

that the United States advance our interest at UNESCO and that we have a confirmed Ambassador.

I am going to underscore the point of the need for a U.S. Ambassador confirmed presence at UNESCO. Because of the current major escalation of anti-Semitism here in America and around the world, one of UNESCO's specific mandates is to combat anti-Semitism and promote Holocaust education, to ensure that other countries teach future generations about the Holocaust, and combat Holocaust denial.

Today, that mission is more important than ever before in recent times. That is why we need a confirmed U.S. Representative who has the experience to advance U.S. priorities, from championing Holocaust educational programs, to advancing girls' education in STEM, to developing responsible international standards on science and technology, including for AI.

Courtney O'Donnell is the right person for this job, and I am very proud to support her nomination, and I am very pleased that she is willing to serve in this capacity. She currently serves in the Office of the Vice President as a Senior Advisor and the Acting Chief of Staff for Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff, where she focuses on countering anti-Semitism, among other issues. She has played an integral role in developing and implementing the administration's anti-Semitism policies. She understands the need for strong U.S. leadership. She understands the urgency of advancing efforts to combat anti-Semitism. She has a proven track record of working to counter anti-Semitism and Holocaust denialism through her work on the U.S. national strategy to combat anti-Semitism.

Don't just take my word for it; let me quote from the president of the World Jewish Congress, who says that Ms. O'Donnell's efforts to combat anti-Semitism "demonstrate a profound commitment to eradicating hate and promoting Holocaust education" and that her confirmation would be a "necessary step" to ensure that "UNESCO continues to uphold its ongoing commitment to partner with Israel, preserve Jewish heritage, combat disinformation, and expand Holocaust education efforts."

The American Jewish Committee said that Ms. O'Donnell's confirmation will "bring U.S. leadership to UNESCO on issues of global concern to the Jewish community and advance American values of pluralism and freedom of expression."

The National Council of Jewish Women and Better World Campaign have echoed these points, writing in strong support of her confirmation.

She committed to do that at the hearing we had before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, where she said she would work "aggressively to combat antisemitism and counter anti-Israel bias."

We know that we have challenges in our international organizations on

anti-Israel bias. We know that. We need a champion, a confirmed Ambassador who will be a champion to represent America to fight that type of anti-Semitic activities and anti-Israel activities and to speak out in favor of Holocaust education and implement strategies to combat anti-Semitism.

This should be a clear vote by my colleagues to want to have America's presence at UNESCO to fight anti-Semitism, when we know how prevalent it is today and how it is growing today.

So I urge my colleagues to support cloture and confirm Ms. O'Donnell to be the U.S. Representative to the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization without any further delay. I know we will have a chance to vote on that shortly.

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 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. 579, Courtney Diesel O'Donnell, of California, to be United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, with the rank of Ambassador.

Charles E. Schumer, Benjamin L. Cardin, Jeanne Shaheen, Alex Padilla, Richard J. Durbin, Amy Klobuchar, Jack Reed, Tina Smith, Tammy Duckworth, Richard Blumenthal, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Catherine Cortez Masto, Margaret Wood Hassan, Peter Welch, Sheldon Whitehouse, Raphael G. Warnock, Debbie Stabenow.

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 Courtney Diesel O'Donnell, of California, to be United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, with the rank of Ambassador, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. RICKETTS), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT), and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 50, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 163 Ex.]

#### YEAS—50

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

#### NAYS—41

|           |            |            |
|-----------|------------|------------|
| Barrasso  | Fischer    | Mullin     |
| Blackburn | Graham     | Murkowski  |
| Boozman   | Grassley   | Paul       |
| Braun     | Hawley     | Romney     |
| Britt     | Hoeben     | Rounds     |
| Budd      | Hyde-Smith | Schmitt    |
| Cassidy   | Johnson    | Sullivan   |
| Collins   | Kennedy    | Thune      |
| Cornyn    | Lankford   | Tillis     |
| Cramer    | Lee        | Tuberville |
| Crapo     | Lummis     | Vance      |
| Cruz      | Marshall   | Wicker     |
| Daines    | McConnell  | Young      |
| Ernst     | Moran      |            |

#### NOT VOTING—9

|         |          |            |
|---------|----------|------------|
| Capito  | Menendez | Rubio      |
| Cotton  | Ricketts | Scott (FL) |
| Hagerty | Risch    | Scott (SC) |

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). On this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 41.

The motion is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

#### BUDGET ENFORCEMENT LEVELS

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I submit to the Senate the budget for fiscal year 2025. Last summer, Congress agreed to a 2-year budget deal as part of negotiations surrounding the debt limit. That was the bipartisan Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023, or the FRA. It included a provision to serve in place of a formal budget resolution for both fiscal years 2024 and 2025. I am submitting the necessary budgetary levels to implement that agreement today.

