

living. For example, a high school teacher in Pennsylvania had two master's degrees and owes more than \$300,000 in student loans. She said: "If I pay this five, six, seven hundred dollars this month, how am I going to afford to buy food for the family for the month—[or] for the week?" That is a familiar struggle for many families.

After the "pause" on student loan payments ended, the first payment was due in October of this last year. The Education Department said that roughly 40 percent of borrowers still have not made that payment by mid-November.

Inflation is about far more than groceries or gas prices. It is a cancer that eats away at our entire economy and the standard of living of 330 million Americans. Inflation impacts the cost of living—as I said, student loan payments, credit card debt, mortgage rates, housing affordability, retirement planning, market volatility, economic growth, and so much more.

This is exactly—this is exactly—what Republicans and many leading economists predicted when our Democratic friends went on not one but two partisan spending sprees during the pandemic. First came the American Rescue Plan, which included a long list of progressive social policies.

You remember, back during the pandemic, there were bipartisan efforts to help develop a vaccine and treatments to save lives. Those were bipartisan. And then there were also programs like the Paycheck Protection Program and others, which were bipartisan efforts to throw an economic lifeline to people during the pandemic.

But after that had largely subsided, our Democratic colleagues just could not give up spending more borrowed money. As I said, it was primarily in pursuit, on a purely partisan basis, of pursuing progressive social policies—backdoor funding for Planned Parenthood, a blank check for mismanaged union pension plans, money for "climate justice"—whatever that is.

Our colleagues tried to brand this liberal utopia of a bill as "pandemic relief," but the pandemic had largely subsided. But they saw, in the immortal words of one former Member of Congress—he said an emergency is a terrible thing to waste, and our Democratic colleagues simply couldn't give up and let go to waste the emergency of the pandemic, even though it had largely subsided. And what they chose to do, then, was to add \$2 trillion of spending to the debt and to an already volatile economy. It was like pouring gasoline on a fire. What do you expect?

As Democrats pushed this bill forward, they ignored warnings from leading economists that this level of spending could trigger inflation. There is more and more money in the economy chasing the same or fewer goods and services. So, naturally, prices go up.

Harvard economist Larry Summers even predicted this package could "set off inflationary pressures of a kind we

have not seen in a generation." He was exactly right.

We could not convince our Democratic colleagues to change course. Instead, they chose to double down. After the so-called "American Rescue Act"—a partisan spending bill of almost \$2 trillion—our Democratic colleagues said: Well, we are not through yet. They went on a second partisan spending spree and gave it an embarrassingly out-of-touch title. They called it the Inflation Reduction Act. The truth is, it was not an Inflation Reduction Act. It was an "Inflation Nonreduction Act." It misleadingly suggested that, somehow, we had to spend another \$740 billion to bring down inflation, when, actually, spending that more money—pouring that gasoline on the economic fire—actually made things worse.

This bill included even more liberal priorities, including hundreds of billions of dollars for climate projects. In total, the second partisan spending bill added \$740 billion.

It is no surprise that it certainly didn't do anything to reduce inflation. As I said, it made it worse. All it did was drive up costs for folks all across the country and add to the mountain of debt—now roughly \$35 trillion—that our grandchildren will inherit.

And now President Biden and many of our Democratic colleagues want to spend even more money. They are not done yet. They want to spend more money to address the problems created by their own unchecked spending habits.

As I mentioned a moment ago, student loans are a fact of life for many, many people. But rather than try to figure out how to work through this debt to help people actually meet their legal and moral obligations to repay the money that they borrowed, the President has proposed spending roughly another half a billion dollars to "forgive" student loans.

But everybody knows there is no forgiveness of the loan. You are just transferring that obligation from the person who borrowed the money and agreed to repay it back to everybody else—the taxpayers across America, many of whom either worked at a job and paid for their college, so they didn't have to borrow money, or else they didn't go to a 4-year liberal arts college. They went to a community college so they could pay the tuition costs and not have to rack up a bunch of debt. So, once again, the Biden administration has decided to pour more gasoline on the fire by effectively transferring that obligation to the taxpayer.

The bottom line is, under Democratic leadership, Texans and the lives of 330-plus million Americans have just gotten harder.

The average Texas household is spending \$1,000 more a month compared to when President Biden took office. As I said, they are grappling with higher costs for food, for energy, for housing, for insurance, and other basic expenses.

Here is the bottom line. For your \$100 package or cart full of groceries 4 years ago, now you are paying \$136.89 for that. That is probably the most real and dramatic and tangible impact on most Texans and most Americans.

When the American people look at inflation and what misguided government policies have done to make their lives harder and to reduce their standard of living, it is no surprise that they are turning pessimistic about the state of our economy—certainly, about their own economic circumstances.

In a recent New York Times poll, more than half the respondents rated the economy as "poor." That was the worst option they were given.

A Wall Street Journal poll found that nearly three-quarters of voters say inflation is headed in the wrong direction. Maybe you could just call that a statement of the obvious.

What is also obvious is that Biden economics and Biden inflation is wreaking havoc on family budgets, and it is clear that President Biden has absolutely no plan, other than to continue to spend more and more money—to pour more and more gasoline on the fire.

He has had 3 years to address inflation, 3 years to tamp down rising costs, which are a hidden tax on most Americans' income. He has had 3 years to return to the 1.4 percent inflation rate that he inherited—1.4 percent inflation when he inherited the office.

Sadly, he has proven himself either unwilling or incapable of addressing the crisis. I suspect he is, frankly, just oblivious to the crisis because it doesn't affect him, living in 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, collecting a large paycheck each month. It doesn't affect him one bit. But it affects hundreds of millions of Americans.

