

member of the Appropriations Committee had said they wanted to do.

Regular order simply means transparency and accountability and letting everybody know what is happening when the Federal Government pays its bills.

Chairman MURRAY and Vice Chair COLLINS have both said repeatedly they want to return to a more transparent, more accountable, more inclusive process of funding the Federal Government, and last summer they proved that this is not just talk. They followed through on that commitment, and the committee passed all 12 appropriations bills for the first time in 5 years. That is an accomplishment, but it should be an embarrassment that the Senate has simply not done its job for the previous 5 years.

I appreciate the time and the effort that the Appropriations Committee has invested in the process. And this is not a partisan matter; this is a bipartisan project and requirement. But I am disappointed that they are now forced to sprint a marathon during the month of July because the majority leader, our colleague from New York, has barely allowed the Senate enough time to do its work.

Unfortunately, the Senate's to-do list does not end there. In addition to the Defense authorization bill and 12 funding bills, we also need to pass a farm bill by September 30. That is when the current bill expires. This legislation is critical to America's food security as well as to the hard-working men and women who grow and produce it.

Our colleague from Arkansas, Ranking Member BOOZMAN, has been a tireless champion for America's farmers and ranchers and producers, and I know he and our colleagues on the ag committee are committed to passing a strong farm bill as soon as possible. The House has already done its job, and now it is up to us in the Senate.

But the majority leader's schedule has made their job difficult, if not impossible, to do before September 30. We don't have much time to complete this mountain of work. Including today, the Senate is only scheduled to be in session for 11 days during the month of July. That is not even a full 3 weeks of work. After that, we are scheduled to take a 5-week recess—a 5-week recess—during the month of August and return for a short period of time in September. Before September, the Senate needs to pass all 12 appropriations bills and a farm bill in order to meet the deadlines. But we are only scheduled to be in session for 12 days in September as well.

Between now and election day, November 5, the Senate is only scheduled to be in session for 23 days. Election day is 120 days away, but we are only scheduled to be in session for 23 days. That should be a source of embarrassment to everyone. The schedule is not conducive to getting our work done. Given the important tasks before us, it is not just lazy; it is downright dangerous.

Funding the government, protecting America's food supply, investing in the safety and security of the American people—these are core to governing. There is no excuse for the majority leader to give us only 23 days to complete all of this incredibly important work. We have a lot to accomplish, and the majority leader, who sets the schedule, needs to let us get our work done.

Forget voting on President Biden's nominees or scheduling partisan show votes, which is what I read that he has scheduled. We need to start doing our job, which is to legislate.

Our colleagues on the Armed Services Committee have done their job. The Appropriations Committee, no doubt, will get their job done. Neither one of these are partisan bills, but we need to get them done and get them done before the deadline.

The Senate needs to especially prioritize America's national security. I urge Senator SCHUMER to file for cloture to start the process of voting on the national defense authorization bill so we can have a full debate on the Senate floor and pass this legislation before the recess begins at the end of July. With everything we need to accomplish in the next few months, we can't afford to waste time on stunt votes or radical judicial nominees. Senator SCHUMER needs to file for cloture on the NDAA and give Members of this Chamber, on a bipartisan basis, the opportunity to do what we were sent here to do, which is to legislate.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BUTLER). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I happen to know you are from Mississippi, and so as I speak about flood insurance, I suspect there are people in Mississippi whom you know or, perhaps, are related to who can relate to that which I describe.

I am speaking specifically about the uncertainty felt by those who rely upon flood insurance as we enter hurricane season. Unfortunately and tragically, we actually have a real, live example of this as Hurricane Beryl has hit an area that was devastated by Harvey just a few years ago. And anyone along that gulf coast who is dependent upon flood insurance to rebuild—and their premiums just rose—have now been hit by Beryl, and they can anticipate their premiums rising once more.

A program that is supposed to give security, instead, is creating anxiety. It isn't just the people who flood because some people who don't flood and who have never flooded will see their premiums rise as well. Why? It is be-

cause of the way that this program is being implemented.

Let me say that Louisiana stands with Mississippi; Louisiana stands with Texas; and we stand with all parts of the Nation that will suffer under the way that this program is being implemented.

