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## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, a Senator from the State of Delaware.

### PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Pastor Laura Viau of First & Central Presbyterian Church of Wilmington, DE.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Holy One, Maker of all places and things, You know more than any of us that we humans are but one part of this complex, interconnected creation, and our lives are but a moment in the vast eternity You govern.

As these leaders gather to serve the people today, grant them resolve to lead with humility, courage to speak for the voiceless, and wisdom to see beyond tomorrow.

May justice roll and love abide. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

The assistant bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, July 10, 2024.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, a Senator from the State of Delaware, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. COONS thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of Charles J. Willoughby, Jr., of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WELCH). The Senator from Delaware.

### WELCOMING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I rise to say a few words about the tradition of spiritual leadership of the Chaplains of the Senate, a decades-old—a centuries-old, actually—tradition of this body, rooted in the fact that those who were the Framers of our Constitution and the Founders of our Nation understood that, although we are a nation com-

mitted to the separation of church and State, we are also a nation that is guided—that is guided by spiritual force, by deep beliefs, by diversity of religions, but also by a profound humility on the part of those of us who serve.

Our Chaplain, RADM Barry Black, has served for many, many years, and I have had the great blessing of hearing from him at Bible study and at the weekly Prayer Breakfast in a way that has helped bring Senators together and that has made a difference in the functioning and the foundation of this important body in our constitutional order.

Today, we have a guest Chaplain from my home church, First & Central Presbyterian in Wilmington, DE. She is my home pastor. Pastor Laura has served our congregation since July, 2 years ago.

A native of Arkansas, raised in Texas in the Disciples of Christ, Pastor Laura felt a calling to the ministry at the very earliest age but told God to just hold that thought for a moment. Two decades later, he called Pastor Laura again, more forcefully this time, and through my denomination, the Presbyterian Church, United States of America—or PCUSA.

After completing seminary in Iowa and serving three other ministry calls, Pastor Laura is now at our faith community in downtown Wilmington, doing God's work at a church without walls that welcomes without limits. Her humor, her hermeneutics, her exegesis, her homiletics—all the good stuff that a pastor does—help hold us together and inspire us to mission at a time that is almost uniquely challenging in my life.

I am so grateful for her wisdom and guidance at home in Delaware, and I thank Pastor Laura for her ministry today to this body, to our congregation at home, and throughout the arc of her life.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

#### REMEMBERING JAMES M. INHOFE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday morning, the Senate was greeted by some sad news. A longtime former colleague and dear friend of many of us, Jim Inhofe, passed away.

As many of our colleagues are familiar, Jim's path to the Senate was an adventure on its own: honorable service in the Army, small business success, undergraduate degree by way of nine different schools, and, by one account, even some prospecting on rare earth minerals.

But what came to define his time in this body was more than his sheer confidence and experience on such a dizzying array of topics, more than his dogged determination on issues from infrastructure to the Armed Forces to African development. What I suspect so many of our colleagues will remember most about Jim was his honesty, his decency, and his deep faith; his love of God, love of country, and love of neighbor.

It would be difficult for anyone to hope for a richer legacy than that.

So this week, I know the Senate is keeping Jim's wife Kay and the whole Inhofe family in our prayers as they mourn a great man.

#### NATO

Mr. President, as I said yesterday, NATO members have taken some promising steps toward making the alliance fit for purpose. But now is not the time to get complacent. The threats we face are grave and growing. How we meet them will determine the future of the order that has underpinned the free world's peace and prosperity for decades.

Our greatest adversaries are not beating around the bush. PRC officials are stepping up their pressure against Taiwan. Standing on NATO soil, China's Ambassador to France suggested recently that China's civil war "has not yet ended" and threatened that the mainland could expel the "rebel regime" in Taiwan "at any time."

This comes from the same revisionist power that has succeeded for too long in infiltrating our economies, supply chains, and critical infrastructure with the promise of quick investments and easy profits. Not long ago, it was America falling prey to this alluring promise, but it is past time for European allies to learn from our experience. And it is time for America to correct our lingering mistakes as well.

We cannot continue to stand by as Chinese military modernization out-

paces our own. We cannot abide defense budget requests that fail to even keep pace with inflation.

The cold truth for all of us is this: Those who fail to take hard power seriously will learn that fighting wars is vastly—vastly—more expensive than deterring them.

