

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). On this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 44.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Dena M. Coggins, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of California.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

ISRAEL

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, last week, on May 14, our friend and ally Israel celebrated its 76th Independence Day.

As we all know, Israel was founded in the wake of the Holocaust to give the Jewish people a homeland that would allow them to return to their ancestral land that they had been forcibly removed from.

I am proud—very proud—that the United States was the first country to recognize Israel; and since then, we have been steadfast allies that support one another through times both prosperous and challenging.

However, this year's Israeli Independence Day came during a time of great turmoil, as Israel battles terrorist forces that have ruthlessly waged war against them since October 7.

We join them as they mourn the loss of over 1,200 Israelis killed in that initial attack and pray for the safe return of the hostages still kept in captivity by Hamas.

In an alarming development, this longstanding U.S.-Israel relationship is now becoming unnecessarily strained by President Biden's quest to appease those in his party who do not support the State of Israel, a bastion of democracy and freedom in the Middle East.

The October 7 attack marks the most horrific attack Israel has suffered since its founding and the deadliest day for the Jewish people since the Holocaust. So how did we get to this point?

The common refrain for those opposed to Israel now has been to call for cease-fire now. We have seen it all across our college campuses. And we saw President Biden clap along to these demands, again, as he delivered a commencement address just this past weekend.

And what is even more mind-boggling is that those who are protesting, who are they demanding a cease-fire from? I haven't heard a single campus protest group call for Hamas to lay down its arms or call for Hamas to release the hostages.

Why? Why? Because they want Israel to stop fighting, because they want Israel to stop defending itself, and because they want Israel to lose. We cannot forget the fact that a cease-fire was in place on October 7, and that cease-fire was broken by Hamas as they deliberately attacked innocent civilians in the most brutal and barbaric ways.

So let's not forget that some of these communities, the border towns in Israel that were attacked by Hamas, were some of the most ardent supporters in Israel for the Palestinian people.

They were some of the biggest advocates for peace. Yet despite the reality, here in the United States, our colleges have become embroiled in controversy over this and play host to anti-Israel and anti-Semitic protests that ultimately stopped Jewish students from attending class and even led a rabbi at Columbia University to recommend Jewish students return home for their own safety.

These protesters demand that Israel drop their weapons, yet refuse to acknowledge that Hamas is the instigator of the war. But we now know what Hamas' entire plan was: to minimize any chance of peace in the region, to attack Israel's most peace-promoting citizens in the most brutal of fashions, especially, and most dangerously and horrifyingly, toward Israeli women.

To undermine the incredible progress that had been made possible through President Trump's Abraham Accords, to stop an emerging normalization deal with Saudi Arabia, and to conduct an attack on Israel so horrific that Israel had no other choice but to respond.

In what world would we ever expect a country to be attacked in such a brutal fashion and not fight to defend itself? It is important to note that the chaos and instability benefits one bad actor above all else, and that is the Iranian regime.

Without Iran's help, both financially and militarily, Hamas would not have been able to execute their terrorist attacks on the Israelis. Iran has further supported Hamas's efforts by launching over 300 projectiles at Israel on April 13. And lest we forget, it was an Iranian-made drone that killed three American soldiers in Jordan on January 29.

We must recognize that the deep ties between Hamas and Iran and their common goal of destroying Israel and bringing harm to the United States and our citizens. Calls for a cease-fire only embolden Hamas and their stated aim to repeat the October 7 attacks a second, third, and fourth time. Israel must defend itself, and they must root out the evil that is Hamas.

So earlier this week, we learned that the International Criminal Court would seek arrest warrants for leaders of Hamas and Israel for war crimes.

It is simply shocking to me that the ICC would seek to establish a delusional level of equivalency between the actions of Israel and the actions of Hamas. I have seen the footage of the attacks on Israeli and American citizens that occurred on October 7, and it is clear that Hamas is the real criminal involved in this conflict.

Hamas continues to show no regard for its own people, spending billions of dollars on over 300 miles of tunnel sys-

tem, but yet they are refusing to allow their Palestinian citizens to shelter there; and they continue to use hospitals, schools, places of worship for military purposes, knowingly placing citizens in harm's way.

While Israel was founded on the principle of promoting development for the benefit of all of its inhabitants, Hamas's only mission is to destroy Israel. The differences between their founding principles, their leadership, and their actions could not be any more different. And it is abhorrent that the ICC would attempt to argue otherwise.

In these times of instability, you would hope that the President of the United States would display strength. Instead, President Biden has decided to play politics by placing a hold on security assistance that this Congress most recently approved.

This is just the latest foreign policy blunder from an administration plagued by weakness on the international stage. Shortly after this policy of withholding weapons was announced, Hamas steps away from the negotiations on the safe return of the hostages.

It seems like a pretty big coincidence to me. Hamas is still holding American hostages captive; although, I wonder how many of these hostages are still alive, as we discovered—I think it was last week, four bodies were discovered.

And President Biden should be doing everything within his power to bring home those American hostages. Instead, he is publicly withholding weapons from our ally and giving their adversary cover.

When President Biden took office, he pledged ironclad support for Israel, but now he is publicly backing down from that promise.

He is projecting to our allies and our adversaries that the U.S. promises' can be subject to political pressure.

To further underscore the administration's lack of responsibility, my EPW committee came across something very disturbing this week in our ongoing oversight of President Biden's so-called Inflation Reduction Act. You might wonder what EPW or the IRA have to do with Israel in their battle against terrorists. But we discovered that the Climate Justice Alliance, a group that received \$50 million from the Biden administration in December, openly denies Israel's right to exist and actively supports the horrific actions of Hamas. They even promote graphics that glorify the bulldozers used by Hamas on October 7.

It is despicable that the EPA is sending millions of dollars through the IRA to a group that perpetrates hatred and violence under the guise of fighting climate change and this administration would allow U.S. taxpayers' dollars to fund these anti-Semitic activities.

There is no doubt that the last 7 months have been an incredibly difficult time for the people of Israel and Jewish Americans here at home. Never,

never in my life, never would I have ever expected to hear and see the anti-Semitic discourse that I see being conducted on our own land, our own American shores, and the violence and intimidation towards the Jewish community.

Together we must condemn the rise of anti-Semitism and make clear that this hatred has no home in our country and in our world.

My Republican colleagues and I will continue to display our unwavering support for Israel and push for the assistance that they need to ensure their survival and victory in this fight, as allies do have needs, particularly in this time of need.

So with that, I yield the floor to my friend from North Dakota, Senator HOEVEN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I am pleased to join my colleague from West Virginia and others who you will be hearing from—next, our colleague from Nebraska—in regard to our absolutely ironclad support for Israel and why it is so important that we stand and we stand strongly with our friend and ally Israel.

On October 7, Hamas committed appalling atrocities against Jews in Southern Israel. I went to Israel one month later to show my support for our close ally during this very dark hour, and I am still today very proud to stand with Israel.

But I am very concerned about the Biden administration holding up weapons that need to be delivered to Israel. That is why I have cosponsored two important pieces of legislation requiring the President to expedite delivery of defensive aid to Israel: first, Senator COTTON's Israel Security Assistance Support Act and then the assistance support act that Senator CRUZ put forward as well; that is the Assuring Resupply of Munitions Act, or ARM Act.

Congress has moved decisively to support Israel, and these bills make crystal clear—there is no doubt about it—our desire that Israel receive our support without hesitation. We said that October 7 can never happen again, but if we say “never again,” we should mean it. If we truly mean “never again,” then the only path forward is for Israel to win the war—to win the war.

And that is why it is so important that we give Israel the tools it needs to win the war as soon as possible. Destroying Hamas means allowing Israel to reestablish security for its people. Destroying Hamas also means it can no longer terrorize and repress the people of Gaza. If we are concerned about the lives of Jews and Gazans, the sooner Hamas is defeated the better. The sooner Hamas is completely defeated, the better.

Putting limits on military assistance only means prolonging a conflict that Israel must win, and it means greater loss of life among both Israelis and Gazans.

Delaying or halting military aid also sends the wrong message to both our allies and our adversaries. Our allies, like Israel, rightly wonder whether U.S. promises will be kept when times get tough. Our adversaries, like Hamas and Iran, wonder if they can manipulate us into failure. When we hesitate to keep our promises and give our enemies the chance to regroup, we incentivize the very behavior that we must oppose.

We have to wipe out terrorism. We have to work with our allies—not just Israel but all of our allies—to wipe out terrorism.

If Hamas survives, it will certainly seize more hostages in the future. That is what Hamas does. If Hamas survives, it will keep using innocent civilians as shields. Think about that: using innocent citizens as their shields. If Hamas survives, it will see October 7 as a triumph rather than a disaster.

The administration may believe that pausing military assistance will save lives or limit suffering, but it will only sow the seeds of future conflict. There is no substitute—there is no substitute—for victory over Hamas.

Congress has provided the resources to support our ally Israel, and I call upon the administration to keep our promises, to act according to the will of the American people, and to accept nothing less than the complete defeat of Hamas.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, this weekend, President Biden called for an immediate cease-fire in Gaza. What the President didn't acknowledge is that Israel and Gaza were not in a state of war until October 7, when Hamas broke a cease-fire. They stormed Israel's borders, and they raped, tortured, and killed innocent civilians.

Far-left, pro-Hamas activists are painting Hamas as freedom fighters that want to liberate their fellow Palestinians. Nothing could be further from the truth. Hamas uses innocent civilians—anyone from babies to the elderly—as human shields. They shelter themselves in schools and in hospitals. They have no regard for human life or dignity, not for Israelis and not for Palestinians.

Members of Hamas film themselves laughing as they maim and murder innocent people. They use sexual assault as a weapon of war. These are no freedom fighters; they are terrorists.

We saw a sobering example of that this weekend. The Israeli military recovered the bodies of four hostages who were captured, abused, and murdered by Hamas. They found them lying in a tunnel in Gaza. These included the body of Shani Louk, a young woman Hamas captured at the Nova music festival on October 7. She and the other hostages ran from the armed terrorists, who were killing people to their left and to their right, but Hamas caught

up with them. They sexually assaulted and maimed Shani before they murdered her.

This weekend, the Israeli military returned the mutilated body of a young daughter to her grieving parents. These are not the deeds of freedom fighters. These are the deeds of terrorists.

There are still over 100 hostages being held in Gaza, many of whom are believed to be dead. Eight of those hostages are Americans, three of whom are dead as well—three Americans.

When President Biden calls for a cease-fire—one neither party has agreed to yet—he is just calling for Israel to surrender. He is emboldening Hamas and abandoning the dozens of people still being abused by these terrorists. He is equivocating because of political pressure.

President Biden must stop sacrificing a moral backbone for political gain. You don't negotiate with terrorists. Hamas is using hostages as political pawns, and no amount of diplomacy is going to change that.

The Biden administration should not be telling Israel's democratically elected government what they must do. Israel must make those decisions to protect their people and protect their country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. RICKETTS. Madam President, I rise today to join my colleagues in expressing my complete support for the State of Israel and the war against Hamas terrorists.

There was a cease-fire in place prior to October 7. Hamas broke that cease-fire. Hamas attacked Israel and murdered over 1,200 Israelis and Americans. They also took hundreds of hostages, including Americans as well.

Hamas is responsible for every death on October 7 and every death since that day. They need to surrender. Hamas must surrender.

If Hamas surrenders and releases the hostages, aid can freely flow into Gaza to support the Gazans. Instead, Hamas continues to prosecute this war. In fact, after October 7, they said they would continue to do atrocities like October 7, if given the chance. They will continue to try to destroy Israel. They will continue to murder Israeli citizens.

They just don't chant “Death to Israel.” They chant “Death to America” as well.

Terror groups like Hamas and Hezbollah represent an existential threat to Israel. They have repeatedly declared their intention to wipe Israel off the map.

Israel has the right and the obligation to destroy the terrorist group Hamas. They must have the ability to defend themselves. And they will be doing the world a favor by destroying Hamas.

We need to support Israel and their efforts to do just that. Part of that support means pushing back on anti-Semitic organizations, like the United

Nations or the International Criminal Court, that attack Israel's legitimacy and their sovereignty.

The International Criminal Court's ludicrous decision to apply for arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Israel's defense chief is the most recent example of their anti-Semitism. This outrageous decision not only emboldens terrorists around the world but creates problems for us here in the United States as well.

In the statement, the ICC prosecutor describes crimes that have been committed on "the territory of Israel and the State of Palestine." That is exactly backward. He should have said "the State of Israel and the territories of Palestine." But that was intentional.

It is a continuation of the rampant anti-Semitism in these organizations, like the ICC and the U.N. It is designed to delegitimize the State of Israel.

And the crazy thing is, the ICC's action, in itself, is illegitimate. It lacks legal basis. Under its own charter, the ICC is banned from moving forward with prosecutions unless the relevant government is unwilling or unable to police themselves.

The ICC knows Israel has a robust and independent judiciary. The ICC knows and has admitted that Israel has trained lawyers who advise commanders and a robust system intended to ensure compliance with international humanitarian law. By moving forward with these arrest warrants, the ICC is calling Israel's laws, government, and democracy illegitimate. It is wrong.

There is no moral equivalency between the State of Israel, democracy, and the terrorist organization Hamas. There is no moral equivalency between Hamas's terrorist actions and atrocities on October 7 and Israel's right to defend itself and to take action to destroy that terrorist organization.

Hamas terrorists have shot unarmed civilians, dismembered soldiers, raped women, and massacred children. Meanwhile, Israel has fought its war while taking great pains to avoid unnecessary civilian casualties.

We need to be supporting Israel in its mission, not undermining the Israeli Government. It is in our interest to do so.

Neither Israel nor the United States are members of the ICC. Both countries are outside of the ICC's jurisdiction. Yet the ICC is going after Israel anyway. America should take note. If the ICC can violate Israel's sovereignty, it can violate America's sovereignty.

The ICC needs to face the consequences of its anti-Israel policies. While it is good that President Biden has condemned the arrest warrants as "outrageous," Israel needs more than words. It needs actions.

Last month, my Republican colleagues and I sent a letter to the ICC with a warning: If the ICC moved forward with arrest warrants for Israelis, we would push to end all American support for this disgraceful organization.

We are here today to tell President Biden one simple thing: If your commitment to Israel is really ironclad, as you say, you will join us in holding these anti-Semitic organizations accountable. Let's sanction the ICC's employees and associates and prevent them from coming to the United States. Let's work with our allies to ensure that they refuse to honor the ICC's indictments against either Israel or the United States. Let's truly demonstrate our ironclad support and stand with our ally Israel in its hour of need.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BUDD. Today is the 229th day of captivity for eight American citizens held hostage in Gaza by the terrorist organization Hamas—229 days of being deprived of food, water, and medical care; 229 days of being subjected to unbearable violence, abuse, and psychological torture by Hamas terrorists; 229 days that mothers and fathers—many of whom I have met—and husbands and wives and brothers and sisters have had to live with the pain, the anguish, and the uncertainty of their loved ones' well-being. But if you flip on mainstream media tonight or if you watch the protests on college campuses or if you listen to the Biden White House, the conversation has been dominated by everything but securing the release of American hostages.

We have seen the prosecutor for the International Criminal Court seek arrest warrants of Israeli leaders as well as Hamas leaders. Equating the Israeli Prime Minister with Hamas terrorists is despicable, and it shows a complete lack of moral clarity.

