

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, an early report suggests that the Biden administration may have set yet another record at our southern border—and not the good kind. If this early report is accurate, the number of migrant encounters at our southern border in January is the highest January number ever recorded. That, of course, would follow December's recordbreaking number of migrant encounters, which was a staggering 309,034. That is not only the highest December number ever recorded but the highest number for any month ever recorded. Before that, of course, there was September's record-breaking number, and the list goes on.

The Biden administration has presided over a truly unprecedented crisis at our Nation's border. We have had 3 years of recordbreaking illegal immigration under the Biden administration. Fiscal year 2021 saw a record-breaking 1,734,686 migrant encounters at our southern border. Then fiscal year 2022 broke that record, and then fiscal year 2023 broke that record. They didn't break that 2021 record by a small margin, either. Fiscal year 2023 exceeded fiscal year 2021 by a staggering 740,000-plus encounters. If the current trajectory continues, it is likely that fiscal year 2024 will break the record yet again.

All told, since President Biden took office, there have been more than 7 million—million—migrant encounters at our southwest border, and that is just counting the individuals who were stopped by Customs and Border Protection. Since January 2021, when President Biden took office, there have been more than 1.7 million known “got-aways,” and those are individuals the Border Patrol saw but was unable to apprehend. We have no idea how many unknown—unknown—“got-aways” there have been over the same period.

I could keep throwing out numbers all day, but needless to say, my point is this: The situation at our southern border is a disaster, it is unprecedented, and it is untenable. We have to get this crisis under control.

I am thankful for Senator LANKFORD's efforts to address the chaos at our southern border. Senator LANKFORD has spent months now working to develop serious border security reform, and his work has further highlighted the ways the Biden administration has invited illegal immigration and undermined security at our Nation's border.

The worst border crisis on record will be a defining feature of President Biden's legacy, in addition to the high cost of inflation imposed on American families and the weakening of America's standing on the world's stage.

IRAN

Mr. President, I also want to take a moment to comment on Friday's strikes against the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps and Iran's proxies in Iraq and Syria.

Last week, I called on the President to take decisive action in response to

the more than 165 attacks against U.S. forces in Iraq, Syria, Jordan, and in the Red Sea, including the tragic death of three soldiers in Jordan. The President's half-measures had failed, with deadly consequences, and a forceful response was overdue. The President must continue to take the necessary measures to protect our troops abroad and to maintain freedom of navigation in the Red Sea.

I specifically would like to commend the men and women of the 28th Bomb Wing, which is based in South Dakota at Ellsworth Air Force Base but now has a contingent of about 250 airmen operating out of Dyess Air Force Base while our airfield is closed.

The 28th Bomb Wing not only participated in Friday's strike against 85 targets, but it did so flying what is known as a CONUS-to-CONUS mission—that is, taking off from American soil, hitting overseas targets, and returning to base in a single, marathon flight.

This ability to generate combat power that can strike anywhere on the map is a testament to the professionalism of the 28th Bomb Wing's aircrews and maintainers, and it also underscores the importance of preserving this capability now and well into the future so that we can deter threats and hold adversaries accountable. Global reach anytime, anyplace.

The B-21 bomber, which was unveiled last year and is set to make Ellsworth its first home for Main Operating Base 1 later this decade, will begin a new era of American airpower, but until that sixth-generation bomber is fielded, we need to continue full support for programs like the B-1 bomber. I will continue to do everything I can here in Congress to support both the B-21 and the B-1 missions and the men and women who are behind their success.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. 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.

The Senator from Washington.

SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, we recently released the text of the supplemental. This bill is about our national security, it is about our national credibility, and it is about our future. That is why Democrats have been glued to the table, negotiating in good faith every step of the way, because the stakes could not be higher.

On Sunday, we rolled out a bipartisan, compromise package with \$60 billion in aid for Ukraine, \$14.1 billion in security assistance for Israel, \$4.8 billion to support our allies in the Indo-Pacific, \$10 billion for humanitarian assistance, \$20 billion for operational needs at the border, and more.

Now, I want to be clear, this is not the bill I would have written on my own. It is compromise legislation that came out of negotiations between Senate Democrats and Senate Republicans. As I have said before, I never believed that we should condition emergency aid for our allies on unrelated partisan priorities, but Republicans demanded that. They insisted we needed not just Executive action at the border or new resources but policy changes. So my colleagues—the junior Senator from Connecticut and the senior Senator from Arizona—worked around the clock, and now we have a bipartisan set of proposals, just as our Republican colleagues demanded.

Now, before I say anything else, this will not be the last word on immigration reform. I will keep fighting—and I know many of us will—day in and day out until we deliver on comprehensive immigration reform that creates a pathway to citizenship for the more than 11 million undocumented immigrants living in America and makes our system work better and more fairly. I know we need to finally pass the Dream Act. We need an immigration system that creates new pathways for legal status, eliminates dysfunction and backlogs, and recognizes that immigrants do make America great.

Immigrants are not just crucial to our economy—although they absolutely are—they enrich our communities and strengthen the fabric of our country in countless ways. And we should, of course, be inviting the world's brightest minds and hardest workers to make America home. That will always remain a North Star for me as we push to make our system work better and meet new needs as more folks come to our country, fleeing persecution and seeking opportunity.

We also have to address the root causes of migration in a way that promotes stability and mutual economic prosperity for everyone.

The bipartisan compromise before us does not accomplish all of that. Border policy and immigration reform is a very tough issue, and in a divided government, compromise is required. So what we have in front of us is a tailored package aimed at addressing some of the challenges before us and one that can win passage in both Chambers.

I am not thrilled with several of the provisions, but there are some important steps forward in it, like a quarter of a million new family and work visas over the next 5 years and pathways to citizenship for the brave Afghans who worked alongside our servicemembers during the war in Afghanistan.

