

act. We need to fix the border and reform immigration to make it fairer and more humane.

This week, Republicans will have an opportunity to join us in taking action. A few moments ago, I filed cloture on the motion to proceed to the bipartisan Border Act, the same bill negotiated 3 months ago by the bipartisan group of Senators MURPHY, SINEMA, and LANKFORD.

The Senate will vote on this bipartisan border bill on Thursday. Last night, the President called both Leader MCCONNELL and Speaker JOHNSON and urged them to go forward with our bill. All those who say we need to act on the border will get a chance this week to show they are serious about fixing the problem.

Unlike H.R. 2, the bipartisan Border Act was written explicitly to win support from both parties with input—significant input—from both sides. The Border Act is an exercise in legislating; H.R. 2 is not.

When Republicans pushed H.R. 2, it couldn't even get a single Democratic vote here in the Senate, much less all Senate Republicans, for that matter. That was not a serious bill. What we are voting on this week is serious.

It is the same bipartisan bill both sides negotiated for months last winter. It is the same bill endorsed by the National Border Patrol Council, a very conservative group; by the Chamber of Commerce; and by the very conservative Wall Street Journal editorial page.

By any objective measure, it is strong and realistic, and, most importantly, a bipartisan proposal. If our bipartisan bill was good enough to win the support of the union that represents border agents, why isn't it good enough for Senate Republicans? Are Senate Republicans saying they know better than our agents patrolling the border? I hope that is not true. I hope our Republican colleagues are ready to join us.

I will be clear: We don't expect every Democrat or every Republican to come out in favor of this bill. That is why, as I have said before, the only way to pass this bill or any border bill is with broad bipartisan support.

If you go by what Republicans said over the last few months, you would think they would leap at an opportunity like the one we have right now. In the words of Speaker JOHNSON, "The time to act on [the border] is yesterday." In the words of my colleague from Texas, "It makes no sense to me for us to do nothing when we might be able to make things better." And in the words of my colleague from South Carolina, "To those who think that if President Trump wins . . . that we can get a better deal—you won't." And he added, "This moment will pass. Do not let it pass."

Well, I wholeheartedly agree. We should not let this moment pass. Border legislation is just about the hardest thing Congress ever wrestles with. Bi-

partisan border bills are rare opportunities here in Congress. That is precisely why we have it in front of us this week. I urge everyone not to let the politics get in the way.

#### ABORTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now, on abortion, shortly, I will join Senators MURRAY, BALDWIN, KELLY, and some of the Nation's leading reproductive rights activists to highlight the terrible consequences of repealing the protections of *Roe v. Wade*.

The MAGA Supreme Court repealed *Roe* nearly 2 years ago. It will go down as one of the worst—if not the worst—Supreme Court decisions of modern American history. In one fell swoop, MAGA radicals on the Court made it so that our children and grandchildren will sadly grow up with fewer civil liberties than those who came before them.

Repealing *Roe* was tragic. It was alarming. It was outrageous, but it didn't happen in a vacuum. It happened because Senate Republicans packed our courts with hard-right judges, plucked right out of the Federalist Society checklist. It happened because Donald Trump appointed not one, not two, but three MAGA Justices, all who voted to overturn *Roe*. Remember what Donald Trump said a few weeks ago? He was "proud" to be the person who paved the way to overturn *Roe*.

And after *Roe* was eradicated, MAGA radicals opened the floodgates for draconian and cruel bans for women's choice across America. And we know this is just the beginning.

Does anyone seriously doubt that should Trump become President again, he won't try to add even more extreme jurists to the bench so he can continue his assault on women's reproductive freedoms? Of course, he will. And the Republican Senators, if past is prologue, are likely, unfortunately, to go along. If Donald Trump and MAGA Republicans get into power, the hard right will not rest until a national abortion ban becomes the law of the land. Mark my words, that is the direction that they will take America in.

House Republicans already included the national abortion ban in their recent Republican Study Committee budget. Remember, the Republican Study Committee includes a majority of House Republicans and their leadership.

