but to prevent gun violence by treating its deep and often complex causes, including poverty, lack of opportunity, despair, and trauma. Bright Star Community Outreach does this by offering a myriad of services, from afterschool programs to job counseling, financial literacy classes, and workshops on homebuying and

entrepreneurship. As Pastor Harris often says, “The best violence prevention program is access to good schools and good jobs,” the kinds of jobs you can raise a family on.

Bright Star also offers counseling and other forms of support to help heal from the trauma that is often at the root—not only of gun violence but also addiction and so many other deadly ills. And he has been at the forefront of this field, being involved in Federal grants from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Over the years, Bright Star Community Outreach has grown from Pastor Harris and a few volunteers to now 115 employees. They are working directly with Chicago Public School students to understand their needs and experiences. I have visited their programs many times, and I am always inspired by the work they do.

And when I set out to introduce legislation to address the role that trauma plays in fueling our cycle of violence, Pastor Harris was one of my first calls. His guidance helped shape the legislation I have worked on for nearly a decade, parts of which have become law and are funding school mental health efforts in Chicago.

Recently, Pastor Harris decided to step back as executive director. He will remain CEO of BSCO, and he will have a bit more time to focus more on his many other duties. The new executive director of Bright Star Community Outreach is LaKreisha Kindred. She is a lifelong Chicagoan with a background in the financial industry—and a member of the famed Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. I wish her well. And I want to say to my friend Pastor Chris Harris, thank you for your unflagging efforts to save lives and bring new hope to the city of Chicago.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. PADILLA. Madam President, I missed a vote on December 18, 2023. Had I been present, I would have voted yea on rollcall vote No. 347 to confirm Martin O'Malley to serve as Commissioner of the Social Security Administration.

I congratulate Commissioner O'Malley on his confirmation, and I look forward to his strong leadership at the SSA.

REMEMBERING FRANK Q. NEBEKER

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, today I would like to honor the life and service of a dedicated public servant, distinguished American, and champion for veterans: the Honorable Frank Q. Nebeker.

Judge Nebeker served as the first chief judge of the U.S. Court of Veterans Appeals, now known as the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. A long-time Federal judge and legal pioneer, he established the landmark court in 1988 before hearing the first

case and issuing the first opinion in 1989. His work ensured that, for the first time ever, veterans had a dedicated court to hear their appeals for their earned Department of Veterans Affairs—VA—benefits.

While Judge Nebeker is no longer with us, his legacy lives on. On behalf of myself and my fellow Americans, I would like to extend our deepest gratitude for his life and service to this nation.

Judge Nebeker grew up in the West. He was born in Salt Lake City and grew up in Ogden, UT, before graduating from the University of Utah and marrying his wife Lou. Together, they moved to Washington, DC, where he studied law and worked in President Eisenhower's White House. Working as a correspondence secretary, he began his career in public service that would last the rest of his life.

After serving as an attorney for the Department of Justice, he was appointed to the District of Columbia Court of Appeals in 1969. He presided on that bench until President Reagan nominated him to be the Director of the Office of Government Ethics in 1987, a position he held for 2 years.

Soon after, Judge Nebeker continued his service to this country when President George H.W. Bush appointed him to be the chief judge of the newly created United States Court of Veterans Appeals. In this role, he was tasked with standing up this new court from the bottom up.

Judge Nebeker's sharp legal mind and unpretentious demeanor made him an ideal person to bring the court to life. He, along with many other dedicated individuals who established the court, provided an opportunity for the men and women who served our country to appeal for the VA benefits they earned for the first time ever. Many veterans live a better life today because of the judicial system Frank helped establish.

He oversaw the court until his retirement in 2000 and served in senior status on the District of Columbia Court of Appeals until 2021. While he left the court, his enduring legacy of serving veterans lived on at the U.S. Court of Appeals, where the Veterans Appeals courtroom is named in his honor.

On January 4, 2024, Judge Nebeker passed away at the age of 93 years old. He is survived by his wife of 70 years, Lou, his children Melia and William, three grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

It is my honor to recognize Judge Nebeker's decades of public service and commitment to serving our veterans and their families. His work will continue to benefit generations of veterans nationwide for years to come, and he will be sorely missed.

REMEMBERING FRANK Q. NEBEKER

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, today, I want to honor the life and

mourn the loss of Judge Frank Nebeker, who was not only the first judge of the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims but also the court's first chief judge. In Kansas, we know the value of community and helping others, and Judge Nebeker took these traits to heart as a dedicated and long-serving public servant for more than 70 years.

He began his legal career in 1956 as a trial attorney in the Internal Security Division of the Department of Justice. From there, he took on multiple jobs and roles within the executive and judicial branches of government. In October 1989, he was nominated to the Court of Veterans Appeals by President George H. W. Bush.

The court was created in 1988 under President Reagan to allow veterans and their families to appeal benefits decisions from the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Board of Veterans Appeals. This court was the first of its kind and provided a forum for veterans and their dependents to advocate for themselves when they disagreed with VA. It currently consists of seven permanent judges and two temporary judges.

Judge Nebeker served on the court from the first day it opened until November 2000, when he then became a “Recall-Eligible Senior Judge.” He still continued his public service to veterans and periodically performed recall service until December 2022, when he fully retired from the court.

Judge Nebeker was a powerful and influential advocate for veterans. He lived a life of purpose and loved bettering the lives of those who have sacrificed for our country. He often held education programs for attorneys and appellate judges throughout the country in his pursuit to improve the lives of veterans and military families through the next generation of public servants.

He is an example for each of us to follow as we seek to care for our veterans. I know his legacy will live on in the court and in the community and people he loved. My prayers are with his family, friends, and colleagues.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate, by Mrs. Stringer, one of his secretaries.