

there is any hope of getting this bill done.

I will be clear: We do not expect every Democrat or every Republican to come out in favor of the bill, but as I have said before over and over again, the only way to pass this bill is with broad bipartisan support. I expect to see that on the Democratic side, and I hope we will see it on the Republican side as well.

This bill was written explicitly with the goal of getting support from both parties, unlike messaging bills like H.R. 2, which did not have bipartisan support to get through both Chambers.

The bill we are voting on this Thursday is practically the same bill that Senators Murphy and Sinema and Lankford and others negotiated 3 months ago. Republicans agreed to the substance of this bill. It is not at all some new measure or something that comes only from the Democratic side. The bill we will vote on this Thursday reforms asylum, boosts staffing at the border, cracks down on drugs like fentanyl, and gives emergency powers to shut the border when crossings meet a certain threshold—all issues Republicans have said we must address.

If our bipartisan border bill was good enough to win the support of the union that represents Border Patrol officers, it should be good enough to win the support of Senate Republicans.

If you judge this bill by its substance and take out the partisanship injected by Donald Trump, it is an objectively tough, serious-minded, and critically bipartisan—bipartisan—solution to the border. In fact, when we released this bill earlier this year, many of our Republican colleagues were surprised at how strong it was, at least in private.

For a short while, it seemed like we finally had a bill both parties could link arms on and pass together. Of course, we all know what happened. Donald Trump happened. He barged into the border debate and publicly came out against the bill, and the rest of his Republican supporters fell into place like dominoes.

Let me be clear: The border bill did not fail 3 months ago because it was too weak. On the contrary, the border bill failed because it was too strong for Donald Trump's liking, and it risked taking away an issue he wanted to exploit on the campaign trail. He said that himself.

Again, the border bill did not fail 3 months ago because it was too weak. It failed because it was too strong—too strong for Donald Trump's liking—and it risked taking away an issue he wanted to exploit on the campaign trail.

As we all know, he was explicit about his intentions. He said, "Blame it on me," as if this were all one giant game to Donald Trump. He really doesn't care about the border. He just cares about the politics and the gamesmanship.

Well, we the American people do not have the luxury of playing games with border security. The issue is too impor-

tant to ignore, and the bill we negotiated earlier this year is too good to pass up. So we are going to give Republicans another chance this week.

In the words of one of my Senate Republican colleagues, when we worked on the border bill earlier this year, "this moment will pass. Do not let it pass."

I couldn't agree more.

#### JUDICIAL CONFERENCE

Madam President, now on judge shopping, today was supposed to be a significant day for gun safety in America. Today was supposed to be the day new rules closing loopholes on background checks went into effect—rules that Democrats and Republicans worked on together when we passed the bipartisan gun safety bill 2 years ago.

But surprise, surprise, MAGA radicals have put background check reforms on ice by going to their favorite judge in the entire country, in the Northern District of Texas, and getting him to rubberstamp a nationwide injunction.

Today's ridiculous injunction is, yet again, another consequence of judge shopping, that deeply unfair practice where radicals virtually guarantee favorable outcomes in court by going to a sympathetic judge of their choice. I say "judge" in this case because there is only one judge sitting in that district. They know when they go to court, they are getting him to hear the case.

Judge shopping jaundices our legal system like few other abuses do. There is no conceivable definition of "justice" where hard-right litigants can pull a fast one on the will of the American people by getting extremist judges they align with to rubberstamp their agenda.

Congress should fix this abuse soon with appropriate legislation. The Constitution clearly allows Congress to exercise oversight of the courts when appropriate. Even the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court—hardly a liberal—has acknowledged that judge shopping is a problem that ought to be addressed.

A few weeks ago, I led a group of 40 Senators in introducing a bill that would curtail judge shopping and restore fairness to the judicial system. I hope both sides can work together on this bill to ensure that nobody gets an unfair advantage in a court of law, simply based on a judge's personal ideological preferences.

We will continue weighing legislative options to ensure that the Federal judiciary remains committed to equal justice under law. Judge shopping moves us away from that noble ideal in a very big way.

#### JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Madam President, on nominations, this week, the Senate will confirm more of President Biden's outstanding judicial nominees for lifetime appointments to the Federal bench and will hit a major milestone along the way.