Just consider the neo-Soviet imperialist with whom the PRC has struck up an "unlimited partnership." The West's weakness and hesitation didn't just fail to deter Putin's escalation in Ukraine, it actually invited a longer, costlier, and bloodier conflict. And Putin's brutal aggression, his reckless nuclear saber-rattling, his militarization of space, his weaponization of energy, his repression of Christians at home and in an occupied Ukraine, his coldblooded targeting of civilians, including a missile strike on Ukraine's largest children's hospital earlier this week—all of this is facilitated by China's support.

Of course, firmly knit into this same web of aggression is Iran, perhaps the most notorious enabler of terrorist child murder in the world, the architect of slaughter across the Middle East, the mastermind of Houthi threats to international trade, and the world's most active state sponsor of terrorism.

Iran continues to make determined progress toward a nuclear weapons capability. As the Biden administration's Director of National Intelligence acknowledged just yesterday, the regime is also stoking aggressive and anti-Semitic demonstrations on our soil—U.S. soil—against Israel's response to the horrific attacks that Tehran enabled.

Our European allies, of course, are reckoning with a persistent strain of anti-Semitism in their own politics. Serious allies ought to dispense with any wishful thinking about the prospects of rapprochement under Iran's newest President.

So make no mistake, the transatlantic alliance is growing stronger, larger, and more committed through the shared responsibilities of collective defense. And on the whole, we are staring down those connected threats with clearer eyes.

But the alliance is only as strong as its weakest link. And today, it almost appears that one weak link in NATO's chain wants to break it.

Last week, without coordinating with Ukraine, NATO, or the EU, Hungarian Prime Minister Victor Orban showed up in Moscow on a self-aggrandizing "peace mission," giving Putin a chance to counterbalance the diplomatic pressure he is otherwise feeling.

Then he took to the pages of *Newsweek* to accuse the alliance of "seeking conflict" rather than resolving it. How insidious. Hungary knows what Soviet repression feels like. How in the world its leader could mistake NATO's efforts to help Ukraine defend itself against Russian aggression for "the pursuit of war" is beyond me.

Neither Ukraine nor NATO provoked Russia into invading Ukraine in 2014. Neither Ukraine nor NATO provoked Russia into escalating its conflict in 2022. As I have said, it was the West's failure to meet Russian aggression with strength that emboldened Putin.

Unfortunately, Mr. Orban's curious soft spot for authoritarians isn't limited to the aggressor that, ironically, drove Hungary to join NATO in the first place.

This week, he also found time to visit Beijing to reinforce what both Hungary and the PRC call "an all-weather comprehensive strategic partnership."

Well, Republicans in Washington who fashion themselves both "national conservatives" and China hawks should pay more attention to Mr. Orban's actions and ask themselves if they are consistent with American interests.

It is certainly difficult to explain away the data. Three years ago, Hungary accounted for less than 1 percent—1 percent—of Chinese investment in Europe. Last year, it received more than 44 percent.

With an economy smaller than Kentucky, Hungary attracted more Chinese foreign direct investment than Europe's top three economies combined. I thought America and our allies were supposed to be reducing our reliance on the PRC. Money talks.

So perhaps it is not surprising that Orban finds time to confer with President Xi, but his government has gone out of its way to slow-walk European assistance to Ukraine. And it has chased deeper trade ties with Iran.

Budapest publicized a call between Hungary's Foreign Minister and his new Iranian counterpart with not a word of criticism for Iran's support for terrorism, malign activities across the Middle East, or support for Russia's war of aggression.

So much for Orban's pursuit of peace. The most successful military alliance in human history didn't get this way by letting dictators and theocrats eat our lunch.

China hawks should be the first to discourage the expansion of PRC tools like Huawei on European soil. Friends of Israel should have no time for myths of constructive engagement with an Iranian regime that underwrites the slaughter of Jews.

NATO members ought to know better—and many do—but, clearly, we have a lot of work still ahead of us.

#### STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS

Mr. President, last month, two judges approved by President Obama ruled against one of President Biden's cornerstone efforts to buy votes: the so-called SAVE plan. By one estimate, this iteration of the Biden administration's student loan socialism scheme would transfer about half a trillion dollars from borrowers to taxpayers by arbitrarily lowering payments for those who borrowed less than \$12,000.

Now, as I mentioned before, the policy is not just costly, it is profoundly—profoundly—unfair. Working taxpayers

who opted not to attend college, folks who worked their way through college to avoid taking out loans, and families who sacrificed and saved for their children's education are all now on the hook to pay somebody else's bills. Even left-leaning scholars have noted that this policy is regressive.

By one analysis, nearly one-third of all the student debt is held by the highest earning fifth of American households. Meanwhile, the lowest earning fifth of households hold only 8 percent of the debt. Just last month, one Congressional staffer earning more than \$80,000 thanked President Biden publicly on social media for forgiving his \$8,000 student loan.

Working families are struggling with high prices and high interest rates—the direct and predictable result of the Biden administration's runaway spending spree. But now Washington Democrats expect them to pay the bills of some of the highest earning elites? Talk about adding insult to injury.

Even Obama-appointed judges are now agreeing with Republicans that the policy is illegal. Last month's ruling confirmed that the President does not have the authority to wave a magic wand and lower student loan payments.

Washington Democrats love to crow about how the Federal judiciary has been co-opted by shadowy rightwing extremists. They have gone to shameful lengths to degrade the legitimacy of the institution of the Supreme Court.

But when even judges appointed by a Democratic President are siding with the Republicans, it might be time for our colleagues to look in the mirror and ask who the extremists really are.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

NATO

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, this week, the city of Washington becomes the command post of liberal democracy. It was my great honor to join, earlier this morning, with Leader MCCONNELL and with my Democratic and Republican colleagues welcoming to the Senate the Secretary General of NATO, as well as the leaders of the U.K., Germany, Sweden, and Finland. For the first time ever, we were proud to welcome the leaders of NATO's two newest members, Sweden and Finland. Standing in the same room with NATO's newest members, Sweden and Finland, was a proud moment for us Senators. It was a culmination of the work that began 2 years ago when the Senate, in a bipartisan way, overwhelmingly approved their accession to the alliance.

I told the leaders of NATO that America will never turn its back on the alliance. I told them the Senate will always hold up its end of the bargain to support NATO and ensure we have the tools to keep the free world safe; and I urged everyone in the room to continue standing firmly with Ukraine.

I applaud the members of NATO for their major announcement of a new round of aid that will help soldiers on the battlefield, brave Ukrainian soldiers.

UKRAINE

Mr. President, later today, I will also meet with Ukrainian President Zelenskyy at a bipartisan meeting of Senators, and we will affirm yet again that the United States stands with them until the job is done.

A few months ago, the Senate showed what leadership looks like by passing a sweeping supplemental package that delivered weapons and ammo and air defenses and missiles for Ukrainian soldiers.

Unfortunately, sadly, many extremists on the hard right led by Donald Trump didn't want to send so much as a nickel to help Ukraine. They would have preferred to let Putin have his way in Europe.

The hard right's softness towards Putin is a prime example of why they cannot be trusted to protect America on the world stage. I am glad their opposition to Ukraine aid was ultimately unsuccessful. But a majority of Republicans in this Chamber voted against that aid.

And what really bothered me was so many of the Republican—the Republican party has been a strong, anticommunist, hawkish party since the days of Ronald Reagan, maybe earlier. And all of a sudden, when Donald Trump, whose knowledge of foreign policy is negligible—to put it kindly; it is often wrong—they turn around and do 180 degrees and oppose giving aid to Ukraine and, instead, start to smile upon Putin.

That, my fellow Americans, is a warning of what a Republican-controlled Senate would do if, God forbid, Trump becomes President. They would turn around on all their principles. Donald Trump could, on a whim, say something, and all of a sudden: Yes, sir. They will march in line with him. This Ukrainian example was a sad one.

So this week, we saw why the supplemental was so important and why America must stand with the Ukrainian people after Putin's forces obliterated an entire wing of the largest children's hospital in Kyiv. I mentioned this to our NATO leaders and the heads of Sweden and Finland and Germany and Britain who were at our meeting.

What a vicious man Putin is. A children's hospital? You see the pictures of these children who were trying to survive cancer—you know, when you see pictures of children like that, many with their shaved heads—and Putin bombs the hospital? What a despicable man. What a brute. That is who we are

dealing with, world. That is who we are dealing with, America, when it comes to Vladimir Putin. His savagery is an example of why Donald Trump's vision is so dangerous at this moment, because a Trump administration would make a Putin victory far more likely.