*Roe* may be gone, but, sadly, the hard right's obsession with eliminating reproductive rights is not. Make no mistake, Republicans will have to answer for their anti-abortion records today, tomorrow, and at the ballot box in November.

#### GUN SAFETY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on guns, 2 years ago, serious-minded Democrats and serious-minded Republicans came together to pass the most

significant bipartisan gun safety bill in 30 years. We passed several new, commonsense rules in our gun safety bill, including rules closing dangerous loopholes on background checks. And I salute so many of my colleagues—led by CHRIS MURPHY and KYRSTEN SINEMA—who helped make this happen.

Yesterday, those rules on background checks were supposed to go into effect, but, sadly, MAGA extremists had other plans. Instead, MAGA extremists exploited our justice system and put our background check reforms on ice. How did they do it? By taking their case to their favorite judge in the country, in the Northern District of Texas, to rubberstamp a nationwide injunction.

The decision out of Texas is terrible for America for two reasons: First, the decision out of Texas is another consequence of judge shopping, a deeply unfair practice which jaundices the whole fairness and support a judicial system has where radicals—rightwing MAGA radicals—all but guarantee a favorable outcome by going to a judge of their choice, often in jurisdictions where there is only one sitting judge in that local division, guaranteeing a favorable audience and guaranteeing a favorable outcome.

No one had any doubt when these rightwing anti-gun safety groups went to this one judge—the very same judge who knocked out mifepristone—no one had any doubt what decision they would receive.

Judge shopping jaundices our legal system like few other abuses do. I have introduced a bill to rein in judge shopping, and I hope both sides can work together on this legislation to restore fairness to the judicial system.

If not, we are going to see injustice after injustice, a slanted judicial system, leaning in favor of hard-right radicals imposing its will on the rest of the Nation. And the courts will have less and less respect because of it.

I urge the Judicial Conference—they agree judge shopping is bad, forum shopping is bad, but they are doing nothing to implement it. They should.

But second, maybe even worse, the decision out of Texas means MAGA radicals have temporarily succeeded in blocking commonsense gun safety measures and making our communities less safe. There were outrages in Uvalde, in Buffalo.

And, finally, the Congress, in a bipartisan way, enacted the strongest gun safety laws in decades, ever since probably I passed the Brady Law and assault weapons ban—those were my bills in the House—in 1994.

And now people are less safe—less safe—because people who shouldn't have guns, young people, are getting them. Closing loopholes on background checks help keep guns out of the hands of people who shouldn't have them.

Keeping dangerous weapons out of the hands of dangerous people should be something both sides can agree on. But, sadly, MAGA Republicans and the rightwing gun lobby thinks the opposite. And with forum shopping, they

can almost automatically get their way at least in the district courts.

#### PACT ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, finally, on the PACT Act, this is some good news. Today, President Biden will announce some very good news. It is very good news for our Nation's veterans. The Biden administration has now approved over 1 million claims from over 880,000 veterans still suffering from burn pit exposure thanks to our PACT Act.

When we passed the PACT Act 2 years ago, it was the most significant expansion of veterans' healthcare benefits in generations. It sent a message to our veterans suffering from cancer, lung disease, and other ailments from burn pits that we are here for you. I am glad to see the PACT Act is delivering on its promise and helping our veterans to get the care and benefits they deserve.

And like the gun bill I mentioned before and like the IRA and like the Chips and Science bill, it reminds us, when Democrats led in the House, led in the Senate, and had the Presidency, we got so much done for the American people.

#### FARM BILL

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on the farm bill, later this week, House Republicans on the House Committee on Agriculture intend to mark up their version of the farm bill that I believe falls terribly short.

The farm bill is one of the most important pieces of legislation that Congress works on, with consequences that affect tens of millions of Americans and a broad range of interests, from farmers, both big and small, to nutrition advocates, to climate champions and rural development advocates who rebuild local economies and create jobs—lots of jobs—in rural America. Some of these agriculture programs have helped rural parts of Upstate New York over and over again.