In the Budget Committee, my Republican colleagues have suggested that we should be debating a budget resolution. So I will take this moment to remind them that we already have one in place from that agreement. I don't see our committee wasting precious time on something that has already been decided, when we could and, indeed, should be preparing for the future.

When at least \$10 trillion of our national debt stems from two exogenous shocks to the economy—namely, the 2008 financial crisis and the COVID pandemic—it would be folly for the Budget Committee not to focus on future shocks to our economy, which is why the Budget Committee has been focused on threats to our Nation's long-term fiscal outlook and on proposing solutions—like how climate change poses systemic risks to our economy, like how tax cuts for the wealthy are driving up deficits, like

how making the wealthy pay their fair share would protect Social Security and Medicare essentially forever, like how we can cut healthcare costs with zero cuts to benefits if we pursue commonsense reforms to healthcare delivery systems.

When it comes to the economy-wide risks from climate change, we have heard from economists, central bankers, financial experts, insurance and mortgage industry leaders, and many others who are ringing the alarm bells.

In the Budget Committee, we have heard testimony about rising seas making large swaths of coastline less and less habitable and less and less insurable. I am sure the Presiding Officer is seeing that in his home State of Georgia. As the decades unspool ahead of us, more and more coastal communities will be at risk, eventually rendering an estimated trillions of dollars in real estate virtually worthless.

We have heard similar testimony about property becoming uninsurable in wildfire-risk areas. We are already seeing insurers flee communities on the frontlines of climate change. We have seen premiums skyrocketing in response to increased climate-related damages. Things will likely get uglier.

So the committee launched investigations into the climate change-fueled insurance crisis. We are working with Democrats on the House Oversight Committee on an investigation into the fossil fuel disinformation campaign in order to better understand how it stalled political progress on climate action and imperiled our economy.

What our joint investigation revealed is that Big Oil knew the environmental and economic harms of its products but deceived the American public so as to keep producing and selling ever more oil and gas. We learned that Big Oil and its trade associations continue to oppose climate policies, including ones that they publicly claim to support.

Unfortunately, our series of hearings on climate costs and the fossil fuel industry's role in perpetuating the climate crisis has been largely met with derision or mockery or just trying to change the subject by many of my Republican colleagues. As I said at the last hearing on this subject, you can have your opinion now, but history will judge.

While acknowledging that revenue is a subject within the purview of the Budget Committee, Republican response to our hearings on raising rev-

enue has not evinced much substantive interest. There is not much outrage, for instance, that big corporations pay lower tax rates than plumbers.

The Budget Committee has held seven hearings, with more planned, examining how tax cuts for the wealthy and for big corporations and the resulting tax gap have been actually primary drivers of our deficit. We have learned that the Bush and Trump tax cuts have added \$10 trillion to the debt and, in fact, are the main reason the debt as a share of the economy is increasing.

According to CBO, extending the Trump tax cuts, which Republicans appear to want to do, would cost another \$4.6 trillion—that is trillion with a “t”—mostly for billionaires and big corporations. You can see where the priorities lie.

We have heard testimony that by closing loopholes, making the wealthy and large corporations pay a fairer share, and cracking down on wealthy tax cheats, we can protect Social Security and Medicare forever, invest in an economy that works for everyone, and reduce our deficit—like my Medicare and Social Security Fair Share Act, which would shore up these twin pillars of retirement security essentially forever without raising taxes on anyone making less than \$400,000.

What have Republicans proposed? Well, not much. They spent decades trying to cut Social Security and Medicare benefits, and then they rose to their feet in acclamation, in last year's State of the Union Address, to assure the American public that they would not cut benefits. Well, if that is the case, then the only solution left is more revenue. So it would be nice if they were willing to discuss how to make the wealthy pay their fair share and protect these programs into the future.

Another big driver of Federal spending is healthcare. The United States continues to spend more on healthcare as a percentage of GDP than any other peer OECD country, and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Actuary estimates healthcare will grow to 20 percent GDP by 2031. For all that spending, the average life expectancy in America is lower than that of many peer countries with far more efficient healthcare systems.

So the Budget Committee is tackling this too. We held a series of hearings on reducing inefficiencies in healthcare that increase costs for patients, families, and the Federal Government. In

just our most recent hearing, we heard how administrative burdens—the billing, reporting, and all the nonclinical work incidental to the actual delivery of healthcare—are responsible for over half a trillion dollars in healthcare spending every year.

And here, I am happy to report that there have been bipartisan glimmers of hope. There has been bipartisan agreement on the source of these problems, and I have begun conversations with Ranking Member GRASSLEY about what legislation we might be able to work on together in this space.

