

Americans should be free to use IVF if they want to, yes or no? If yes, then the only right answer is to vote in favor of today's bill.

The Right to IVF Act is common sense and necessary. It establishes a nationwide right to IVF and eliminates barriers for the millions of families looking to use IVF to start and to grow a family.

Protecting IVF should be the easiest "yes" vote the Senate has taken all year. Republicans cannot say they are pro-family and then vote against protecting IVF.

It is very fitting that we take this important vote today of all days. Here in the Senate, we are voting to protect women's reproductive freedoms, but on the other side of Capitol Hill, Donald Trump and his Republican sycophants will be talking about tax breaks for the very rich, cuts to the middle class, and packing our courts with more radical judges. The contrast couldn't be clearer. Look at the contrast. Democrats are protecting IVF; Donald Trump and the Republicans are protecting wealthy tax breaks. Which side is for the American people? It is obvious.

Look, as we prepared this IVF bill, many of our Republican colleagues who hate talking about the issue have made the same panicked arguments they made about Roe: It is a nonissue; it will never happen; that we are blowing things out of proportion; that IVF, they say, is simply not under threat and today's bill is unnecessary.

Senators CRUZ and BRITT even organized a statement yesterday, signed by all Republican Senators, saying that of course they support IVF. But they certainly won't be voting on a bill that protects it. Easy to see through that one, isn't it? How strange—all 49 Republicans are willing to sign a piece of paper saying they like IVF, but none of them seem to be willing to actually vote for a bill that protects IVF. It shows you how afraid they are of the issue, how they are tied in a knot by the MAGA hard right on choice, and they can't do anything the American people want.

This is simple: If you really support access to IVF, vote to protect access to IVF.

America, watch what our Republican colleagues do, not what they say. Again, this is not a show vote; this is a "show us who you are" vote. Today, unfortunately, it seems our Republican colleagues are going to show us just who they are—people who will not protect a woman's right to IVF.

To all those who claim that IVF is not under any threat, facts are stubborn things. Look at what happened yesterday when one of the most powerful anti-abortion voices in America officially came out against IVF. Look at what the Alabama Supreme Court did 4 months ago. Their decision on IVF led to a temporary halt on IVF services across the State of Alabama. This is a disastrous thing to see in 21st-century America.

Senate Republicans who like to pretend that IVF is not under threat should have a word with the likes of the Heritage Foundation and Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America. These organizations are some of the most influential authorities in conservatism and on the Republican Party, and they are making it plain as day that IVF is the hard right's next project.

Just 1 week ago, the Susan B. Anthony league wrote to Senators telling them to oppose the Right to IVF Act. They said our bill protecting IVF was "irredeemable" and described IVF as a "free for all." Their opposition to IVF uses identical language as those who oppose abortion.

The Heritage Foundation—one of the most important conservative and most powerful conservative, most influential conservative organizations—is against our bill protecting IVF. They were even against the fig leaf messaging bill pushed by Senators CRUZ and BRITT, which didn't actually protect IVF at all. It seems the senior Senator from Texas, up for reelection, is running scared.

One senior policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation predicted a generational shift in how the right views IVF, saying:

Many of these pro-life Republicans are going to have to think more deeply about what it means to be pro-life.

The hard right is saying it as plain as day. First they targeted abortion, and now IVF is next. Sooner or later, Republican Senators are going to fall in line.

That brings me back again to the very important vote happening today here on the Senate floor. As Donald Trump talks about protecting tax cuts for the rich, we Democrats in the Senate are talking about protecting women's reproductive freedoms. It is a fitting encapsulation of what is at stake this year.

Finally, let me finish with this: Starting a family is one of the most sacred decisions a person can ever make. For many, it is what makes life worth living. Infertility makes that impossible for tens of millions of couples. About 10 percent of couples struggle with this medical condition. That is a heavy burden to carry if your deepest wish is to become a mom or a dad. It can be a source of worry, concern, even shame.

IVF has thus been a miracle cure for generations of parents and kids. It has been part of my family's story. My beautiful grandchild was born thanks to the help of IVF, and I thank the Good Lord for it.

