

order for a cloture vote at this time. Perhaps the Senator can resume her remarks at a later time.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 60 more seconds to finish my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there any objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, 19-year-old Karina Arieiev is a gentle and humble girl. Her loved ones say she often has a wide smile and is always ready to help those around her.

Nineteen-year-old Agam Berger is a gifted violinist who volunteers to help disadvantaged populations. Like Karina, she also enjoys helping others and is an optimist who is always smiling.

Naama Levy is a soft-spoken, athletic, and determined girl. She is compassionate and understanding, with a passion for helping those in need.

As a mom, I cannot fathom the anguish these parents are facing. I know every other Senator here cannot fathom the anguish they are facing. All of us must do everything we can to bring them home.

I yield the floor.

#### 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 assistant bill 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. 459, Joshua Paul Kolar, of Indiana, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Angus S. King, Jr., Margaret Wood Hassan, Peter Welch, Mazie Hirono, Alex Padilla, Jeanne Shaheen, Jack Reed, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Chris Van Hollen, Richard Blumenthal, Gary C. Peters, Raphael G. Warnock, Christopher A. Coons, Jeff Merkley, Christopher Murphy.

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 Joshua Paul Kolar, of Indiana, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator

from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) would have voted "nay."

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 66, nays 29, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 24 Ex.]

#### YEAS—66

Bennet	Graham	Peters
Blumenthal	Grassley	Reed
Booker	Hassan	Romney
Braun	Heinrich	Rosen
Brown	Hickenlooper	Rounds
Butler	Hirono	Sanders
Cantwell	Kaine	Schatz
Capito	Kelly	Schumer
Cardin	Kennedy	Shaheen
Carper	King	Sinema
Casey	Lujan	Stabenow
Cassidy	Manchin	Tester
Collins	Markley	Thune
Coons	Menendez	Tillis
Cornyn	Merkley	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Moran	Warner
Cramer	Mullin	Warnock
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warren
Durbin	Murphy	Welch
Ernst	Murray	Whitehouse
Fetterman	Ossoff	Wyden
Gillibrand	Padilla	Young

#### NAYS—29

Blackburn	Hawley	Risch
Boozman	Hoeven	Rubio
Britt	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Budd	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cotton	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Crapo	Lee	Sullivan
Cruz	Lummis	Tuberville
Daines	McConnell	Vance
Fischer	Paul	Wicker
Hagerty	Ricketts	

#### NOT VOTING—5

Baldwin	Klobuchar	Smith
Barrasso	Marshall	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BUTLER). On this vote, the yeas are 66, the nays are 29.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Maryland.

#### UKRAINE

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, as the chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I come to the floor to advise our colleagues about the urgency for us to take up and pass the supplemental appropriations bill that contains many important provisions, but I am going to start with the most urgent, and that is providing assistance to Ukraine to defend itself from the brutal attack by the Russian Federation.

Vladimir Putin could change the equation in Ukraine in a matter of weeks. His tanks could be rolling through Ukraine. His forces could be arresting Zelenskyy and his Cabinet. The Russian flag could be flying over Ukraine's capital. This could happen in a matter of weeks if the United States does not act.

A few days ago, I was in the White House for a meeting about this. President Biden could not have been clearer: We are out of money to support Ukraine in this fight. Think about how that sounds to the Ukrainians fighting on the frontlines.

One Ukrainian soldier said:

The guys are tired, very tired. They are still motivated, many people understand that they have no other choice. But you can't win a war only on motivation.

Ukrainian soldiers have had to ration artillery shells. One unit had to go from firing as many as 90 shells a day to just 10 to 20 shells a day.

Mr. Putin has made it clear. He is investing in a long war. The New York Times reported:

Nearly a third of the country's spending next year—roughly \$109 billion—will be devoted to "national defense," according to a budget he signed into law.

Russian TV commentators are celebrating our gridlock. As one European Ambassador reportedly said, he can "hear those champagne bottle corks popping in Moscow."

President Putin knows that if Congress does not act, he will be able to break Ukraine. If he succeeds, he will be signaling to the world that he can invade his neighbors whenever he wants to, erase the nation of Ukraine and our allies in Europe, in the Middle East, in Africa, and in Asia, and we are ourselves, the United States, will be in greater danger.

A group of NATO parliamentarians was in Washington last week, concerned about Congress's inability to pass the supplemental funding.