Thankfully, that is not the case. Instead of breaking NATO, Putin's war has made NATO even stronger and must continue to be that way until the Ukrainian people see victory and peace is restored to Eastern Europe.

REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM FOR WOMEN ACT

Mr. President, now on choice, today the Senate will vote on the Reproductive Freedom For Women Act. Senate Republicans must answer a very simple question: Do they believe that women should be trusted to make their own healthcare choices? Yes or no? Will Republicans stand with the majority of Americans, stand with the mainstream, and stand against Donald Trump by affirming a woman's fundamental right to choose? Will Republicans show courage and declare, as most people in this country prefer, that the basic protections of *Roe v. Wade* should be the law of the land?

I want to thank Senator MURRAY from the great State of Washington for leading this bill and every single female Senator on our side of the aisle for cosponsoring it.

Today's vote will not be the end of the struggle to secure reproductive freedoms, but it is an important step forward. Americans want to see where their Senators stand. By voting on these bills on women's health, we are moving the issue forward, because it is very important and very reasonable for members to be called on to take a position on a vital issue.

Of course, many Republicans would rather sweep reproductive health under the rug, saying it is political. But this is not political. This is the essence of what elected government is like. We all know these issues are deeply personal to so many people, and Americans ought to be able to see how their Senators vote.

All year long, Senate Republicans have shown everyone just how out of touch they are with the mainstream. When Senators blocked Federal protections for contraceptions, when they blocked protections for IVF, they chose MAGA extremism over the American people.

When Donald Trump pushed not one, not two, but three radical Justices to the Supreme Court with the explicit goal of overturning *Roe*, Senate Republicans confirmed them without question.

It was Trump who said:

If we put another two or . . . three justices on [the Court] . . . that will happen.

Every time Senate Republicans have gotten a chance to do the right thing this year, they have consistently doubled down on their anti-woman agenda. Just yesterday, Senate Republicans again and again came to the floor to block commonsense legislation to protect women's reproductive freedoms.

Of course, if my Republican colleagues take issue for being called out for their bad record on women's issues, they have another option. They should vote yes today. Maybe it will happen. Unlikely, but you always hope.

If Republicans don't think women, on the other hand, are second-class citizens, they should vote yes. If Republicans don't think women are second-class citizens, they should vote yes. If Republicans do, in fact, trust women to make their own reproductive choices, they should vote yes.

I urge them: Do the right thing. And I remind them: America is watching.

#### STEEL AND ALUMINUM TARIFFS

Mr. President, now on the U.S.-Mexico steel announcement, this morning the Biden administration announced new joint actions with Mexico to prevent China and other countries from evading tariffs on steel and aluminum imported through Mexico.

For years, America's steel and aluminum industry has been harmed by the Chinese Communist Party's schemes to flood markets with products that are artificially cheapened thanks to subsidies from the Chinese Communist Party. One of the most common ways the CCP avoids tariffs and launders its steel into the U.S. market is through Mexico.

Earlier this year, I visited a steel producer in central New York, Nucor Steel in Auburn, NY—many good paying jobs in that beautiful plant. I visited the plant to bring attention to a dangerous pattern in our steel industry.

I called then on the administration to take action to stop the steel surge from China by preventing the CCP from using Mexico as a backdoor entrance into the United States.

I am glad to see this morning that the Biden administration responded to my concern by taking action to strengthen U.S. steel and aluminum. We have some very fine aluminum plants in Upstate New York as well.

This announcement is a major step towards protecting U.S. markets from being flooded with cheap, Chinese-made steel and aluminum imported through Mexico. The Chinese Communist Party's unfair trade practices have devastated companies and union steel workers across the United States, and especially in industrial places, places like Auburn in central New York, Massena in the north country, who simply aren't competing on a level playing field.

The CCP's behavior also endangers our national security because it weakens our domestic supply chains used by our military and transportation systems.

So the administration's action is great news for America's safety and for communities and States like New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and others who know the grief of watching manufacturing jobs leaving for China.

I applaud the administration for taking action to stop the Chinese Com-

munist Party's unfair trade practices, and we will keep working to make sure American workers, manufacturers, and industrial regions are not left on the world stage.

And just one other note, upstate New York has a major role in convincing America and their Senator about China's unfair practices. When I visited Crucible steel up in Syracuse in 2003, the owner said to me: China is manipulating its currency. It makes it much harder for me to sell steel abroad, and it makes it easier for China to compete with me here in America.