Later this afternoon, the Senate will vote on the confirmation of Seth

Aframe of New Hampshire to be a circuit court judge on the First Circuit.

Mr. Aframe would make an exceptional addition to the First Circuit and was given a unanimous rating of "well qualified" by the American Bar Association. A longtime member of the U.S. Attorney's Office in New Hampshire, he has argued approximately 100 cases before the First Circuit on a broad range of criminal and civil cases.

When confirmed, Mr. Aframe will be the 198th judge confirmed since President Biden took office. As soon as tomorrow, I expect the Senate will reach a significant milestone of 200—200—judges under Senate Democrats and under President Biden.

I salute Senator DURBIN and the Judiciary Committee for the good work they have done in this regard. It is a figure—200—that we can all be proud of and shows how intensely focused we are on filling the bench with jurists who will make our democracy stronger and uphold the rule of law.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ECONOMY

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor today to speak about the economy.

Joe Biden is clearly the President of high prices. People all across the country, all 50 States, are well aware that this is going to be Joe Biden's enduring legacy.

Prices spiked again in April. The statistics are out. Prices have been rising again and again and again. Price increases have been now above 3 percent for the last 37 months. This is the longest period in history of high prices since the late 1980s.

President Biden continues to repeat a falsehood—you could call it a lie—because he has said time and again that inflation was 9 percent when he came into office. This is pure confusion on his part. Even the liberal fact checkers—people at CNN, people at the Washington Post—have said what President Biden is saying about inflation is flatout false; it is wrong.

In January of 2021, the day that the President—current President Biden—took the oath of office, the inflation rate in America was 1.4 percent. Today, prices are almost 20 percent higher than they were the day he took the oath of office. The burden of Bidenomics on the American public is crushing; it is compounding; and, of course, it is cumulative. It continues to add on every single day.

But Democrats in this Chamber and around the country deny this economic reality. Certainly, the Democrat in the

White House denies this economic reality. And President Biden proved that he was completely disconnected from the suffering American families. Earlier this month, he said Americans have “the money to spend.” I am not sure whom he is talking to, but that is not the case across America, and it is not the case of my home State of Wyoming.

Democrats are completely out of touch with the economy because they are out of touch with American voters, the citizens of this country. Rising prices have plagued Americans for the last 3 years. Everyday life costs more and more and more. Under Joe Biden, Americans are squeezed; they are stressed; and they are struggling to get by.

More than half of Americans will tell you that the economic conditions that they see day in and day out are poor—poor—for them personally. More than 80 percent of Americans say that high prices are their No. 1 concern. That is what Americans are suffering from today. President Biden’s policies are not the cure for inflation in our economic anxieties. Joe Biden and the Democrats’ policies are the cause of our economic struggles.

Joe Biden and the Democrats in this Chamber and in the House of Representatives at a time when NANCY PELOSI was Speaker approved more than \$3 trillion—\$3 trillion—in wasteful Washington spending. The President added more than \$1 trillion additionally on stifling and punishing economic regulations.

He launched a war on American energy, hiked energy costs for families, gas prices went up, electricity prices went up. Because of failed Bidenomics, Americans are paying over \$12,000 more a year—this year—than they did the year that he came into office just to buy the same things that they could buy the day he came into the White House. It is over \$1,000 a month. That is what the American people are seeing today. A \$100 cart of groceries in 2019, the cost now for that same cart of groceries—not very full—is \$137. A gallon of gas in 2021 was \$2.38. Today, in many of the battleground States—Nevada, Arizona, Pennsylvania—it is approaching \$4 a gallon.

Now, of course, high prices aren’t the only problem. Interest rates are at the highest level in 23 years. High interest rates are a bitter fruit of Bidenomics. People are suffering when they have to take out a loan. This is causing significant affordability crises all across the country and in all age groups.

Under these failed policies of the Biden administration, younger people— younger Americans—are being demoralized. They are delaying life’s biggest moments. Homeownership is slipping clearly out of the reach of most young married couples and young people trying to start a family.