So let me put up my first floor chart. We have the National Flood Insurance Program—or NFIP, as we call it—as a safety net for homeowners after a storm. It protects them from being financially wiped out by a hurricane or any other act of flooding. But this year is different from past years for two reasons. First, the National Weather Service predicts that 2024 will see above-normal hurricane activity in the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico. Second, there is much more uncertainty about—and this is the key thing—whether NFIP will remain affordable due to FEMA's new risk assessment system called Risk Rating 2.0. For most people, the short answer is no—no that it will remain affordable.

But this is not the issue just for Louisiana. It affects Mississippi. It affects Texas. It affects all coasts and anyplace where there is a river or a stream. Anyplace there is water, there is a risk of flooding.

The National Flood Insurance Program covers 4.7 million policies across the country. And so those 4.7 million Americans rely upon NFIP to insure their homes and businesses, to keep their family safe. And we have seen flooding in States that you typically don't think of when you say “flooding.” Virginia, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, New York, New Jersey, Texas, Pennsylvania, California, Mississippi, and Alabama are all States that have had more than \$1 billion in NFIP claims since 1978. Again, these States, over \$1 billion in claims since 1978.

And those are just the States hardest hit, those in the dark. These lighter colored States have all been affected as well. Now, maybe not a billion, but if you are the family whose home has been washed away, it has affected you in one of the most profound ways.

I will also point out that this is not a rich man's program. If you look in these communities, like in Pennsylvania, oftentimes that is called riverine flooding. And folks who are less well-off tend to have the older homes in the bottom of the valley. When the flooding goes through and rips up their home, they have fewer financial resources by which to rebuild. So the kind of charge that this only protects luxury homes on a beach—totally false. This is for middle-income families, working families, and poor families, allowing them to have the security that they can rebuild after a tragic event.

In the past 3 years, we have seen seven major flooding events across the country, each costing more than \$1 billion. In 2021, Louisiana saw flash flooding affecting thousands of homes. California, the State the Presiding Officer

now represents, has had two major floods—in January 2021 and the winter of 2023. Kentucky and Missouri both saw major flooding in July 2022 and Florida, in April 2023. Vermont, New York, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Illinois were each hit in July 2023. In December 2023, we saw flooding along the east coast States from Florida to Maine. Remember, these are just the floods that caused over \$1 billion in damage.

When we consider, once again, who lives in these areas most affected, we see why we need to keep the NFIP affordable for working families. Sixty-two percent of all NFIP policies are in parishes and counties where the median household income is below the national average of about \$54,000 a year. Once more, these are not billionaires' beach homes.

Hard-working people are uncertain whether they will be able to stay in their homes because of a decision made by a bureaucracy with zero input from Congress. Now we are seeing the consequences of that decision, with an estimated 900,000 people—one-fifth of all policies—dropping coverage because it is unaffordable. When that happens, the pool of policyholders shrinks, and the program enters what is called an actuarial death spiral. That is where the risk is put on fewer people, which raises the premiums even more, which make those who are, relatively speaking, least at risk drop their policies, which concentrates it more—once more, a death spiral, setting up the program for collapse.

Congress needs to do something before it is too late. First, we need to step back and ask how we got into this situation. Why did FEMA implement Risk Rating 2.0? Why inject this much uncertainty into the system? Congress never passed a bill requiring that FEMA implement this.

President Biden could have stopped it with the stroke of a pen. We have done it in the past. In 2019, my office worked with the Trump administration to successfully delay implementation because of concerns over the methodology of how FEMA was calculating rates. This time, even though the concerns remain, the Biden administration would not work with us.

Since the Biden administration is allowing this to happen, Congress must step in. My team has worked on a bipartisan solution that will roll back Risk Rating 2.0 and make flood insurance affordable and accountable again.

Let me say to my colleagues: Let's talk about it. Let's have a conversation. Every single Member of this body has constituents who rely on the National Flood Insurance Program. We owe it to them to find a solution to a system that isn't working for Americans who were promised a safety net in case of a flood. Let's get to work.

TRIBUTE TO MARY MOODY JOHNSON

Madam President, as you know, as Members of Congress, we are fortunate to have highly motivated and produc-

tive younger people working for us. They are essential for our country to meet its goals.