So it is the stuff of nightmares that today the hard right in America is beginning to set their sights on preventing people from using IVF. We have a chance today to stop this madness before it takes full flight. We have a chance to pass a bill that says something very simple: IVF is a basic right and will be protected under law.

To my Republican colleagues: The choice is yours. Americans are watch-

ing, parents back home are watching, and couples who want to become parents are watching too.

Republicans cannot say they are pro-family but vote against protecting IVF. That is what is at stake today.

I urge everyone to vote yes.

Remember, America, this is not a show vote; it is a "show us who you are" vote.

#### ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Now, Mr. President, on AI legislation, artificial intelligence is already reshaping our world as we know it. Every industry—healthcare, finance, manufacturing, and others—will in some way be impacted by AI and must be prepared when that moment comes. That includes the Federal Government.

As more Federal Agencies begin to incorporate AI into their operations, it is critical that they have a clear and established set of guidelines to manage this technology safely and effectively. So I was pleased that yesterday Chair PETERS and Senator TILLIS introduced a bipartisan bill to make sure the Federal Government is proactive in harnessing AI's potential while managing its very real risks.

This legislation will establish some of the first guidelines for the responsible procurement of AI by the Federal Government. The guidelines in this bill will be essential for the Federal Government to deploy AI so it protects people's civil rights, prevents bias, and ensures people's privacy.

These protections are critical not just for the application of AI in the Federal Government, they are important for the application of AI in every industry.

I commend Chair PETERS and Senator TILLIS for introducing this legislation. It is a great example of both sides working together to legislate effectively on AI.

As we have said, we first had our AI forums. We then put out our roadmap. Now our committees are beginning to work on specific legislation. I am very, very proud that we are moving forward in this regard.

We had another opportunity to work together to pass AI legislation last night when Senator DURBIN tried to pass his DEFIANCE Act, which cracks down on nonconsensual AI pornography and holds those responsible for the sharing of graphic images and videos.

Sadly, despite the bill having bipartisan support, one Member—only one Member—from the other side of the aisle stood in the way and blocked its passage. I hope this is not the norm moving forward. I hope both sides can continue working together—like Chair PETERS and Senator TILLIS did—to harness the potential of AI while protecting against its risks.

#### DONALD TRUMP CAPITOL HILL VISIT

Mr. President, finally, on the Trump visit, later this afternoon, Senate Republicans will welcome former President Donald Trump to Capitol Hill for a meeting about some of the top priorities of the Republican agenda moving

forward. One of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle predicted the meeting would be “an expression of unity.” “[A]n expression of unity”? I will be honest. It is getting harder and harder to differentiate between the Republicans’ agenda and the extreme, hard-right MAGA agenda. In many ways, they seem to be one and the same nowadays.

The topics up for discussion between Senate Republicans and Donald Trump today read like Republicans’ greatest hits: taxes, Social Security, Medicare, and more. But when you take a closer look under the hood, it is not difficult to see that these are issues where Republicans are way out of touch with the American people.

Cutting taxes on the very wealthy and on corporations that don’t pay their fair share? That is what they want to do. Social Security and Medicare—when 180 House Members are part of the group that said we should cut them, and RICK SCOTT—running for leader—from Florida says we should cut Medicare and Social Security? Give us a break. If that is unity, the American people sure as heck don’t want it.

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 Republican leader is recognized.

#### NOMINATION OF SARAH NETBURN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, soon, the Judiciary Committee will consider promoting a magistrate in New York, Sarah Netburn, to the district court after a less-than-judicious committee process.

Judge Netburn’s hearing was a contentious affair. You should go watch it. My friends the junior Senators from Louisiana and Texas had the judge dead to rights on her judicial activism from the bench. She was clearly prepared for their line of questioning, but by the end, she wilted under the withering fire from my colleagues.

That is when the acting chairwoman of the committee got involved. After Republicans were finished questioning Judge Netburn, she invited the nominee to defend herself. Her defense, of course, flatly contradicted her written opinion as a judge.

Committee Republicans rightly objected. It is one thing to give a nominee the chance to rehabilitate herself, but giving her the last word as she lied to the committee is a different matter entirely. After the nominee gave two different explanations for why she had engaged in political activism from the bench, committee Democrats blocked further questions and closed the hearing.