We have read about the State of Qatar reportedly temporarily expelling Hamas leaders from Doha, only to reverse course and welcome them back later. To be clear, Qatar is hosting a brutal terrorist organization with American blood on their hands. This continued dithering and flip-flopping is not helping. Qatar must pressure Hamas leaders to release the hostages now or expel them from Doha. It is just that simple. To do anything less, my friends, is unbecoming of a major non-NATO ally.

When we look to the President of the United States, we continue to see weakness and a lack of moral clarity on this issue. In a total betrayal of our friend and ally, the Biden administration withheld lethal aid to Israel earlier this month. This signaled to Hamas that they can drag their feet and hold out because the so-called ironclad bond between the United States and Israel, in Biden's mind, is not so ironclad after all.

I know firsthand that Biden is overruling his national security team, and he is letting a few radical activists on his staff dictate foreign policy as American lives hang in the balance. At the end of day, there is nothing more important in U.S. foreign policy than protecting American citizens. The best

way we can bring the hostages home from Gaza is by increasing pressure on Hamas.

On the international stage, we need global bodies, like the ICC and the U.N., to grow a moral core, identify the evil being committed, and to rally the community of nations to pressure Hamas to release innocent hostages. We need the State of Qatar to end its straddling and doublespeak and to permanently expel Hamas leaders from Doha. Here at home, we need the Justice Department to file charges and hunt down every Hamas terrorist responsible for the murder of over 40 Americans on October 7 and the kidnapping of 8 who remain in captivity. We need the President of the United States to show strength and to show some moral leadership on this issue.

Friends, the line between good and evil in this conflict is crystal clear. President Biden needs to use every lever of national power to secure the hostages' freedom.

After 229 days, let's be united in working for the release of these eight hostages.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Madam President, to kind of continue on the theme of my good friend from North Carolina, apparently today or yesterday, the countries of Ireland, Spain, and Norway recognized a Palestinian State.

Here is my question: Who is in charge of the state? Who is running the place? What are its boundaries? Did you recognize Hamas being in charge of Gaza? Do you want to keep the PA as we know it now in the West Bank, as old and corrupt? What did you recognize?

These are allies, but they need to hear from a friend that what you did is reprehensible. You are rewarding terrorists.

On October 7, Hamas attacked the State of Israel and murdered 1,200 innocent people, put babies in ovens, raped women, set people on fire, and recorded it all. And your response is to create a Palestinian State? You are rewarding terrorists. The way a Palestinian State will be created, if ever, is through direct negotiations between the State of Israel and Palestinians, not a unilateral recognition of a Palestinian State after the largest terrorist attack against the Jewish people since the Holocaust.

To my friends in Ireland, Spain, and Norway, what you did was reward Hamas. Here is the message you are sending: Kill Jews, and you will get a reward.

Again, tell me about the state you just recognized. Who is in charge, and what are the boundaries? You can't answer those questions, but you went ahead and recognized the Palestinian State for political reasons.

The world has turned upside down.

Madam President, you have been a stalwart defender of Israel, and we appreciate it.

Here is what I would say: After October 7, Hamas is engaged in using the Palestinian people as human shields at a level I haven't seen in warfare. The response is to punish Israel, who is in a no-win situation. The battalions have to be destroyed. The tunnels are underground. Why do you need a 2,000-pound bomb? Because there are underground tunnels that only a major bomb will be able to destroy.

When it comes to civilian infrastructure, the destruction of it has been in large part because Hamas has used schools, mosques, and hospitals as military sites, putting all that infrastructure in jeopardy by militarizing it.

On top of all of that, the International Criminal Court has decided to issue an arrest warrant for the Prime Minister of Israel and the Defense Minister of Israel as well as Hamas leaders. Boy, has the world turned upside down.

To consider Israel like Russia—Putin had an arrest warrant issued because there is no rule of law in Russia. People fall out of windows who are opposition leaders. People get poisoned. There is no rule of law in Russia.

