

sanction official discrimination are unacceptable. In 2024, we as the U.S. Congress must rebuke these efforts not only with words, but with action.

The energy with which an alarming number of local and State legislators craft legislation that targets transgender individuals should be channeled into other efforts that would help, not harm, our people.

I am proud to support several pieces of legislation that would expand LGBTQ+ individuals' access to a wide range of resources and protections. I am particularly proud to be a cosponsor of Senator MURRAY's Therapeutic Fraud Prevention Act. We hear a lot of talk about the importance of protecting our children but have yet to take serious action to hold so-called "conversion therapy providers" accountable for abuse and fraud.

The scientific literature increasingly agrees that "conversion therapy," which claims to be able to change a person's sexual or gender identity through various interventions, simply does not work.

Furthermore, these practices are strongly associated with adverse mental health effects, such as anxiety, depression, and suicide, in people who have been through conversion programs. With Senator MURRAY's Bill, we can—and will—prevent further traumatization of our LGBTQ+ youth and their families.

Another bill I am proud to support is the bipartisan Safe Schools Improvement Act, led by Senator CASEY, that would ensure K-12 students across America could receive age-appropriate education to prevent all forms of bullying and harassment. Bullying can lead to tragic outcomes like the loss of Nex Benedict, a nonbinary teenager who died this March after being severely bullied at school for their gender identity.

We already know statistically that LGBTQ+ children and teens across America are at disproportionate risk of depression, anxiety, and suicidality. Instead of enabling the discrimination that is so damaging to our kids' mental health, we should be working to turn those statistics around so that more children, like Nex, get the chance to grow up and pursue their dreams.

Eradicating homophobia in our Nation starts with an honest education on the past and present of the LGBTQ+ community. Senator CASEY's bill presents an opportunity to protect our youth from ignorance and its dire consequences.

I am also proud to cosponsor the Equality Act, offered by Senator MERKLEY. This legislation would prohibit discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity with respect to businesses, employment, housing, federally funded programs, and other settings.

All Americans should be treated equally under the law—no matter who they love or how they identify. LGBTQ+ individuals deserve to be af-

forded every right and protection granted to their neighbors. Members of this community should feel safe enough to be themselves and are entitled to the respect and recognition we expect for every human being.

I am a proud ally who will continue to fight all forms of attack against the LGBTQ+ community. No hate crimes or State-sanctioned discrimination will ever be tolerated by myself, and I expect the same of my colleagues and fellow Americans. The U.S. Senate must challenge intolerance and safeguard civil rights for LGBTQ+ individuals everywhere.

Our Nation must not allow individual opinions to derail the right to dignity to which every American is entitled. It is imperative the United States of America uphold the values of tolerance, compassion, and freedom upon which we claim to stand.

And we certainly cannot overshadow the bravery, joy, and resistance to societal regression that so many LGBTQ+ individuals and activists have demonstrated. I am committed to growing Federal support and increasing resources to safeguard civil rights for this community. I believe that I have an obligation, not just as a Senator from Maryland, but as a human being, to do so. And I look forward to continuing to work, not just this Pride Month but every day of the year, toward equality for all.

TRIBUTE TO MATTHEW BROWN

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Matthew Brown, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past several weeks.

Matthew is a graduate of Brandon Valley High School in Brandon, SD. Currently, he is attending Augustana University in Sioux Falls, SD, where he is pursuing a degree in business administration and finance. He is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Matthew for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO HENRY HAFT

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Henry Haft, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past several weeks.

Henry is a graduate of Lincoln High School in Sioux Falls, SD. Currently, he is attending the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in Lincoln, NE, where he is pursuing a degree in business administration. He is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Henry for all of the fine

work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO NATHAN LAW

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Nathan Law, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past several weeks.

Nathan is a graduate of Wall High School in Wall, SD. Currently, he is attending Dakota State University in Madison, SD, where he is pursuing a degree in cyber operations. He is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Nathan for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO ELLE WESTRA

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Elle Westra, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past several weeks.

Elle is a graduate of Lincoln High School in Sioux Falls, SD. Currently, she is attending the University of St. Thomas in Saint Paul, MN, where she is pursuing a degree in business management. She is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Elle for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING DOMINGA BUSTAMANTE

• Mr. PADILLA. Madam President, I rise today to celebrate the life of Dominga Bustamante, a selfless community leader and an adored mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, who passed away in May at the age of 89.

Dominga Bustamante's family first migrated to California in search of agricultural work and settled in the town of Dinuba, CA, in Tulare County. It was there that she would meet her high school sweetheart and the love of her life, Cruz Bustamante Jr., with whom she would have six children: Cruz, Belinda, Dorothy, Ron, Andrew, and Naomi.

But it was further west in San Joaquin, CA, where Dominga would make her biggest impact. Though she held no elected office and had no formal obligation to serve, her personal moral convictions and her deep religious values made her a relentless force for good.

She was the unofficial "Welcome Host" to Hindu and Sikh families moving to town, an ally to families trying

to secure Social Security benefits, and a friend to seniors who needed a ride to appointments. She split her time between serving as a bilingual instructional aide, a San Joaquin Teen Club adviser and teen anxiety first responder, and even a law enforcement interdiction advocate. She was also a devout Catholic, serving for years as a Catechism teacher in San Joaquin and Fresno.