LINDSEY GRAHAM and I, actually—Senator GRAHAM and I back then teamed up and worked and worked and worked to see that this manipulation of currency, which affected steel, was put an end to, and we have made some significant progress. There is still more to make even now.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

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

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

The Senator from Rhode Island.

#### REMEMBERING JAMES M. INHOFE

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a great gentleman, a dear friend, a colleague, and in many cases a battle buddy, Senator Jim Inhofe.

He was an extraordinary gentleman. And you can't say "gentleman" enough when it came to Jim Inhofe. He was a man of humility, of decency, and of kindness, and he touched everyone he met with those qualities.

He was also a man of deep principle. But what made him a great Senator—in fact, one of the best that served in this body—is that he was always looking for principled compromise. He was always trying to reach across the aisle and see if he could, working with others, find a way forward that would be better for the country. So I was terribly saddened when I learned yesterday of Jim's passing. He was a leader. He was a gentleman. He was all that we expect a Senator to be and much more.

I was honored to serve alongside Jim. For three decades, he served on the Armed Services Committee in both the House and the Senate. I had the privilege to serve with him as a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. We were, in turn, both chairman and ranking member—both the senior Republican and the senior Democrat—on the committee for many years, and we produced nearly two dozen National Defense Authorization Acts. We traveled to combat zones and military posts around the world and worked to support our men and women in uniform. As I said before, there were many issues we disagreed upon, but we were able, in many, many—if not most—cases, to find a way forward.

One of the issues that I think is so compelling in Jim's life is that as a young man, he was in the Army, and he knew what it was like to serve and sacrifice and dedicate yourself to a cause beyond personal ambition and personal aggrandizement. He learned also something that was profound and reflected in all of his work on the committee—that the decisions we make here ultimately affect the lives of young Americans in uniform across the globe. He knew that. He understood that. So he was not sitting back here thinking about, well, how will this affect this company and that company? It was, are we doing the best for the young men and women who have dedicated themselves to this country and would sacrifice even their lives for this country? Are we doing as much as we can for the families that are serving with them? That profound sense of service that he incubated as a young Army soldier he carried through his Senate career.

He always insisted on speaking to the junior NCOs and junior servicemembers. You know, up here we all get briefings from generals saying "Here is the situation, sir," but he wanted to get down and talk to privates and specialists and seamen and airmen and say: What is going on? How are things going? Is this working from your perspective?

Again, adding to the quality of his service was his sensitivity. He truly understood the people who serve in uniform in the United States, and he made sure to support those troops. He sponsored critical legislation to improve their lives, whether by overhauling barracks or creating new benefits for military families. He and I worked together on countless efforts to provide better pay and healthcare and equipment to our service men and women.

This Nation and our military are stronger today because of Jim Inhofe and safer today because of Jim Inhofe.

He had a way of looking ahead. I remember when I was serving as the ranking member with John McCain and we were thinking about what would face us in the future, and Jim was there with us, talking about the Pacific Deterrence Initiative, how we have to begin to put more resources in the Pacific, and then, before the invasion of Ukraine, the European Deterrence Initiative. I mean, we have to be able to be flexible and to counter the thrust of a potential outbreak of war. We were positioned in Europe to help the Ukrainians because of Jim Inhofe's work over many, many years.

I am especially proud that the Armed Service Committee voted to name the fiscal year 2023 Defense bill the "James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act." It was a fitting tribute and honor.

Again, he was an extraordinary leader with legislative skills, the capacity for hard work, always placing the troops and his fellow Oklahomans first. He never forgot about Oklahoma. He

never forgot about their needs. He was in there fighting every step of the way.

I am very, very grateful for the kindness he extended to me. He was just an amazing gentleman. I think I speak for the Senate Armed Services Committee and I think I speak for all of the Senate: We will miss him dearly.

I want to express my deepest sympathies to Kay, his wife, and his wonderful family. He would admit without any reservation that he was able to do his job because of the love and support of Kay and his family. They were there with him every step of the way. In their moment of sorrow and sadness, I offer my sincerest condolences.

May we all strive for the wisdom, courage, and humility that Senator Jim Inhofe imparted upon this great Nation and this Senate.