It sounds an awful lot like the way another nominee, Adeel Mangi, explained his policy views to liberal interest groups only after the committee was finished questioning him. Judge Netburn got the last word here.

As the junior Senator from Louisiana said, it looks an awful lot like a cover-up. Apparently, it is not enough for Senate Democrats to rubberstamp radicals to the courts. They desperately don’t want the American people to even know about it.

Well, it is not working. The Judiciary Committee has received almost 100 letters from liberals opposing Judge Netburn’s activism. The cat is literally out of the bag. So I would urge my colleagues to pay attention to what happens in the Judiciary Committee as Judge Netburn’s nomination moves forward.

#### NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. President, now on another matter, this week, the Armed Services Committee has been marking up the National Defense Authorization Act for the coming year. In the past, the committee has prided itself on considering hundreds of amendments and thoroughly exercising Congress’s oversight responsibilities in the process. I expect this year to be no different.

But one essential question hangs over both the NDAA and the appropriations process to come: Is Congress ready—finally ready—to fulfill our most fundamental responsibility of adequately providing for the common defense? This, of course, remains an open question. For a fourth straight year, the process of funding the Federal Government began with a White House budget proposal that would impose net cuts to the national defense.

I have said it before. How can we expect to keep up with the pacing threat, the PRC, if our military budgets don’t even keep pace with inflation? I know a number of our Democratic colleagues recognize that the threats we face are growing and that our defense requirements are growing along with them, but they don’t seem to be ready to respond with any sense of urgency. Senate Democrats continue to indicate that they will stick to their long-standing demand for artificial parity between defense and nondefense appropriations for any increases above the President’s budget.

It is time for all of us to face the actual facts. The threats we face have grown since the bipartisan budget caps were negotiated. They have grown since the President’s budget was drafted. The defense of Israel and Ukraine continue to offer lessons on the glaring need for modern air and missile defenses. We have learned how insufficient our inventories of critical long-range munitions might be in the event of a direct conflict in the Pacific. And with the risk of simultaneous conflict in multiple regions actually growing, the enduring importance of the two-war force planning construct is making itself abundantly clear.

This is the reality our colleague Ranking Member WICKER was grappling with when he put together a detailed plan for an overdue generational investment in the national defense, and I am grateful to my friend for his leadership. A serious roadmap for preserving our military primacy is on the table. The question now is whether the Senate will follow it; whether we will lay the groundwork right now for urgent investments in critical munitions, long-range fires, sea power, and in the defense industrial base required to sustain all of it for long-term strategic competition.

Way back in 1940, when the scope of the Axis threat was finally so glaringly obvious that even longtime skeptics began to soften their opposition to long-overdue military investment, the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Harold Stark, pointed out a harsh reality: Dollars can’t buy yesterday.

We are already facing a steep uphill climb to prepare America’s Armed Forces to deter aggression and outcompete our adversaries. You can’t surge readiness. We can’t modernize overnight. Yesterday is right now, and it is time to invest in what we need to deter and defeat looming threats.

So I will be watching our colleagues’ work closely, and I will urge the Democratic leader to bring the NDAA to the floor for consideration as soon as the committee completes its work.

#### PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Mr. President, on one final matter, earlier this week, Senate Democrats took up the Biden administration’s banner of prescription drug socialism.

Our colleague Chairman SANDERS announced he would ask his HELP Committee colleagues to subpoena a drug company executive to testify before the committee about the prices of innovative treatments.

Never mind that U.S. Senators shouldn’t require remedial lessons in the workings of the market economy. And never mind that the company in question had already expressed willingness to testify. Our colleague has decided to take the route of maximum escalation.

I have discussed the facts behind America’s world-leading medical innovation sector at length before. What innovator would sink the time, resources, and risk into the development of a new treatment if there were no prospect of recouping their investment? Apparently, Senate Democrats aren’t the only ones who seem to be stumped—stumped—by this question. The Department of Commerce is taking steps to finalize a framework it announced last December known as march-in rights. Under this policy, if the Federal Government deems that the prices of certain drug treatments are too high, it could elect to “march in” and seize the company’s intellectual property rights.

In a rather ironic twist, the Department’s proposed policy relies on a law—the Bayh-Dole Act of 1980—that