For her dedication, she was recognized by California Latina Leaders in Action with the Lifetime Achievement Award and by the Diocese of Fresno with the Bishop's Catechist Appreciation Certificate.

Whether seeking her help after just moving to town, praying alongside her in church, or even joining for her tamale-making parties, countless people felt welcome in California because of Dominga Bustamante.

My wife Angela and I pray for Dominga and the entire Bustamante family, and our hearts go out to her 6 children, 13 grandchildren, and 24 great-grandchildren.●

REMEMBERING RAUL PORTO SR.

● Mr. PADILLA. Madam President, I rise today to celebrate the life of Raul Porto Sr., a loving husband, father, and grandfather and the name behind the beloved Southern California institution, Porto's Bakery.

While today, Porto's is synonymous with southern California, Raul Porto Sr. was raised over 2,000 miles away in Cuba. But after Raul met and married the love of his life Rosa, hardship hit the Porto family. Rosa lost her job, and Raul was forced to work at a labor camp during the early years of Fidel Castro's rule. It was during that time that Rosa first began baking, making local Cuban favorites and selling them to support the family.

But like so many others in Cuba at that time, they dreamed of a better life—a dream that often started on a long waiting list, but ended with a "Freedom Flight" that brought them to the United States.

For the Portos in 1971, that meant packing up and flying west to make Los Angeles their home. Even in America, while Raul worked shifts as a janitor, Rosa continued to sell baked goods from their new home. Soon enough, after baking through late nights and even co-opting the kids' beds for extra counter space, their business grew enough to support their first official storefront property at a local strip mall in 1976, the first of what would become six shops across Southern California, with a seventh on the way.

For anyone who has ever been lucky enough to have walked into Porto's, to have met Raul or Rosa, or to have tasted one of their famous potato balls or guava and cheese strudels, it is easy to see why they became so successful. In California, the Porto family didn't just bring an affordable slice of home to a

growing Cuban American community. They expanded to both add to and reflect the diversity of the region, eventually serving fruit tarts, croquetas, tres leches, and more.

Today, at any Porto's location, you will likely find a line out the door of customers eagerly waiting to pick up one the iconic pastry boxes that bear Rosa's face. You might find one of Raul and Rosa's three children—and now co-owners—Beatriz; Raul, Jr.; or Margarita working. And if you talk to any Californian lucky enough to have a Porto's nearby or the countless others thousands of miles away who order Porto's shipped across the country, they will tell you the same thing: to them, Porto's is home.

On a personal note, Porto's has filled the tables of Padilla family gatherings for years. My wife Angela and I were even proud to celebrate our wedding with a cake from Porto's in April of 2012.

Raul and Rosa's story is one of family, of struggle, and of perseverance. But most of all, it is a story of immigrants bold enough and brave enough to still chase the American dream. Because of it, Californians will always remember Raul Porto, Sr.

Today, our hearts go out to his three children, his grandchildren, and the entire Porto family.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Kelly, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. REED, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. KAINE, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BENNET, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. WELCH, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CASEY, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. BUTLER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. COONS, Mr. BROWN, Mr. FETTERMAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. OSSOFF, and Ms. SMITH):

S. 4595. A bill to improve the structure of the Federal Pell Grant program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. YOUNG (for himself and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 4596. A bill to require the Secretary of Commerce to conduct a public awareness and education campaign to provide information regarding the benefits of, risks relating to, and the prevalence of artificial intelligence in the daily lives of individuals in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. DAINES, and Ms. ERNST):

S. 4597. A bill to provide relief for employees of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation who were subjected to discrimination, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 4598. A bill to require any person that maintains an internet website or that sells or distributes a mobile application that is owned, wholly or partially, by a foreign adversary country, by a foreign adversary country-owned-entity, or by a non-state-owned entity located in a foreign adversary country, or that stores and maintains information collected from such website or application in a foreign adversary country, to disclose that fact to any individual who downloads or otherwise uses such website or application; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SCHMITT:

S. 4599. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to enter into an agreement with the Gateway Arch Park Foundation to host private events in Gateway Arch National Park buildings, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. PETERS:

S. 4600. A bill to require the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs to provide a briefing on the status of establishing a course of education on authentication of digital content provenance and a briefing on a pilot program on authentication of digital content provenance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. OSSOFF:

S. 4601. A bill to authorize the appropriation of amounts for the construction of a consolidated communication facility at Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany, Georgia; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. OSSOFF:

S. 4602. A bill to authorize the appropriation of amounts for the construction of a National Guard and Reserve Center at Fort Eisenhower, Georgia; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. OSSOFF:

S. 4603. A bill to authorize the appropriation of amounts for the construction of a dining hall and services training facility at Savannah Air National Guard Base, Georgia; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. OSSOFF:

S. 4604. A bill to authorize the appropriation of amounts for the construction of a trident refit facility expansion at Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base, Georgia; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. OSSOFF:

S. 4605. A bill to authorize the appropriation of amounts for the construction of a battle management combined operations complex at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. OSSOFF:

S. 4606. A bill to authorize the appropriation of amounts for the planning and design of a civil engineering group facility at Dobbs Air Reserve Base, Georgia; to the Committee on Armed Services.