One of my counterparts, the chair of the Lithuanian Foreign Affairs Committee, asked:

Who is next? Balkans, Taiwan, Korea, the Baltics. . . . It takes years to wake up Washington, so please guys, wake up.

He is right. We need to wake up.

If Putin wins in Ukraine, he will not stop there. That is why this isn't a choice between sending funding to Ukraine or not sending funding to Ukraine. The choice is between sending American dollars to fight Putin now or sending American soldiers to fight him later.

If we want to preserve America's credibility with our allies, it is up to us. If we want to show our partners we will be there to help when times are tough, it is up to us. If we want to make sure the United States stands on the right side of history, it is up to us.

Russia is one of our most dangerous adversaries and an enemy of democracy everywhere. This is money that will strengthen the United States' security.

Ukraine needs money for air defenses, money for drones, money for arming the brave Ukrainians on the frontlines and, of course, direct budgetary support and humanitarian assistance.

People around the world are depending on the United States for the humanitarian assistance in the supplemental funding request. Without money for food, children and mothers, from Africa to the Middle East to Eastern Europe, will go hungry.

It is up to us. It is up to us.

Finally, I want to underline that there is strong bipartisan agreement on the need to support Ukraine.

We must not let this be the end of Ukraine. We must not give in to Russian aggression. We must not stand idly by as this dictator does what he likes to his neighbors. We must vote

for the supplemental funding that supports Ukrainians' struggle for freedom. Time is running out. We need to act now.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### TRIBUTE TO MARIA DOWNEY

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, it is Thursday afternoon, and, as you know from presiding at this time frequently, it is my favorite time of the week because I get to come down to the Senate floor and talk about our Alaskan of the Week. This is somebody who is doing something great for our local communities, our State, maybe the country, maybe the world.

I have been doing this for several years now, and it really helps highlight what makes Alaska, in my view, the greatest State in the greatest country in the world.

I would like to talk about, at the beginning of this speech, a little about what is going on in Alaska. We have seen all the snowstorms across the country this week. Trust me, that is just another day in our State. I think by Christmas Eve this year in Anchorage, my hometown, we had close to 100 inches already of snow, so no worry about a white Christmas back home.

It is actually a really beautiful time of the year—great to get outdoors. I have done some skiing already. People are out snow machining. If you are watching on TV or in the Gallery, come up to Alaska any time of the year. In winter, you can see the northern lights. In summer, you will have a great time fishing, hunting—whatever you want to do. It is truly an incredible State. Year-round, we want people to visit—our great fellow Americans to come up. You will have a fantastic time.

Now, it is not always the easiest place to live. It is far from the lower 48 here. The weather can be extreme. It can be pretty harsh. As a result, the people in the communities bond a lot. They have to. They work together, particularly in some of our most remote communities.

Every community in Alaska—in America—needs to be able to share reliable, credible information. Local journalism across this great Nation of ours is vital—more vital, probably, in Alaska than any other State, I would say. It isn't talked about nearly enough how vital that local journalism is. We all benefit all across the country from thousands of local reporters who are working on stories day in and day out. That is certainly the case in Alaska. I believe that we should be saluting these frontline journalists—local journalists—for doing this important work a lot more here.

What we are trying to do is do that today for one of the alltime best. Our local reporters in Alaska are so important. So what I would like to do today is introduce to the U.S. Senate and the American people a great Alaskan of the Week, Maria Downey—longtime Anchorage journalist, news anchor—who for more than 40 years has brought Alaska's news directly to our homes and kept us informed about our State, our communities, our country—with professionalism, sincerity, kindness, and grace.

Let's talk about Maria Downey—Alaskan of the Week, Maria Downey. She moved to Alaska from Florida with her husband Ron in 1981. In 1981, a lot was going on in Alaska. The Trans-Alaska Pipeline—which, by the way, this body approved—was flowing. Our country needed energy. We just had the Arab oil embargo. So Alaska was booming. Almost 2 million barrels a day was flowing through taps, as we call it in Alaska. That is unbelievable. It is great for Alaska, great for America. We need energy.

Maria said about 1981:

It was a great time to be a reporter because it was the boom period. CNN or NBC, whatever the affiliates were at the time, would not hesitate to spend the money to send you places [during that time].

Now, for a little context. Journalism in Alaska looks a little bit different than other parts of the country. There are a lot of things in Alaska that look different from the lower 48. A reporter, for example, may have to take a charter plane hundreds of miles—several hundreds of miles—just to reach some of our State's most rural communities. Of course, they are usually faced with weather challenges. They are getting into the nitty-gritty of small-town politics. You might encounter some hungry wildlife even.

But because of these challenges, some of the best reporters arise from Alaska. An example of some of the National Public Radio's most famous reporters nationally who have gotten their start in our great State: Peter Kenyon, Elizabeth Arnold, and many others. And the Anchorage Daily News, which has won Pulitzer prizes, had the late, great Howard Weaver. These are big names in reporting.

But I am digressing because the biggest name, in my view, in journalism in Alaska is our Alaskan of the Week, Maria Downey—even bigger than some of the other names I just mentioned.

It is this kind of intrepid reporter that makes Alaska so special in terms of news broadcasts and makes our Alaskan of the Week so special.

Maria started, as I mentioned, her journalistic career in 1981 on Channel 13 before moving to Channel 2 in 1985. At Channel 2, Maria quickly climbed the reporter ranks, going from co-anchoring to a full anchor in just 6 weeks. That is a shooting star in terms of journalism. As an anchor, Maria realized how vital the role local news reporting played in reporting Statewide news:

When we go to a village in rural Alaska, there's people meeting us at the airstrip [when we get off the plane]. So when you go there, and you feel that connection [with your fellow Alaskans throughout the whole State].

While the national media can get a lot of negative attention—some earned, maybe some not earned—local media, especially in Alaska, is often the crucial link to rural communities who need that reporting for information, who need that reporting throughout the State, who need that reporting to bring us all together, especially in a State as big as Alaska.

Maria said:

It's our community [the whole State]. We're invested in it. It would be a disservice to do anything that's not honest and fair to our community.

What a great principle, by the way, for a journalist.

People see that we're out and about [working with them] and this is our home.

If you need evidence for how invested Maria truly has been and was in her job—you won't believe this story—in 1986, while on the air live on Channel 2, she went into labor. She stayed on the air the whole time. Yes, that is a true story. Her longtime coworker, news director John Tracy, said:

She was cool as a cucumber. You'd never know what was happening [that she was in labor]. I timed her contractions in between commercials.

It is amazing. Maria closed out her segment in labor by telling her husband on the air: "Ron, meet me at the hospital."

There you go. If that is not dedication to Alaska journalism, I don't know what is. So along with her own two children, Alaskans across the State have seen and viewed Maria as our "TV mom." Again, that is the kind of personality that she brings to her job, the professionalism and the fact that people love her.

As the Facebook congratulatory posts have flowed in the past week when Maria announced her retirement after more than 40 years, one post in particular stood out, from a child from rural Alaska who every night would pray for all his family members and then say, "God bless Maria Downey."

Children across Alaska associate Maria with the close of the day—the Channel 2 evening news theme signaling dinnertime every night in thousands and thousands of homes across our great State. Channel 2 is the biggest station. It reaches pretty much the whole State.

Madam President, as you are probably gathering here, Maria is about as close to a local celebrity as you can get, and her popularity is really, really well-earned. Her coworkers, some of whom have worked with Maria more than 20 years, never fail to describe her as kind, intrepid, and good-humored. Tracy Sinclair—by the way, another intrepid journalist and producer herself who I know well at Channel 2—remembers Maria bringing her meals when

Tracy was fighting breast cancer. She will tell you—and this is a quote from Tracy:

Maria is absolutely the person you see on TV [the best].

News director John Tracy said:

She could have done many other things for more money. But she just loved what she did. She earned every accolade.

And the accolades are now pouring in.

Maria is eager to pass her reporting expertise on to the next generation of Alaska's journalists—by the way, a true sign of a leader, developing the next generation to take over after you are completing your professional career.

So, of course, Maria is Channel 2's internship coordinator, where she has mentored young journalists, many of whom now hold full-time positions in the newsroom and continue to work alongside their mentor, Maria Downey.

Outside of the newsroom, Maria has devoted herself to serving the community that she reports on. No surprise there. For more than 25 years, Maria has led Channel 2's Muscular Dystrophy Association Labor Day telethon, raising hundreds of thousands of dollars every year for MDA for Alaska.

She was part of the committee that started what we call in Alaska the Pick, Click, and Give. It is an initiative and a program that lets Alaskans easily donate to the charities of their choice when they are applying for their Permanent Fund Dividend. This is a great initiative, and Maria has been critical to that success.

For her journalistic career, Maria, as I mentioned, has been rightfully honored with awards throughout the years, throughout the decades, celebrating her exceptional reporting for Alaska. She is a Silver Circle inductee with the Northwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, an honor recognizing individuals with 25 years or more in the industry for exceptional contributions to broadcast and media in the Pacific Northwest. She has also been recognized by Alaska's ATHENA Society, by the YWCA's Women of Achievement Awards, and was inducted into the Alaska Broadcasters Hall of Fame.

When asked how she wants to be remembered from her 40-plus years in journalism, Maria said working to make sure her community is a better place is what she focused on:

Looking at ways to help, donating time, talent, treasure. The old stewardship motto. Hopefully what we've done, and what I have done throughout the years, has helped push people towards doing what's right for their community.

What a great legacy. She is not done. She is retiring, but, fortunately, Maria is going to stay in Anchorage. That is great news for all of us in Alaska. She is going to be spending more time with her husband and their two children. Even though we won't be seeing her in our homes every night and letting us know what is happening in our commu-

nity, in our State, in our country, we all hopefully will be seeing her around town. I am sure we will.

So on January 26, after 38 years of Channel 2, Maria will anchor the Channel 2 News for the last time. So all Alaskans make sure you tune in. Americans, you want to watch one of the greatest newscasters in the country—the whole country should tune in.

So, Maria, thank you for your exceptional service to Alaska, for being that woman behind the news all these many years. Thank you for keeping our communities connected, people informed about what is going on in Alaska, in America, in our communities, and congratulations on maybe one of the biggest awards you have ever received up until this moment, being our Alaskan of The Week.

Great job, Maria. Have a great retirement.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). The Senator from Hawaii.

#### ABORTION

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, this week is the anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision. Because of the current rightwing Supreme Court's decision almost 2 years ago to dismantle reproductive freedom, women in many parts of the United States today have less control over their bodies than they did 50 years ago—50 years ago.

The Dobbs decision was the crowning achievement of the hard right's decades-long war on a woman's right to choose, but it wasn't the end. They want to go even further. These very same people are now going State by State, trying to pass extreme laws to all but ban abortion access, and it is working. Over half of the women of reproductive age live in States that are hostile to abortion rights, and more than 64,000 women and girls have become pregnant because of rape in States that have implemented abortion bans after Roe was overturned—64,000 women and girls pregnant in States where abortion access is limited or not available at all.

The stories they share about the pain and trauma inflicted by this extremist cruelty will break your heart. A woman in Ohio had 1 day—1 single day—to decide whether or not to keep her child because she was right on the verge of the State's ban at 6 weeks. A Florida woman was forced to carry her baby to term even though doctors found fatal abnormalities in an ultrasound at 23 weeks and knew that it had at most a few hours to live after birth. Another woman, whose baby would have been born without a skull—without a skull—traveled 1,400 miles from Baton Rouge to New York City to get an abortion because local doctors were afraid they would lose their license—they would lose their license—or be thrown in prison for providing abortion services.

Horrific as these stories are, they haven't stopped Republicans from trying to destroy every last bit of bodily

autonomy and freedom. Republicans here in Congress are explicit: They are pushing for a national abortion ban. So some of the things you say about what is happening sound like they are partisan talking points, but that is what is happening. They actually do want an abortion ban in Federal statutory law.

The rightwing Supreme Court may well deliver another hammer blow to abortion rights in the coming months if it reverses Federal rules governing access to medication abortion—rules that were shaped in part by a Federal lawsuit where a Hawaii doctor argued correctly that women should be able to access abortion pills, which are safe and effective, when and where they need them. For Hawaii and so many other places around the country that rely on telehealth and medication by mail for access to care, this is vital, but they may not last much longer.

If there is a glimmer of hope in all of this, it is that a majority of Americans reject this extremism on abortion. They see it for what it is: plainly unjust and needlessly cruel—needlessly cruel. They believe in a woman's right to choose, and they support enshrining reproductive rights nationally once and for all.

We live in a democracy, after all, and Senate Democrats will continue to fight until a woman's right to control her own body is the law of the land again.

#### SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

Mr. President, the war in Gaza, the war in Ukraine, looming threats in the Indo-Pacific—finding bipartisan consensus about what to do on any one of these issues is very, very hard. To do them all together is extraordinarily difficult. But time is running out, and it is essential that we act—No. 1, because we have a very real security interest in each of these areas, and No. 2, because our allies and partners are counting on our help as they encounter the alarming march of fascism around the globe.

It has been almost a month since the last U.S. arms shipment left for Ukraine. Funding for assistance has run out completely. Let me just repeat that. This is not something we are arguing about in terms of the facts on the ground; it is a fact that Ukraine is slowly but surely running out of ammunition.

Ukraine will have to fight for its survival with a weapons supply that is dwindling by the day. Putin, on the other hand, is intensifying his assault with the help of missiles and artillery rounds provided by North Korea and Iran. That is who Ukraine is up against—Russia, North Korea, and Iran—a band of autocrats that have no respect for democracy or even a passing interest in peace.

Beyond its own survival, Ukraine's fight is for the fate of the free world and nothing less. So we don't have time to play partisan politics here as Putin continues to pummel Ukraine day by day. Time is running out, and they desperately need help.

I understand people say what is useful to them as an argument to get their legislation through, so I don't want you to think this is some sort of overstatement. They are literally running out of ammunition. If you ask anybody in a classified session, in a nonclassified session; if you ask any expert—left, right, and center—the determining factor for Ukraine's future and therefore the future of Europe and the future of the free world is, what do we do about the supplemental appropriations bill? They are running out of ammunition, and Putin is banking on a war of attrition that Ukraine will not be able to win.

Meanwhile, the war between Israel and Hamas since Hamas's barbaric attacks on October 7 continues to devastate millions in the region. Hamas still holds 130 hostages captive, including Americans and even a year-old infant.

As the United States made clear in the immediate aftermath of the Hamas attacks, Israel has an entirely legitimate right and an obligation to defend itself and to rescue the hostages. It should not be lost on anyone that Israel continues to lose scores of young men and women in battle trying to protect their nation in the wake of this unprecedented terror attack.

But just as the United States has a responsibility to Israel, as its closest ally, to help it defend itself, we also have a responsibility as the leader of the free world to call on Israel to wage this war smartly and justly—to prosecute Hamas, not the Palestinian people. More than 25,000 Palestinians have been killed in the last 3 months, most of them women and children. This is in no one's interest strategically or morally.

We also have a responsibility to make sure that humanitarian assistance is allowed to flow to the millions of innocent civilians suffering the horrific conditions under the constant barrage of crossfire.

Even in the face of heightened passions and justifiable anger, we have to make a distinction between people and their governments. These are two peoples suffering agonizing losses, two peoples who want to live their lives just like the rest of us—outside of the constant shadow of violence and bloodshed. They just want to go to school or teach at a school or be a garbage collector or bake bread or eat bread or drink coffee or make coffee or fix roads or drive on a road. Everybody has basic human needs. Everybody has basic human needs. And the idea that we can't see beyond our geopolitical disagreements to understand that this is causing immense suffering for everyone is one of our fundamental challenges.

I talk a lot with the Presiding Officer from New Jersey about this. You know, it is at least partly the internet. It is at least partly the fact that if you say something about the suffering of Palestinians, the first thing out of every-

one's mouth in your replies is "What about October 7?" If you say "Hamas is terrible," people say "What about"—the truth is, there really is suffering on both sides, and I am not trying to make equivalent a terrorist attack with a reaction to that terrorist attack. I am not. But, do you know what, that is all written in the wind. Everyone is suffering. Everyone is suffering.

Whenever and however this war ends, there has to be a path to a just and a lasting peace. It has been the longstanding policy of the U.S. Government on a bipartisan basis to support a two-state solution because a two-state solution is the only way to guarantee distinct, inalienable, and mutually recognized homes for both peoples and empower each to chart their own future.

As we consider a major aid package for the region, it is not insignificant to at the same time reaffirm our commitment to that vision. The amendment I plan to file, along with 48 of my colleagues, should a supplemental aid package come to the floor is about making the American position clear.

Inherent to achieving a two-state future is leadership on both sides that is actually interested in peace and both sides feeling secure enough to pursue it. Israel must feel that Hamas and other militant groups have been degraded so they no longer pose a threat to the people of Israel or the country of Israel, and Palestinians must feel that they have a real seat at the table.

There can't be extremists in the Israeli Government who jump at every chance to inflame and incite divisions, and there can't be a Palestinian Authority rank with corruption and nepotism, deteriorating into a kleptocracy. Palestinians want and need a representative and an effective government, and the PA in its current form is falling short.