I can only wish that my Republican colleagues were similarly willing to have serious conversations on climate risk and on revenue opportunities. As our hearings have made clear, if you care about American debt deficits, you have to care about climate change, about unrigging our Tax Code, and about addressing wasteful spending in healthcare.

And with that, section 122 of the FRA requires that I submit the levels that will be used to enforce the second year of the spending agreement. This submission sets the spending level for appropriations for 2025 at the spending caps in law and allows the Appropriations Committee to begin its work.

It also sets mandatory spending and revenue levels for 10 years at current law levels. I am also updating the reserve fund in the FRA to be available for legislation that doesn't increase the deficit between 2025 and 2034.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that these accompanying tables be printed in the RECORD.

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

ALLOCATION OF SPENDING AUTHORITY TO SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

(Pursuant to Section 122 of the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 and Section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974)  
(\$ in billions)

|   | Budget Authority | Outlays   |
|---|------------------|-----------|
| Appropriations:                               |                  |           |
| Revised Security Category/Defense .....       | 895,212          | N/A       |
| Revised Nonsecurity Category/Nondefense ..... | 710,688          | N/A       |
| General Purpose Discretionary .....           | N/A              | 1,869,797 |
| Memo:   |                  |           |
| On-budget .....                               | 1,599,212        | 1,863,193 |
| Off-budget .....                              | 6,688            | 6,604     |
| Mandatory .....                               | 1,562,610        | 1,544,166 |

N/A = not applicable. Budgetary changes related to program integrity initiatives and other adjustments pursuant to section 251(b) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act, as amended by the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023, will be held in reserve until consideration of legislation providing such funding. “Revised security category” means discretionary appropriations in budget function 050, while “revised nonsecurity category” means discretionary appropriations other than in budget function 050.

ALLOCATION OF SPENDING AUTHORITY TO SENATE COMMITTEES OTHER THAN APPROPRIATIONS

(Pursuant to Section 122 of the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 and Section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974)  
(\$ in billions)

|                                       | 2025    | 2025–2029 | 2025–2034 |
|---------------------------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: |         |           |           |
| Budget Authority .....                | 186,630 | 967,147   | 2,004,484 |
| Outlays .....                         | 175,749 | 916,958   | 1,877,482 |
| Armed Services:                       |         |           |           |
| Budget Authority .....                | 287,793 | 1,094,587 | 2,053,411 |
| Outlays .....                         | 285,585 | 1,091,957 | 2,056,297 |
| Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:  |         |           |           |
| Budget Authority .....                | 29,964  | 170,669   | 356,235   |
| Outlays .....                         | –14,947 | –80,642   | –130,907  |

ALLOCATION OF SPENDING AUTHORITY TO SENATE COMMITTEES OTHER THAN APPROPRIATIONS—Continued  
(Pursuant to Section 122 of the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 and Section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974)  
[\$ in billions]

|   | 2025       | 2025–<br>2029 | 2025–<br>2034 |
|---|------------|---------------|---------------|
| Commerce, Science, and Transportation:      |            |               |               |
| Budget Authority .....                      | 24.029     | 102.967       | 194.261       |
| Outlays .....                               | 18.793     | 98.312        | 177.180       |
| Energy and Natural Resources:               |            |               |               |
| Budget Authority .....                      | 10.108     | 41.737        | 82.818        |
| Outlays .....                               | 14.840     | 76.740        | 122.300       |
| Environment and Public Works:               |            |               |               |
| Budget Authority .....                      | 67.352     | 333.108       | 664.759       |
| Outlays .....                               | 16.385     | 62.091        | 88.801        |
| Finance:                                    |            |               |               |
| Budget Authority .....                      | 3,934.908  | 21,879.366    | 51,266.540    |
| Outlays .....                               | 3,932.931  | 21,884.552    | 51,247.329    |
| Foreign Relations:                          |            |               |               |
| Budget Authority .....                      | 52.009     | 228.212       | 449.061       |
| Outlays .....                               | 49.447     | 225.675       | 446.499       |
| Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:     |            |               |               |
| Budget Authority .....                      | 71.215     | 295.039       | 584.696       |
| Outlays .....                               | 79.517     | 297.034       | 564.497       |
| Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: |            |               |               |
| Budget Authority .....                      | 184.521    | 965.290       | 2,033.245     |
| Outlays .....                               | 186.079    | 955.982       | 2,005.571     |
| Indian Affairs:                             |            |               |               |
| Budget Authority .....                      | 0.499      | 2.382         | 4.248         |
| Outlays .....                               | 0.876      | 3.120         | 4.994         |
| Judiciary:                                  |            |               |               |
| Budget Authority .....                      | 20.696     | 102.797       | 209.268       |
| Outlays .....                               | 23.650     | 106.526       | 210.899       |
| Rules and Administration:                   |            |               |               |
| Budget Authority .....                      | 0.052      | 0.260         | 0.536         |
| Outlays .....                               | 0.030      | 0.162         | 0.356         |
| Intelligence:                               |            |               |               |
| Budget Authority .....                      | 0.514      | 2.570         | 3.598         |
| Outlays .....                               | 0.514      | 2.570         | 3.598         |
| Veterans' Affairs:                          |            |               |               |
| Budget Authority .....                      | 222.290    | 1,296.471     | 3,006.815     |
| Outlays .....                               | 218.748    | 1,302.338     | 3,032.704     |
| Small Business:                             |            |               |               |
| Budget Authority .....                      | 0.000      | 0.000         | 0.000         |
| Outlays .....                               | 0.010      | 0.010         | 0.010         |
| Unassigned to Committee:                    |            |               |               |
| Budget Authority .....                      | –1,389.309 | –7,354.901    | –16,808.687   |
| Outlays .....                               | –1,377.785 | –7,285.811    | –16,666.582   |