Young Americans are facing the costliest housing market ever. Borrowing costs have soared. When Biden took of-

fice, they were 2.7 percent. Today, they are over 7 percent. Home prices today are nearly six times higher than the average household income. That is a record ratio—six times higher than the average household income. Other costs—utility costs, insurance costs—all costs are climbing, and they are all caused by the amount of spending we have had under this administration.

Younger Americans are having trouble buying a car. The price of car loans has gone way up as well as the price of automobiles themselves.

Younger Americans are also forced to rely on credit cards more and more. They are developing mounting debt, which is going to continue to saddle them in their future. Young Americans will tell that you they are overextended and they are distressed and they are begging for relief. Today’s high prices and high interest rates are going to create tomorrow’s troubles.

Now, President Biden has failed to protect the American dream. We now have an entire generation of young Americans who can’t afford to buy a home, can’t afford to start a business, can’t afford to begin a family, and certainly can’t afford to begin to grow any savings that they may have.

Americans are absolutely fed up with big-spending, high-price Democrats. People are financially exhausted by Joe Biden’s high prices. People are ready to move beyond Bidenomics and beyond Joe Biden.

It is time for a change. Senate Republicans are ready to put America back on track. We are fighting to lower costs. That is what we are hearing every weekend at home: Get down the prices of things that are up under Joe Biden; stop the wasteful Washington spending; and please unleash American energy. That is the solution to the problems facing America today. This is how we can help make life more affordable for all Americans.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nebraska.

#### RECRUIT AND RETAIN ACT

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, in 1969, the city of Montreal, Canada, discovered what it is like to live in a world without police. For 16 hours on October 7, the city’s full police force went on strike. What ensued is now called Montreal’s “Night of Terror.” The city rang out with gunshots, glass shattering, and flames erupting.

Just 3 hours after the strike began, the first bank was robbed. Robbers stormed nine more before the police returned. Thefts, vandalism, and mob violence took the city by storm. There were 450 break-ins and over 30 armed holdups. A crowd 800 strong overturned a bus and sent vehicles ablaze.

The government sent Provincial police and army officers into the city. But by then, the chaos was already in full force. A sniper shot one officer, killing him. The result of Montreal’s “Night of Terror” was two dead men, dozens of injuries, over 100 arrests, and close to \$3 million in property damage.

Less than a day without police was a nightmare for Montreal.

Here in America, we often take our strong police force for granted. We enjoy the safety and protection of law enforcement, sometimes without even realizing it. But if trends continue, we will inch closer to living the nightmare of a world without police.

In 2022, almost 50 percent more officers resigned than in 2019. Almost 20 percent more officers retired. The number of police officers nationwide decreased by 4,000 between 2020 and 2023.

A study in 2023 found that over the prior 2 years, at least 12 American towns completely dissolved their police departments.

I have been speaking with law enforcement in Nebraska and around the country about growing staffing challenges for years. I greatly respect the State and local control of law enforcement agencies so I always ask them how I can make existing Federal tools more supportive of their work. Based on those conversations, I introduced the Recruit and Retain Act, which the House passed last week.

I am thankful to the Nebraska officers and sheriffs who collaborated with me to craft legislation with bipartisan appeal. As retirements increase and new applications decline, departments are shrinking, burdening the officers who are trying to keep them afloat. Understaffed departments are doing their best to keep up, but they don’t always have the resources to hire all the officers that they need.

The Recruit and Retain Act offers them better access to resources to reverse this trend. My legislation improved the Department of Justice’s community-oriented policing services, or COPS, a hiring grant program. The bill expands COPS grants for specific onboarding expenses like background checks and psychological evaluations.

It also provides clear guidance to the understaffed agencies applying for this funding, and it alleviates administrative burdens that come with those applications. These changes will allow departments to consider more applicants and hire more officers.

Recruit and Retain also establishes the Pipeline Partnership Program to promote student interest in law enforcement careers. Departments and local schools will work together to launch mentorship opportunities that give young people an inside look at law enforcement work. This will not only create a hiring pipeline for police departments, but it will also strengthen community relationships with law enforcement.

Finally, my bill directs the Government Accountability Office to investigate the causes of recent recruitment challenges and those effects on public safety. We see some of these causes and effects already: Anti-police movements like far-left “defund the police” that has demonized our law enforcement. We have seen rising crime levels in places like Portland, in Minneapolis, in