A good farm bill represents all of the interests I just mentioned. So passing a farm bill has always been—and must be—bipartisan, but, once again, the path MAGA-right House Republicans are taking with their farm bill breaks with the bipartisan tradition, which has always enshrined the ag bill. A purely partisan bill that departs from the longstanding spirit of bipartisan cooperation, unfortunately, will not have a future in the Senate.

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. McCONNELL. Mr. 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.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

#### FDIC

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday, FDIC Chairman Mark Gruenberg announced he was prepared to step down from his position and expressed pride in maintaining public confidence in the Nation's banking system. Unfortunately, there is little such confidence in his ability to foster a safe working environment for the Agency's employees.

But despite alarming reports about rampant sexual harassment, abuse, and retaliation at the FDIC, Senate Democrats in positions to insist on change have actually pulled their punches. Instead of calls for Mr. Gruenberg's prompt resignation, we have heard everything from confidence in his ability to lead change at the Agency to delicate suggestions that the President nominate a new Chair.

The senior-most members of the Banking Committee apparently can't bring themselves to call a spade a spade. Surely, their reluctance has nothing to do with the FDIC's line of succession, which would fill a vacancy with the Agency's distinguished Vice Chair, who happens to be a Republican.

Surely, our colleagues won't play politics in the face of such glaring failures of leadership at a major regulatory authority. The Senate's oversight responsibility is serious business. I hope our colleagues in the majority are up to the task.

#### BORDER SECURITY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, yesterday, the Democratic leader once again tipped his cap to President Biden for what he describes as "many actions" in "recent weeks" to secure the southern border, which leads me with a couple of questions: First, what took the President so long? And, second, why isn't he taking the actions we know would actually begin to address the crisis that he actually invited?

The reason I ask is because time matters here. The cost of an average day of avoidable crisis at the border is measured in thousands of apprehensions of illegal arrivals and the interdiction of lethal drugs like fentanyl.

And if that is not alarming enough, consider the story reported earlier this month of the catch-and-release of a military-age male who spent 2 years free in the interior of the country before he was detained for alleged affiliations with ISIS-K.

Of course, everything I have mentioned so far we only know because the Border Patrol was able to stop it. But think about what border officials know they are not catching—the known "got-aways."

For 10 years before President Biden took office, under administrations of both parties, an average of about 125,000 people per year successfully crossed the southern border and escaped into the interior. On the Biden administration's watch, in fiscal years 2021 through 2023, the average tally of known "got-aways" is 550,000—from 125,000 to more than half a million.

President Biden's Press Secretary says this administration has "done more . . . than anybody else" to secure the border. But if you wanted to make that claim true, you would say this President has done more than anyone else to make the tough jobs of CBP and other law enforcement personnel even tougher.

In fact, one sobering new report suggests that contending for years with a historic humanitarian and security crisis without effective enforcement authorities is taking a heavy toll on the men and women of the Border Patrol. The rate of suicide among CBP personnel is three times higher than it was a decade ago. As one agent told reporters, "when it turned out that the job became nothing more than processing and releasing these people, that was very hard to take."

Going soft on border security may have started as just a shortsighted campaign strategy. A reckless debate-stage promise to "surge" asylum seekers to the border might have been just a cynical play to court leftwing voters, but after 3 years on the job, President Biden's failure to perform one of the most basic functions of his office isn't endearing. It is not some impressive sign of leftwing bona fides.

It is a glaring, avoidable failure, a profound moral embarrassment, and even Washington Democrats are beginning to recognize it as a tremendous political liability. The American people are telling poll after poll that they are alarmed by the border crisis and want to see real solutions.

Fortunately, the quickest way for the President to start undoing the damage he invented is to restore and use the authorities he already has at his disposal, like "Remain in Mexico" and border wall construction. Any of our Democratic colleagues who recognize that the President must act ought to start telling him so.

It is time for the Biden administration to start exercising its immense authority to restore sanity and start cleaning up the mess at our southern border. The time for distractions is long, long past.

#### STUDENT LOANS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on one final matter, speaking of the failure to discharge basic responsibilities—the Biden administration's Department of Education.

Around the country, high school seniors and their parents are still reeling from delays and processing errors in a botched rollout of the Free Application