| BUDGET AGGREGATES   |           |               |               |
|---|-----------|---------------|---------------|
| (Pursuant to Section 122 of the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 and Section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974)                          |           |               |               |
| [\$ in billions]  |           |               |               |
|   | 2025      | 2025–<br>2029 | 2025–<br>2034 |
| Spending:   |           |               |               |
| Budget Authority .....  | 5,302.483 | N/A           | N/A           |
| Outlays .....   | 5,473.615 | N/A           | N/A           |
| Revenue   | 3,713.563 | 21,082.529    | 47,281.026    |
| Social Security:  |           |               |               |
| Outlays .....   | 1,409.171 | 7,953.297     | 18,448.817    |
| Revenue .....   | 1,284.893 | 6,946.313     | 15,335.885    |
| N/A = not applicable. Figures represent current law, including CBO's February 2024 baseline and legislation that has subsequently cleared Congress. |           |               |               |

| PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD FOR THE SENATE |          |
|--|----------|
| [\$ in billions]                       |          |
|  | Balances |
| Fiscal Year 2024 .....                 | 0        |
| Fiscal Year 2025 .....                 | 0        |
| Fiscal Years 2025–2029 .....           | 0        |
| Fiscal Years 2025–2034 .....           | 0        |

| ACCOUNTS IDENTIFIED FOR ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS                     |  |
|--|--|
| (Pursuant to Section 122 of the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023) |  |
| Financial Services and General Government:                         |  |
| Payment to the Postal Service Fund                                 |  |
| Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education:                   |  |
| Employment and Training Administration                             |  |
| Education for the Disadvantaged                                    |  |
| School Improvement Programs  |  |
| Career, Technical, and Adult Education                             |  |
| Special Education  |  |
| Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development:                    |  |
| Tenant-based Rental Assistance                                     |  |
| Project-based Rental Assistance                                    |  |

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I will momentarily yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate consider the following nominations

en bloc: Calendar Nos. 578, 457, 607, 608, 609, 610, and 611; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc without intervening action or debate; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the following nominations en bloc: Calendar No. 578, Calendar No. 457, Calendar No. 607, Calendar No. 608, Calendar No. 609, Calendar No. 610, and Calendar No. 611?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc as follows:

IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Stephan A. Lang, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be U.S. Coordinator for International Communications and Information Policy, with the rank of Ambassador.

IN THE MERIT SYSTEMS PROTECTION BOARD  
Henry J. Kerner, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Merit Systems Protection Board for the term of seven years expiring March 1, 2030, vice Tristan Lynn Leavitt, term expired.

IN THE FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSION  
Daniel B. Maffei, of New York, to be a Federal Maritime Commissioner for a term expiring June 30, 2027. (Reappointment)

Rebecca F. Dye, of North Carolina, to be a Federal Maritime Commissioner for a term expiring June 30, 2025. (Reappointment)

IN THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD  
Patrick John Fuchs, of Wisconsin, to be a Member of the Surface Transportation Board for a term expiring January 14, 2029. (Reappointment)

IN THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Jennifer L. Homendy, of Virginia, to be Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board for a term of three years. (Reappointment)

Jennifer L. Homendy, of Virginia, to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board for a term expiring December 31, 2029. (Reappointment)

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. 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.

TRIBUTE TO FATHER CLETUS KILEY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, we all answer calls to serve in different ways. For me, that has meant representing the great State of Illinois in the U.S. Senate. But on May 8, 1974, a young priest answered the call to serve by receiving his ordination as a priest. Father Cletus Kiley could not have known the impact he would make on Chicago, and on people across the Nation, on that day in 1974. But as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of his ordination as a priest, it is clear that his dedication to spiritual and social well-being has been nothing short of remarkable.