So, as we press for diplomacy, we also need to be clear that it will take a reformed P.A. that can deliver on the aspirations of the Palestinian people, in addition to a cooperative, forward-looking Israeli Government, in order for these negotiations to work. Changing a longstanding and deeply broken status quo is hard, but it is incumbent on the United States of America, as a global leader, to do everything that we can to foster the conditions for an enduring peace.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). The Senator from New Jersey.

TRIBUTE TO THE PAGES

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I appreciate the Presiding Officer, my dear friend, and I think he and I are very aware of this. If you ask the average person who knows about their Federal Government how many people are in the U.S. Senate, their answer is going to be 100, and they would be wrong. There are 100 Senators, but as the Presiding Officer and I both know, there are thousands of people who work in the U.S. Capitol for the U.S. Senate. This is a larger body of people who are

critical to keeping this institution running.

There are amazing folks who work here in the U.S. Senate. If you take the time to talk to them, you will hear stories that make you feel proud to be an American—from literally the people who are keeping the pipes under this place functional, who keep this place and its history and its heritage preserved. There are people on staffs who make sure the floor runs smoothly so Senators can present bills and ideas. This is an extraordinary collection of Americans who takes part in what is a hallowed and civic institution.

But, perhaps, when people look at the floor, there are two Senators here, but there are probably 30 or so people on the floor right now, not to mention those working in the cloakrooms. But often, when people turn on their TVs and happen to catch it on C-SPAN—hi, Mom, who watches a lot—the folks they probably most overlook are the people I think bring an energy, an excitement, and an enthusiasm to this place, and those are the pages.

Now, I can't even get my mind around, when I meet these young people, taking a year—or, excuse me, a semester—off of your normal track—all your extracurricular activities, from all of your friends—traveling from all over the country and coming here, not just to work a full-time job amidst these hallowed halls, but also to hold a full-time schedule of classes.

I look at these teenagers, and I feel this utter sense of just sympathy for them because they are grinding in ways that a lot of Senators don't do. Think about this. They work on the floor of the Senate, which is a demanding job, doing critical work. Then they go home and study. Then they wake up sometimes at 5 o'clock in the morning to take classes in things that I am not sure if every Senator can still pass—calculus, for crying out loud. They do their academic work, and they do their service for their country. So it takes a special breed to do something so irrational with their teenage years.

I get a chance every time—all of us Senators get a chance—to engage with them and meet them, and I just want to take this moment, on the last day that they are here, to just say some things particularly about this class.

Mr. President, this class is the most awful group of joke tellers I have ever met.

(Laughter.)

I mean, their jokes are so particularly bad that I have never used it to describe such a page class. They are not just bad; they are painfully pathetic. Their jokes are pugilistic and pugnacious. Their jokes are pukeworthy. Yes, this is the first time in American history that word has ever been used on the Senate floor—"pukeworthy." The truth of the matter is they have a gene in their bodies that prevents them from having good senses of humor, and I make that clear: They need to work on this, or they may not make it in life.

But I will say something about this class that I think that the Presiding Officer may have noticed and definitely a lot of the staff who serves on the floor. I was literally struck, when I came in on the first day and started engaging with them, as I often do, that there was something special about this class, because it is the value I most admire in anybody that I meet. In this class, whether they are pages who serve on that side of the aisle or on this side of the aisle, I found them immediately to have this important superpower for coping in life, and that is that this page class is kind. They really are good people. I have to say that that is how I will remember this class. I will try desperately to forget their bad jokes. I will always, though, remember their kindness.

I want to tell this page class that you brought something special to this floor; that you all contributed more than you probably realize; that you, in your humility, probably underestimate the impact you bring to this place. I know you are going to have special memories here. In fact, it is amazing, as I feel sometimes just as a Senator, that we all had a chance in our service together in the Senate to be on the frontlines of history, to witness some of the greatest debates of humanity right now. You heard one from the Presiding Officer, who just spoke, and who spoke to issues that go to the heart of what this country is about, what this country stands for, what this country will do. That was a privilege that you were a part of.

But, to me, what I think is important about the role that you have played in the short period of time that you have been here is the fact that I think you remind a lot of us who are two and three and four times your age that, when you still come in here, despite how tired you are, and still have that look of wonder about this place, you help us to remember what a privilege it is to be here.

So I just want this class to know that it has been my privilege, as one Senator, who, I believe, probably speaks for most—that it was a privilege to serve with you in the United States of America.