For the sake of families across the country who are still being crushed by the weight of inflation, we need a change in management. We need a change in direction because, as I said, the American people are not fooled. They know we are on the wrong course, and we need to correct that course come November.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WELCH). The Senator from North Dakota.

(The remarks of Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. MARSHALL pertaining to the introduction of S. 4081 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. HOEVEN. I yield the floor.

NOMINATION OF ROBERT J. WHITE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Robert Jerome White to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Born in Royal Oak, MI, Mr. White received his B.A. from the University of Michigan and his J.D. from Chicago-Kent College of Law. After graduating from law school, he worked as an associate attorney at Ralph E. Meczyk and

Associates from 2010 to 2014. There, Mr. White worked on cases involving financial crimes, healthcare fraud, bank/mortgage fraud, firearms offenses, drug-trafficking offenses, and organized crime.

In 2014, Mr. White began serving as an assistant U.S. attorney in the Western District of Texas's El Paso Division. From 2015 to 2018, he served on the organized crime and drug enforcement task force. In 2018, Mr. White continued his service as assistant U.S. attorney in the Eastern District of Michigan. He has served as the lead attorney on the Detroit dark web task force, where he investigated and prosecuted cases relating to wire fraud, aggravated identity theft, drug trafficking, and money laundering. Mr. White has also served as the office's digital asset coordinator and presently serves in the white-collar crime unit. Throughout his career, Mr. White has tried approximately 15 cases to verdict in Federal court.

The American Bar Association unanimously rated Mr. White as "well qualified," and his nomination is strongly supported by his home State Senators, Ms. STABENOW and Mr. PETERS. He also received bipartisan support in the Judiciary Committee.

I am proud to support his nomination.

#### VOTE ON WHITE NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the White nomination?

Mr. HOEVEN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 58, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 118 Ex.]

#### YEAS—58

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Bennet	Hirono	Rounds
Blumenthal	Kaine	Sanders
Booker	Kelly	Schatz
Brown	Kennedy	Schumer
Butler	King	Shaheen
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Sinema
Cardin	Luján	Smith
Carper	Manchin	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Collins	Menendez	Tillis
Coons	Merkley	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Murkowski	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Fetterman	Ossoff	Welch
Gillibrand	Padilla	Whitehouse
Graham	Peters	Wyden
Hassan	Reed	
Heinrich	Romney	

#### NAYS—42

Barrasso	Crapo	Lankford
Blackburn	Cruz	Lee
Boozman	Daines	Lummis
Braun	Ernst	Marshall
Britt	Fischer	McConnell
Budd	Grassley	Moran
Capito	Hagerty	Mullin
Cassidy	Hawley	Paul
Cornyn	Hoeven	Ricketts
Cotton	Hyde-Smith	Risch
Cramer	Johnson	Rubio

Schmitt	Sullivan	Vance
Scott (FL)	Thune	Wicker
Scott (SC)	Tuberville	Young

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

#### 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 senior assistant legislative 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. 535, Ann Marie McIff Allen, of Utah, to be United States District Judge for the District of Utah.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Peter Welch, Laphonza Butler, Richard Blumenthal, Alex Padilla, Tim Kaine, Christopher A. Coons, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Margaret Wood Hassan, Sheldon Whitehouse, Gary C. Peters, Catherine Cortez Masto, Jeanne Shaheen, Tammy Duckworth, Tina Smith, Chris Van Hollen.

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 Ann Marie McIff Allen, of Utah, to be United States District Judge for the District of Utah, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 97, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 119 Ex.]

#### YEAS—97

Baldwin	Duckworth	Manchin
Barrasso	Durbin	Markey
Bennet	Ernst	Marshall
Blackburn	Fetterman	McConnell
Blumenthal	Fischer	Menendez
Booker	Gillibrand	Merkley
Boozman	Graham	Moran
Braun	Grassley	Mullin
Britt	Hagerty	Murkowski
Brown	Hassan	Murphy
Budd	Hawley	Murray
Butler	Heinrich	Ossoff
Cantwell	Hickenlooper	Padilla
Capito	Hirono	Paul
Cardin	Hoeven	Peters
Carper	Hyde-Smith	Reed
Cassidy	Johnson	Ricketts
Collins	Kaine	Risch
Coons	Kelly	Romney
Cornyn	Kennedy	Rosen
Cortez Masto	King	Rounds
Cramer	Klobuchar	Rubio
Crapo	Lankford	Sanders
Cruz	Lee	Schatz
Daines	Luján	Schmitt
	Lummis	Schumer

Scott (FL)	Tillis	Welch
Shaheen	Tuberville	Whitehouse
Sinema	Van Hollen	Wicker
Smith	Vance	Wyden
Stabenow	Warner	Young
Tester	Warnock	
Thune	Warren	

#### NAYS—2

Scott (SC)

Sullivan

#### NOT VOTING—1

Cotton

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). On this vote, the yeas are 97, the nays are 2.

The motion is agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Ann Marie McIff Allen, of Utah, to be United States District Judge for the District of Utah.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### 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.

#### SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE 118TH CONGRESS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the revised memberships on the twelve subcommittees of the Committee on Appropriations for the 118th Congress be printed in the RECORD. The new assignments reflect my selection as chair of the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development and Senator KYRSTEN SINEMA's selection as chair of the Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, both for the remainder of this Congress.

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

#### SUBCOMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Senator Murray, as Chair of the Committee, and Senator Collins, as Vice Chair of the Committee, are ex officio members of all subcommittees of which they are not regular members.

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES

Senators Heinrich (chair), Tester, Merkley, Baldwin, Manchin, Peters, Sinema, Hoeven (ranking member), McConnell, Collins, Moran, Hyde-Smith, and Fischer. (7-6)

#### COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES

Senators Shaheen (chair), Reed, Coons, Schatz, Manchin, Van Hollen, Merkley,