There is a robust legal system in Israel. It is probably the pride of the world. The most independent judiciary maybe on the planet lives and resides in Israel.

So Israel is not Russia, and the Prime Minister and the Defense Minister of Israel are not Hamas, but in the ICC world, they are all the same. That is despicable.

Here is what has happened: Apparently, a lot of legal experts, some well-known, famous people, advised the ICC that Israel needed to be charged—the State of Israel, the Prime Minister and the Defense Minister. They are legal experts under international law. I would not pay these people 5 cents given my undersigning of their own statute.

I, along with seven members—four Republicans and four Democrats—engaged the ICC weeks ago, arguing that for you to bring a charge against the State of Israel, you would have to believe that the judiciary in Israel is not independent and that Israel is not acting in good faith—they are acting in bad faith—when it comes to allegations against Israeli forces and policies of Israel. It is called complementarity.

Israel is not a member of the ICC, nor are we. In 2015, the ICC recognized the Palestinians as a state for ICC purposes even though they are not recognized by the U.N. Why they did that, I don't know. But they took over jurisdiction of this conflict, and where do we lie now?

On May 20, a couple of days ago, a representative of the ICC was supposed to land in Israel to set up a meeting between legal officials, government officials of the State of Israel and the prosecutor, Khan, next week.

The group that I was involved in urged the ICC to sit down and talk with Israel—called complementarity.

Under their own statute, the ICC cannot act unless the nation in question is unable or unwilling to proceed with an investigation or if the investigation is conducted in bad faith. There is no way you can find Israel is not acting in good faith when they were willing to meet you 2 days ago.

So here is what happened: We were misled and lied to by the ICC.

This group thinks they have jurisdiction of the entire world; they are going to roam the globe and right wrongs. They were created to deal with voids where there is no rule of law or rogue states like Russia, where the rule of law has been destroyed, not come and second-guess robust democracies like Israel and the United States.

They threatened to come after our soldiers in Afghanistan years ago, and Senator ERNST, who was a member of the U.S. Army serving abroad. We objected to high heaven.

We have a very robust military legal system. We have a very independent judiciary. Israel has the most independent judiciary on the planet.

So they canceled the meeting. Israel called and said: When will you get here? The man in question for the ICC said: I have been told I can't come. And Israel heard about the arrest warrant on CNN. They had prerecorded this interview—Mr. Khan had—with a CNN reporter before the meeting.

Senator CARDIN has been awesome on this.

We are trying to get Israel to engage with the ICC, listen to their complaints, and see if we can move forward. They acted in bad faith. A meeting was set up, the man did not attend, and before Israel knew anything, they heard it on CNN.

So I am hoping that we can come together—and I want to applaud President Biden, Secretary of State Blinken, and Jake Sullivan for issuing strong statements condemning the actions of the ICC against the State of Israel.

Now it is time to impose sanctions not only to help our ally but also to help ourselves. I want everybody to know that if you deal with the ICC in this sham trial against Israel, you will never come to this country. Your visa will be revoked, and if you have assets here, they will be lost. You have to pick what I think is an abuse of the rule of law over doing business with America.

If we don't do that as a body, we are next. I have tried for months to find a way forward with my colleagues, who have been terrific, trying to find a way for Saudi and Israel to recognize each other, come up with a better deal for the Palestinians, to end this conflict in a permanent way.

In the middle of this sensitive moment, the ICC, in a very deceptive way, brings charges against the Prime Minister of Israel and the Defense Minister, who are in a fight for their lives. They are surrounded by Hezbollah, Hamas, and Iran.

Where was the ICC when the Iranians drug a young girl off the bus and beat

her to death? Where are they in North Korea? They pick Israel—a nation with one of the most robust, independent legal systems on the planet. They lied to eight U.S. Senators. They cannot get away with this. If you let them get away with this, then you are going to regret it.

So I look forward to working with Republicans and Democrats and the administration to send a clear signal: We are not going to sit on the sidelines while the rule of law is politicized, turned upside down, to the detriment of our allies and our own Nation.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, first, I would like to thank the Senator from South Carolina. We know that normalization between Saudi Arabia and Israel is incredibly important, and the Senator from South Carolina has been knee-deep in efforts to bring those two nations together. I would like to thank him first for that.

America's promises mean something—or at least they should. President Biden has repeatedly promised that his commitment to Israel is ironclad, but revoking much needed military support for our closest Middle Eastern ally says otherwise.

Let's be clear: The Middle East—really, the entire world—right now is on fire, and the blame lies, in large part, on the shoulders of the administration. President Biden's weak leadership has consistently appeased our enemies and abandoned our allies.

This dangerous trend began with the disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan, where he left behind Americans and Afghan allies to the mercies of Taliban rule. As a result, terrorists across the globe rejoice at Biden's decisions instead of trembling in fear of the United States as they once did and should.

Two weeks ago, I returned from Israel, where I advocated for the release of American hostages held captive by Iran-backed Hamas. I stood before Israeli officials, including Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, and assured them that America has your back. Yet, as my words were still reverberating, the Biden administration sent a far different, far more damaging message to our ally: We are withholding key munitions.

Unbelievable and unconscionable.

Let's not miss that the very weapons that President Biden is withholding include kits that will convert bombs into precision-guided weapons—tools that would help Israel conduct very precise strikes against Hamas, thus reducing civilian casualties.

Mind you, reducing civilian casualties is the administration's stated goal when it comes to how the IDF prosecutes their rightful retaliation. Yet the Biden White House is withholding the very means Israel needs to accomplish this goal.

It is total hypocrisy, folks.

As Prime Minister Netanyahu said to me and to the world, the United States withholding these precision-guided capabilities will not stop Israel from defending itself.

But make no mistake, Biden's decision will make it harder for Israel to avoid civilian deaths. This, my friends, is a very, very grim reality.

In April, Congress, with my help, stood firmly with our ally by approving critical weapons support for Israel. Leading up to the passage of this bill, President Biden himself declared the aid to Israel was critical and called for "swift and decisive action" to ensure Israel had everything it needed to defend itself. Yet, now, when it is his time to act, Biden fails to do so.

Since October 7, Israel has faced existential, Iran-backed threats on every side. In the Gaza Strip, Hamas terrorists continue to attack our friend and hold dozens of hostages, including Americans—our American eight. Hezbollah forces continue to bomb northern Israel, forcing the evacuation of 60,000 Israelis. Houthis have also attacked dozens of ships crossing the Red Sea in order to strangle the Israeli economy. And, of course, Iran—the supporter of all of these terrorist groups—launched more than 300 projectiles against Israel last month in an unprecedented escalation, not to mention the attacks by Iranian proxies on our own servicemembers in the region. Three American servicemembers were killed at Tower 22 in Jordan. Let's not forget.

As Israel faces these dangers, we must give her the arms needed to fight and win—to destroy the Hamas terrorists that continue to hold our—our—fellow citizens hostage, the American eight.

What must not get lost in all the noise is that the decision to withhold weapons from Israel reeks of politics. The President is choosing to capitulate to an anti-Israel, pro-Hamas faction within his own party. He does so at his own peril and, more importantly, at the peril of countless lives.

President Biden, you have made your choice. You are choosing the side of Iran-backed Hamas terrorists who brutally rape women and burn children. You are choosing the side of anti-Semites who are ruining the lives of Jewish students across this country. You will live with the consequences of your choices and, most gravely, so will the American hostages and U.S. servicemembers being targeted by Iranian proxies every single day.

Republicans will not waver in our support for Israel and our Jewish friends. "Never again" is not just a slogan; it is a solemn vow, and in this pivotal moment, we will stand on the right side of history.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

BORDER ACT OF 2024

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, nearly every day, Republicans come to

this floor to tell us how much they care about the border and how much they believe in border security. Yet—and yet—when they have an opportunity to do something about it, they don't just balk; they run for the hills.

If you care about securing the border, then you actually have to pass legislation that secures the border. It doesn't secure itself by itself. Our statutes are outdated. Our Border Patrol doesn't have enough resources. You have to change the law. You have to put more resources on the border. That is what the bipartisan border security bill did. I regret the fact that all but four Republicans voted against it after they requested that we engage in a bipartisan process to develop that border security bill, after they demanded that we pass bipartisan border security legislation.

But because we believe that this issue is so important—because the American people believe that securing our border and compassionately treating those who arrive at our border is such an important issue—we are going to bring this bill back for another vote tomorrow. We are going to give Republicans a second chance to do what they say they want to do: work across the aisle in a bipartisan way to provide more resources to control our southwest border.

So I am glad to be on the floor today with a number of my colleagues who believe as I do; that this is the time to pass significant bipartisan legislation to secure our border, to reform our broken immigration system. It is what the American people want.

We should stop playing political games. Republicans should choose the security of this country ahead of their Presidential candidate's political prospects, and we have the opportunity to do that this week. So I am grateful to have so many of my colleagues on the floor.

I believe starting our remarks will be Senator KAINE.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I am thrilled to join my colleagues on the floor to talk about the importance of this border security bill, but I am also going to talk about my own naivete and admit to being a very naive Senator.

When I came to the Senate in 2013 with Senator MURPHY, one of the first things we did in June of my first year in the Senate was to pass a significant and bipartisan immigration reform bill. That immigration reform bill was comprehensive, including a \$40 billion-plus investment in border security. We passed it in a bipartisan way in this body with nearly 70 votes.

My naivete was this: Yes, there was a Republican House. When the bill went over there, having been a Governor and having watched how State legislatures worked, I assumed that the Republican House wouldn't just embrace our bill

but that they would do their own version of an immigration bill, and then we would sit down in a conference and hash out some middle ground. No. I was wrong. The Republican majority House decided to bottle the bill up in committee. They never took it up and never did their own bill. That was in 2013—the education of a naive Senator.

Years later, in 2018, during the Trump administration, when we had a Republican majority in this body, we dealt directly with President Trump. He wanted \$25 billion in border security over 10 years. We basically came up with an offer that was, Can you take yes for an answer?

I was part of an eight-member crew negotiating a bipartisan deal: protection for Dreamers and \$25 billion in border security—every penny Donald Trump asked for and not one penny less. He told us that he supported Dreamers. He told us that if the bill got to him, he would sign it. Because we had a Democratic House, if we could get it through this body, we would get it to President Trump's desk. But as soon as we rolled out the bill with eight Democrats and eight Republicans as cosponsors, President Trump did a 180, turn tail. He trashed the Dreamers. He said the bill was awful and encouraged Republicans to vote against it, and we couldn't get to the 60-vote margin.

So, for the second time, we did a bipartisan deal that was going to do good things and invest a whole lot in border security that was killed by President Trump and now this most recent effort.

I so applaud Senator MURPHY, Senator SINEMA, Senator LANKFORD, and others from the administration who worked on this deal, a bipartisan border security provision with other important provisions: the normalization of Afghan refugees. We have more in Virginia than almost any other State. There is really important work in this bill—bipartisan.

It is not lost on me how hard it is to do a deal where both the American Immigration Lawyers Association and the Border Patrol union, which tend to be quite opposite politically, take a look at a compromise and say: You know, this isn't perfect, but we need to do this.

I don't know of another issue where these two organizations have said: We need to do this. That was the needle that these Senators were able to thread after months and months and months of negotiation.

But just as in the first two instances, a significant effort to protect our border and make our country safer in a bipartisan way got shot down when President Trump came out and encouraged Republicans to oppose it. Even though they had been briefed on the negotiation every step of the way and supported it, as soon as President Trump said they should oppose it, folks turned tail and ran. President Trump was honest. I mean, I will give him this. He was honest about the reason.