I hope you remember that the highest calling of citizenship is service; that this is not your last time that you answer that call whether it is in your communities, your neighborhoods, whether it is to your States or to this Nation. I hope that you always aspire to show your patriotism not by what you say but by what you do.

And, dear God, don't let a harsh world—a world that can be mean—ever stop you from being as kind as you were on the day that I first met you.

I love that story about the man who goes up to a young person and says: What do you want to be when you grow up?

And the confident young person looked at them and simply said: I want to be kind.

I think you guys already have achieved one of the greatest callings for people, which is to be good to one another. In fact, I look at our political climate in America, and it is often not a good demonstration of that high human virtue. So I want to thank you for your kindness. I forgive you for your bad jokes, but most of all, I hope that you will not change that spirit that resides in your hearts.

Thank you for your service here to the U.S. Senate. What an honor it has been to be with you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). The majority leader.

#### SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, for months, I have said that the only way we are going to pass a national security supplemental is if both sides are serious about an agreement.

Democrats are resolute on getting something done. We are committed to keeping our promise to helping our friends in Ukraine in their fight against Putin. We know that if Putin prevails in Ukraine, the consequences for Western democracy and for the American people will be severe and haunt us for years.

Democrats are also resolute on reaching an agreement on securing the southern border. We know how important this is. We are negotiating in good faith and want to get this done in a bipartisan way.

And Democrats are resolute to send more aid to Israel, provide more humanitarian aid for innocent civilians in Gaza, and hold the line against the Chinese Communist Party in the Indo-Pacific.

As we have seen over the past day, getting a bipartisan agreement on the supplemental is very difficult. But I am glad that now negotiations are continuing to move forward. Of course, there are still issues that must be settled, but negotiators will work all weekend in an effort to get this done.

#### TRIBUTE TO SENATE PAGES

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the names of our current pages be printed in the RECORD.

Thank you, Pages, for your good work, and have a good life.

Let me just say to the pages, today is your final day in your class. It has been a very busy session, but you pages have done a great job bringing the Senate to life.

The pages are always here when we need them: early in the mornings and late into the evenings. They have served this institution with grace and dignity, and it is an honor to have you with us.

On behalf of a grateful Senate, we say thank you and wish you all the best as you return home, move on to your next adventures. And again, to repeat, have a good life.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

#### 2023 FALL PAGES NAMES

Peyton Bolling, Jessie Cai, Jacob Cozze, Sloane Demetriou, Isabella “Bella” Dereszkievicz-Hodowany, Miles Erdly-Liang, Oliver Forero, Rishi Gurudevan, Lauren Holland, Graydon Martone, Piper Richardson, Graham Shabino, Isabella Soto, Avery Upeslakis.

Alan Ventura Duran, Theia Wepaloki, Michael Bicksel, Aleyah Carbajal, Chace Durant-Asbury, Eben Francis, Spencer Headlee, Yosef Herrera, John Honnold, Anna Kardashyan, Victoria Lavinder, Elsa Remington, Arjun Sandil, Ella Stillick, Sophia “Sophie” Wright.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. 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.

#### VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. Mr. President, I was absent for rollcall vote No. 347 on December 18, 2023. Had I not missed the vote I would have voted yea, to confirm Mr. O'Malley's confirmation.

#### S. RES. 504

Mr. OSSOFF. Mr. President, the Senator from Vermont last week proposed to discharge the Foreign Relations Committee of S. Res. 504, his resolution to require the production by the Department of State of a report on Israel's human rights practices.

Senator SANDERS' resolution is intended to serve the important purpose of ensuring robust Senate oversight of how U.S. security assistance has been deployed by the State of Israel in Gaza, where humanitarian conditions are catastrophic. However, Senator SANDERS' measure as drafted is overbroad, with potentially significant unintended consequences.

Beyond its reporting requirements with respect to ongoing Israeli operations in Gaza, Senator SANDERS' resolution requires within 30 days the affirmative certification by the Secretary of State that no individual unit of the Israel Defense Forces receiving U.S. security assistance over the past 5 years has committed any gross violations of human rights. The Department of State cannot feasibly undertake within 30 days the far-reaching analysis of IDF operations over half a decade that would be required to make such a certification.

The Department of State would therefore, in my view, be unable to comply with the reporting requirements in Senator SANDERS' resolution, potentially triggering a mandatory cessation of U.S. security assistance to Israel before the Senate even had the opportunity to review its report.