The bill would help speed up the processing of asylum claims, ensure for the very first time that everyone gets a written explanation of their asylum decision, and provide an important downpayment on new resources to clear the backlog.

It would provide immediate work permits for folks who pass through the

asylum screenings so they can provide for their families and build a life in our country.

The bill enshrines for the first time a legal right to representation for all asylum seekers in expedited removal, and, especially important to me, it provides legal counsel for the youngest kids who arrive at our borders without a parent, seeking relief in the United States.

It protects the President's parole authority—another means of preventing chaos at our borders.

It helps ensure that documented Dreamers, the children of H-1B visa holders, are not deported.

It provides critical new resources—a 75-percent boost—for our cities and our States and organizations around the country to provide lifesaving support to migrants who are already here.

It also includes funding to help resettle refugees fleeing Putin's war and other horrific conflicts across the globe.

It has significant new investments to not just detect and stop fentanyl at our borders but to stop the chemicals used to create it way up the supply chain.

So this bill does leave a lot to be desired, but it is a compromise bill. It takes really important steps to get urgently needed aid to our allies and innocent civilians, and it was crafted to win bipartisan support.

I will be voting for this package because American leadership is on the line here and because aid to our allies, including in Ukraine, and humanitarian aid to Gaza cannot wait a moment longer.

I have tremendous appreciation for the tireless effort my Democratic colleagues put into negotiating away some of the worst and most partisan proposals. I am not new to brokering deals here in the Senate, and I understand that in negotiations, you don't always get what you want. In fact, you never do. But I also know that after a bill passes, you don't stop pushing for the progress you want to see, and that will be the case here. But when it comes to the bill before us, there is no reason—none whatsoever—for further drama or delay or partisanship.

Funding for Ukraine, Israel, and the Indo-Pacific all have overwhelming bipartisan support, and Senate and House Republicans alike were some of the loudest voices calling for changes to border policy in the first place. So despite the flurry of statements from Republicans we have seen in the past 24 hours, rushing to judgment, I hope they will join us in moving the very steps that they demanded.

After all, if Republicans kill this deal without even voting, throwing out border policies that they demanded—that they demanded—throwing their Senate colleagues under the bus, and throwing in the towel to dictators like Putin, how are they going to have any sort of credibility on addressing the border?

They won't. The American people will rightly see it for the kind of naked partisan politics people cannot stand.

We have a bill here that is serious. It is bipartisan, and it is urgently needed by our allies, especially Ukraine. If we do not fully meet this moment and soon, we are going to leave families living in a more dangerous world—a world where dictators like Putin trample democracies without consequences; a world where civilians who are caught in crossfire have less hope of getting basic aid, food, water, medical care; and a world where allies don't trust our promises and adversaries don't heed our warnings.

That is unacceptable to me, and I urge our colleagues to join me in passing this bill through the Senate and in pressing the House to vote on this bill without any further delay.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA). The Senator from Maryland.

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

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

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask consent that I be permitted to finish my remarks before the scheduled vote.

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

NOMINATION OF KURT CAMPBELL

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to speak in support of the nomination of Kurt Campbell to be Deputy Secretary of State.

The Deputy Secretary of State is one of the most critical roles at the Department of State. The Deputy Secretary serves as a key adviser to the Secretary, advancing top national security priorities, and serves as one of our top diplomats around the world.

To that end, Mr. Campbell's distinguished career provides him with the experience to excel in this position. It includes service in the Navy, in the State Department, the Defense Department, and the private sector. Mr. Campbell brings more than two decades of service in various leaderships, including as Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Affairs.

He has the expertise to help navigate the Department and our Nation through complex global challenges. Having a confirmed Deputy Secretary of State is paramount as we work to support our allies and build resilient partnerships, and respond to crises and deescalate tensions and conflict around the world—from Europe, where maintaining unity and support for Ukraine is more critical than ever; to addressing challenges in the Indo-Pacific, with the dynamic reaction between Beijing and Taipei; to the Middle East, where we must prevent further escalation and work toward the release of hostages and avoid the humanitarian crisis.

These require the full diplomatic force of our Nation. At this critical moment, the State Department's role in leadership is more important than ever. I don't have to remind my colleagues of all the challenges we have around the world. We need a full diplomatic corps there to represent the United States' interests, and it is critically important that we have Mr. Campbell confirmed as Deputy Secretary of State.

I want to take a moment to acknowledge the exceptional leadership of Ambassador Victoria Nuland, who has been serving in an acting capacity since last year. She is among our Nation's finest diplomats, and we have been lucky to have someone of her experience step into this role in the interim.

I must state that I have had many dealings with Ambassador Nuland. She has always been very direct with us. She has always been an incredibly talented diplomat representing our Nation, and we thank her for being willing to take on this extraordinary position during this critical time.

But it is in our national interest to have a Senate-confirmed official serving in our Nation's top national security post. Mr. Campbell is among the most experienced and most capable officials to be nominated to this position.

I strongly encourage my colleagues to support cloture of Mr. Campbell's nomination and to confirm him without delay.

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. 486, Kurt Campbell, of the District of Columbia, to be Deputy Secretary of State.

Charles E. Schumer, Benjamin L. Cardin, Alex Padilla, Tammy Baldwin, Jeff Merkley, Mazie Hirono, Tim Kaine, Richard Blumenthal, Tina Smith, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Jack Reed, Margaret Wood Hassan, Richard J. Durbin, Chris Van Hollen, Christopher A. Coons, Jeanne Shaheen, Christopher Murphy.

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 Kurt Campbell, of the District of Columbia, to be Deputy Secretary of State, 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 Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator