

This week, the Senate will vote on the Right to IVF Act, led by my colleagues Senators DUCKWORTH, MURRAY, and BOOKER. The Right to IVF Act establishes a nationwide right to IVF and eliminates barriers for millions of families looking to use IVF to start and grow a family.

Protecting IVF should be one of the easiest votes the Senate has taken all year. The vast majority of Senators should agree that strengthening treatments that help people start a family is a good thing.

In fact, I have seen personally the immense good IVF can do. I have seen it in my own family. One of my grandkids was conceived with the help of IVF treatment, and we are immensely grateful we had access to this service. I can't imagine what we would have done if they had told us: Sorry, we are no longer offering this treatment. Thank God we never had to deal with that.

My family's story can be repeated over and over and over again in the country, millions of times. Millions of Americans have the joy of children, thanks to IVF.

So in no way, shape, or form is protecting IVF a show vote. It is a "show us who you are" vote. Remember what some Senators said when we first pushed marriage equality 2 years ago. They called that a "show vote," "gimmicky," and a "waste." And, lo and behold, after a lot of hard work, enough Senators on both sides worked together, and marriage equality became a law. That bill certainly wasn't a show vote, and neither is this one.

So let me say this again: 86 percent of Americans support protecting IVF, and just 14 percent of Americans say it shouldn't be legal.

Supporting this bill should be a no-brainer here in the Senate, and it is all the more urgent, given what House Republican extremists are doing right now to attack women's healthcare through the appropriations process.

Just last week, the hard right stuffed the VA funding bill with poison pills that would rip away reproductive care for our veterans.

And let's not forget, 3 months ago, the Republicans Study Committee, which includes 80 percent of House Republicans—an overwhelming majority of them—pushed a radical new agenda that would endanger IVF treatment, along with a national abortion ban with zero exceptions for rape and incest—80 percent of House Republicans, an abortion ban with no exceptions for rape or incest. That is how far right that group has become on this issue. What a nasty and awful and out-of-touch message to send to the American people.

Instead of pushing policies that the vast majority of Americans support, House Republicans continue to focus only on their most extreme constituencies.

Here in the Senate, we should choose a different path, one where we show the

American people that we protect the rights they care about. And this IVF bill would be a good way to do that.

FERC NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, on the FERC nominations, this week, the Senate has several important nominees to confirm to one of the most important Agencies, with a daunting-sounding name: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

FERC, as it is usually called, rarely shows up on people's radar screens, but its mission is essential. Every time you turn on the light or touch the thermostat or see new powerlines go up, the rules and regulations and policies of FERC are at work. FERC ensures the rates of electricity remain just and reasonable. That is their job, to do that. It regulates the transmission of power across State lines. It ensures our power grid is safe and reliable.

But if the Senate does not act soon, FERC could soon lose its quorum, and much of its work could come to a halt. If these vacancies go on for too long, it would create serious backlog and delay, potentially slowing down new projects that power people's homes and cities.

So I am glad to move forward on three new FERC nominations here on the Senate floor. I hope we can confirm all three by the end of the week so FERC can keep its quorum and continue its mission of providing Americans with affordable, reliable, and safe energy.

I thank Chairman MANCHIN and Ranking Member BARRASSO for working together in a bipartisan way and in good faith to bring these nominees through.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Rosner cloture motion be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss an issue that I have been working on for quite some time.

It was over 20 years ago that I introduced the DREAM Act. I introduced it with Republican Senator Orrin Hatch, who was then chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. In fact, there was a little competition, at the start, as to who would be the first named on the bill. Senator Hatch insisted that he had the idea before me. I deferred to him, as being in the majority and as chairman of the committee.

This bipartisan legislation would provide a pathway to citizenship for young immigrants brought to the United States as children and allow them to remain in this country—in fact, the only country they have ever called home.

These young people grew up alongside our own children, with the same

hopes of getting their first job, applying to college, getting a driver's license, having a bright future. And many have gone on to serve as doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, and first responders.

Yet, without congressional action for more than two decades, every day is spent in fear of their lives being uprooted, facing fear of deportation.

I am amazed when I think about the issue of immigration. When you really come to understand America and its place in the history of the world, you realize that we are first and foremost a nation of immigrants—people who have come from every corner of the world to be part of the American dream, who, despite the odds, have overcome hardship and really built a future for themselves and made this great Nation what it is today. And yet every successive generation seems to go through the debate as to whether or not immigration is a good thing.

I think we all agree that we need an orderly process at our borders and otherwise when it comes to immigration. I think we all agree that we cannot absorb every person in the world who wants to be part of the United States today.

We have a priority to first look at those who live in this country and to measure our needs economically with the reality of immigration. We also have an obligation to only allow those to come to this country who are going to be safe and not cause any danger to those of us who live here. These are the basics.

But having said that, we are in desperate need of immigrants coming to this country for so many reasons.

Just yesterday, I was in Chicago taking a look at a new, innovative research project that is going on with our Department of Defense. The gentleman who was showing me the project is named Ben Hernandez. It is called Numat, N-U-M-A-T. It is a new material that will keep our troops safe from biological and chemical warfare.

It is amazing. His partner in this effort is Dr. Farha. Dr. Farha is Palestinian. He came to this country and used his skill to engage in this effort to keep our men and women in uniform safer—another immigrant, another immigrant story, another success story for America.

This week marks the 12th anniversary of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, known as DACA. President Obama created DACA in response to a request that I made with Senator Richard Lugar, Republican of Indiana. When we couldn't pass the DREAM Act, I appealed to the President to use his Executive authority to create a program that would protect these young people as long as possible. He came up with DACA.

Under this program, 830,000 individuals were able to be protected. Now, they had to go through a background check, every 2 years they had to renew their application, and they had to pay

a fee. That was understood. But it seemed like a reasonable thing to allow these talented people to stay in America and be part of our future.

DACA has protected more than 830,000 young people from deportation, all of whom were brought to this country as children, some as young as just a few months old.

Last month, I held a hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee on the importance of protecting Dreamers and DACA. We heard from some amazing witnesses who showed why it is so important that we do this.

One of the witnesses was Officer Mitchell Soto Rodriguez from my State of Illinois. She is the first-ever DACA recipient to serve as a police officer with the Blue Island, IL, Police Department. She was very clear: Without DACA, that would not have been possible. Now she is realizing her dream as a part of the police force of this community.

Let me share another story of a talented DACA recipient contributing to our country. I have come to the floor of the Senate 143 times, as of today, to tell these stories. I believe each one tells a better story than any speech I could give on the subject.

This young man's name is Wilmer Palacios. He comes from a small village in Guatemala. He came to Los Angeles when he was 14 years old. His dream: He wanted to be a registered nurse. But he didn't think it was possible because he was undocumented.

The day Wilmer heard about DACA in 2012, he immediately switched his degree to pre-nursing because, for the first time, he finally felt that he could fulfill his dream.

Mr. Palacios has held DACA status almost since the program's inception 12 years ago. He now has a master's of science degree in nursing and is a registered nurse and family nurse practitioner in a medical cardiac intensive care unit in Fresno, CA. His ultimate goal is to open a medical clinic in a low-income community, and he would like to serve in the U.S. Army as a nurse.

Do we need nurses in America? Let me tell you—go to your local hospital and ask the first person in management that question, and they will tell you we are desperate; we need more nurses. We need more people like Wilmer.

He recently said: DACA offered me the freedom and opportunities I never thought possible growing up, but I cannot deny that I live in constant fear—constant fear—of a court decision and a Presidential election that can take it all away.

DACA has allowed Wilmer to pursue his dreams for now, but it was always intended to be temporary, until Congress acted. The fact is, with precious few exceptions, for 30 years, Congress has failed to act and upgrade our immigration laws.

Everybody knows the immigration system in this country is broken. And

to fix it, we need a determined Senate, House of Representatives, and a President who is looking for a constructive solution. It has been hard to find.

Since President Obama established the DACA Program, Republicans have waged a relentless campaign to overturn DACA and deport these Dreamers back to countries they barely knew. Now, this program is hanging by a thread in the courts due to legal challenges from Republican State attorneys general, and DACA recipients like Wilmer Palacios are being forced to live with uncertainty every single day.

Last September, a Federal judge in Texas declared DACA illegal. Though the decision left in place protections for the current recipients, these Dreamers live in constant fear that the next court decision will upend their lives.

The litigation has also prevented at least 100,000 additional Dreamers from registering for the program. Keep in mind, those who register for the program go through a background check. When I hear people describe our immigrant population in America as murderers, rapists, terrorists, and the insane, I think to myself: Who are they talking about?

These DACA recipients—over 800,000 of them—go through background checks to make certain they are no danger to the United States; and like Mr. Palacios, they turn out to be absolutely essential to our future.

One study estimated that if DACA were to end, 1,000 U.S. workers would be out of work every business day for the next 2 years. Losing 1,000 workers like Wilmer—1,000 every day. Business owners in my State tell me they need more skilled workers.

There isn't a hospital in the State of Illinois that doesn't want a nurse like Mr. Palacios, who has a master's degree in nursing. They are desperate for them.

Some would say: Send them away. Deport them. They are not Americans. Some use harsh terms like they poison the blood of America. I couldn't disagree more. These people are part of our future. They are good, solid people who will be good citizens of the United States.

The threat just doesn't come from the courts. When he was President, President Donald Trump tried to end the DACA Program and deport people like Wilmer Palacios. And it is clear that, given the chance, he would try it again.

If my Republican colleagues will join us, Congress can protect the Dreamers and DACA recipients. I urge my colleagues: Meet the Dreamers personally. You will realize they are not a threat to this country; they are the future of our country. They can bring to us things that we need desperately.

They have earned the right to live in this country without fear. They should be able to put down roots, start families, further their education, and contribute to our society without the fear of deportation hanging over them.

It is time for Congress to get to work on a bipartisan basis and pass the DREAM Act. It is the right thing, and it is long overdue. I thought we had a chance to do that a few weeks ago. There was a bipartisan bill that moved forward. I look back at it and say that JAMES LANKFORD, a Republican conservative from Oklahoma, and two other Senators—CHRIS MURPHY and KYRSTEN SINEMA—all came together with a bill which would have really moved us forward in bringing order to the border, ending the crisis that we found there; put more resources into stopping the illegal flow of drugs into the United States; hire more people to do the jobs at the borders.

A leading union for Border Patrol agents endorsed this bipartisan bill. Well, what happened to it? Why wasn't it passed? Why didn't the Senate pass this bill?

There is one reason, and it is very public. The former President of the United States, Donald Trump, said: I don't want this bill to move forward. I want this issue to remain in the campaign until November.

So our opportunity for a bipartisan solution to this problem was lost.

We have got to move back to the point where we are working on a bipartisan basis to solve this program. We can do it. Virtually all of us who believe that immigration is an integral part of the history and future of the United States have an obligation to the American people to meet that responsibility.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Vermont.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, let me be as clear as I can be. That is, the American people—whether they are Democrats, Republicans, or Independents—are sick and tired of paying, by far, the highest prices in the world for prescription drugs. The American people are sick and tired of being ripped off by giant pharmaceutical companies who make huge profits every year while charging us outrageous prices that the American people cannot afford.

A few months ago, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee—the HELP Committee—that I chair held a hearing on the extraordinarily high prices of prescription drugs in the United States, and this is what we learned.

We learned that Merck, one of the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world, made \$14.5 billion in profits last year charging Americans struggling with diabetes \$6,900 for Januvia, when the same exact product can be purchased in Canada for \$900 and in France for \$200.

Here you go: \$6,900 in the United States, \$900 in Canada, \$200 in France. This is not a generic. This is the exact same product.

We found that this same company—which, by the way, could afford to