I rise today to honor a member of my team. For 7 years, I have been fortunate to work with one of the best—my health policy director, Mary Moody Johnson.

On Capitol Hill, a lot of our staff come and go pretty quickly, so when you have someone who stays with you 7 years, who is loyal to the things you are loyal to, dedicated, working so hard for so long, you feel a special attachment.

After almost a decade on Capitol Hill—7 of which she spent in my office serving the people of Louisiana, first in my DC office and then on the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee—Mary is moving on to a new professional challenge at the end of this week. It is bittersweet.

She has played an incredible role in the success of my office in lowering the costs of healthcare and serving the Americans we represent. Just as an example, if someone says, "My gosh, we made a lot of progress in terms of mental health reform," Mary Moody is one of those who are critical to that. If somebody has a surprise medical bill which they appeal and get reversed, that was Mary Moody—now Mary Moody Johnson—taking 3 years to work with other offices and with stakeholders to come up with a bill which passed both Houses of Congress and was signed into law. It should have been called the Mary Moody Johnson End Surprise Medical Billing, as far as I am concerned. She worked long hours with long spreadsheets, and she got a bill that has saved maybe as many as 1 million surprise medical bills a month.

On a personal note, it is a privilege to be her friend. She came into my office when she was 24. She had a grandmother from Louisiana and convinced me she had deep ties to our State, so I hired her. It turns out she was from Texas. I never let her forget that. I especially like that she married a man from Ponchatoula, LA. I was able to attend their wedding in the Marigny section of New Orleans a year and a half ago.

She is now ready to move on. I get that. At some point, it is not what you do for the rest of your life; it is what you do next. Both because of her marriage and other reasons—her commitment to her church—she is ready to try something else.

I am thankful for all she has done. I am sure our paths will cross again. I am excited to see what happens next. We all wish her the best as she moves on. She will be missed by all, but our loss is someone else's incredible gain.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

REMEMBERING JERRY WEST

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of a world-class athlete, NBA executive, proud West Virginian, and my very, very dear friend, Jerry West.

Often referred to as one of the greatest American basketball players of all time, his career led him to success, joining the greats in stadiums across America, far from his hometown in the Mountain State of West Virginia.

Born in Chelyan in 1938, Jerry spent the beginning of his life in a small town in southern West Virginia. He faced many health and family challenges as a young boy, but he spent a lot of time shooting hoops in his backyard.

At East Bank High School, he began educating himself on the ins and outs of the sport he loved. Jerry quickly began to excel in the game as the star of his beloved high school team. His jump shot was always his trademark, and it allowed him to stand out even as a young player.

Jerry attended West Virginia University, where his already well-developed skills and unyielding consistency were notable characteristics of his playing ability. He consistently averaged double digits in points, rebounds, and assists in almost every major game.

One personal story I can tell you: As a 10-year-old boy in 1957, my mother took me—she loved basketball and loved to go to Mountaineer games. She took me to the games as a small boy. She said: Now you watch that little No. 44, that little skinny guy over there. He really can move the ball well. He has very good delivery. I think he might be something.

That was my mother. I remember that to this day.

In the 1960 Summer Olympics, he won a gold medal as cocaptain of the U.S. men's basketball team.

Following his second overall selection in the NBA draft of the same year by the Minneapolis Lakers, Jerry continued to be a powerhouse on the court as the team moved to Los Angeles. Mr. Clutch, as he was known, sank a staggering number of winning baskets from both the field and free throw line. With his signature jump shot extending 16 inches above the rim, his defense, as well as offense, was solid, but often it was his work ethic that was the envy of his teammates.

One of the reasons Jerry was so successful was he was never one to back down from a challenge. Like all of us, he experienced setbacks in life which weren't always met with victory. Those are the types of situations where a person's true character will show through. He always believed that hard work, dedication, and perseverance will get you where you need to be, win or lose.

With Jerry's leadership on the court, the Lakers continued to rise through the ranks in the subsequent seasons. He racked up a staggering number of notable accomplishments.

During his 14 years with the Los Angeles Lakers, he was voted 12 times to the All-NBA first and second teams, elected to the NBA All-Star team 14 times, and continues to hold the NBA record for highest average points in a