I also want to salute my colleagues today—Senator LANKFORD, who is carrying on that tradition of integrity and decency, as are Senator THUNE, Senator CORNYN—and to thank them for letting me say a few words about my friend Jim Inhofe.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). The Republican whip.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I want to join with Senator REED and so many of my colleagues today as we express our great sorrow in learning about the death of Senator Jim Inhofe.

Jim was an icon here in the Senate. He was a personal inspiration to me. When I first got here, he was the chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee in the Senate and worked with me. My first legislative accomplishments came as a result of him and his staff working with me to help me establish myself as a new Senator and to do the work that the people of South Dakota sent me here to do. And he made that possible because of just the way that he led the committee and his understanding of what it takes to get things accomplished here in the U.S. Senate.

And I am grateful for his legislative prowess, for his leadership as a chairman of not only that committee but later the Senate Armed Services Committee. And I am grateful for his tireless work ethic. I have learned a lot.

My first trip actually, as a Senator, abroad was to Iraq, and I went with Senator Inhofe. And I can tell you from traveling with him—and I know that anybody who has traveled with Senator Inhofe knew—that he had boundless energy and an ability to work people half his age under the table. He was truly a remarkably durable and passionate advocate for this country, a man of deep convictions, and—as was pointed out by Mr. REED—somebody who had a connection with the rank-and-file military because of his military background. And in every place that we went, we would meet with soldiers who respected him for that—the connection that he had and also for the leadership that he provided for our country when it came to important national security matters.

I also had the opportunity in Oklahoma to visit and to travel the State a little bit with him. I flew in an airplane with Senator Inhofe, and he was a renowned pilot. I think everybody knew that was one of his great passions in life. But there wasn't anybody who was around him ever who had the opportunity to interact or work with Senator Inhofe who wasn't impressed by that powerful work ethic that he brought for the people of Oklahoma and for the people of this country.

And I know that, in traveling abroad with him, I saw that firsthand. I know of his many trips to the continent of Africa, oftentimes to war-torn countries where he built relationships, advocated for American ideals, and was a tremendous example and witness on those trips. And I am grateful for his leadership in so many ways and for the impact that he had not only to the people of Oklahoma and to the people of this country but people all over the world whom he touched by his work, by his efforts, and by his character.

And I also want to say, finally—and probably most importantly—above all, I am grateful for his Christian witness. Jim was a man of deep and profound faith, and it showed up literally, as I mentioned, in every aspect of his life.

For many years, he hosted Chaplain Black's Bible study in his office, providing a place for Senators from both parties to gather for prayer and study. I don't think—and I think Chaplain Black would probably validate this—that Jim ever missed a session of that Bible study. And while the Bible study has continued without him—and is still, I would argue, one of the most significant hours that we spend here each week—I know that all of us miss being welcomed into Jim's office, which Jim made easy for us to find by hanging the ichthys symbol outside of the door.

My thoughts and prayers today are with Jim's wife Kay and with his family. Jim will be sorely missed. But in the midst of the sorrow, I am also comforted by these words from the Apostle Paul, and these are words Jim deeply believed:

Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. . . . For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. . . . And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I want to join with my colleagues and say a few words celebrating the tremendous life and times of James Mountain Inhofe. He had a great name, and it seemed to fit him amazingly well.

My memories of Senator Inhofe were similar to those that Senator THUNE mentioned. When I came to the Senate, he was the chairman or ranking member of the Environment and Public Works Committee. I remember him telling me one time: I am a true conservative. I believe in a strong national security, lower taxes, and infrastructure.

And, of course, the job of the Environment and Public Works Committee was largely to handle the regular highway bill reauthorization and funding. And he was true to his word. He believed, as a true conservative, in those three important things, and, he said: Pretty much everything else we do is way down the list in terms of priorities.

But perhaps the time I remember the most is working with him when he was leading the Armed Services Committee. I know he believed that there was no more important job for us to do—those of us who have the privilege of serving in the U.S. Senate or in the Congress—than to defend and protect our country and our way of life. And he believed that with all of his heart and all of his mind.

And so the exercise that we do every year, which is called the National Defense Authorization Act—which we have done, I think, now 63 years in a row—he was passionate about making sure that we did that on time and got it done because of his commitment not only to our national security but to the men and women who serve our country in uniform and the families who love and support them. And he was passionate about making sure we did our work and supported them and kept our country safe and our way of life protected.

His physical stamina was legendary. We have already heard some of our colleagues talk about some of his trips around the world. Some of our colleagues, when they travel, believe in what I would call almost a “death march” pace. And, certainly, Senator Inhofe believed in making the most of his overseas travel, but, frankly, most of them were focused on either supporting our men and women in uniform, most recently in Iraq and Afghanistan, but also making sure that he got the most out of those trips. So if you agreed to go with him, chances are you wouldn't get much sleep, but you would get a chance to see and do a lot. He would regularly make his trips to Africa, where he would reach out to leaders through a common belief and a common faith.

He was very active in the National Prayer Breakfast. I remember, on most Wednesday mornings here in the Senate, he would almost always be at the Senate Prayer Breakfast. For those of us who can attend from time to time, it is one of the times where we sort of take our masks off—where we are not Republicans or Democrats and where we share a common faith. This is something that I know was very important in his life.

Certainly, he was a wonderful example and exemplar for the rest of us in how to be a whole person, not just a political animal coming here or maybe a performance artist but somebody who was a genuine human being, who had a strong foundation in his faith and strong beliefs and convictions about what he was here to do.

One of the things I will never forget is his annual quail hunt in Altus, TX—excuse me—Altus, OK. I said Altus, TX. We call Oklahoma “North Texas” sometimes, and they call Texas “South Oklahoma,” but we share a common border and a lot of common interests. One of those was the annual quail hunt in Altus, and it was a great community event. They are primarily connected with the airbase and trying to make sure that community support is strong for that airbase in Altus. I would go up to his each year, and then he would come down to one that I have in Hondo, TX, outside of San Antonio.

The other thing I remember—and Senator LANKFORD, I know, has carried on this great tradition—is that they would have their annual quail breakfast here in DC. It is not something you would ordinarily find at your breakfast table here in Washington, DC, but they would have an annual quail breakfast with the Altus delegation each year.

I just think we have lost a great man, a great Senator, a great human being, a great friend.

I wanted to come to the floor to express my condolences to Kay and his wonderful family—who meant everything to him—for their loss. We share in their sense of loss, but we also share in their celebration of a great life lived.

He had a good run. There is not a lot you can complain about in terms of living to 89 years old and having the sort of fulfilling life and accomplishments he had in his life. So we do want to send our condolences to the family because we know they are grieving now, but we also want to hold up Jim Inhofe as an example of what we should all aspire to as Senators—a great representative of his State, a great human being, and a great, great friend.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following Senators be allowed to complete their remarks prior to the scheduled rollcall votes: myself, Senator LANKFORD, and Senator ROUNDS.

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

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, my colleagues and I are here today to honor the life of our former colleague, Senator Jim Inhofe.

Jim was a longtime legislator, a public servant, and a conservative champion. He was many things to many people. To me, Jim was a dear friend.

Jim and I are both from the heartland, so we shared a similar world view as well as a commitment to similar

people—the humble, hard-working Americans from the center of this country.

Jim was fierce in his convictions. Jim was serious in his work. He was also kind-spirited, with a deep compassion for others. But perhaps more than all of these things, Jim was a visionary who used his positions in public life to build a better future for his State and for this country. He recognized the profound importance of public infrastructure investment. From highways, to airports, to levees and much more, Jim's legacy can be felt all across America's heartland.

Jim and I worked together on the Senate's Armed Services Committee. A veteran himself and an avid pilot, Jim was a fighter for the members of our military. All of our Senate colleagues knew that if Jim was leading an international trip to visit with servicemembers across the globe or to meet with America's allies that that trip would be all business. We would sleep on the plane, and we would be in a different country every single day.

I remember that, on one trip, we were forced to slow down a little bit when we lost a plane engine. You heard that right. We lost a plane engine, so we needed to stay in a country an extra day while the repairs were going to be made. That didn't mean we had a vacation. What Jim did is he found ways that he could be relentlessly efficient with all of our time, and his energy and his motivation to do the people's work was infectious.

Near the end of his Senate career, Jim served as the ranking member on the Armed Services Committee. He was one of the first Members of the Senate to recognize how seriously the world had shifted since the Cold War and how desperately we needed to rebuild our military in response to that. He had a very clear view of the global threats that America faces, both present and future, and he led accordingly.

Jim respected the design of the Senate as a place where every State's needs should be considered. He valued cooperation, he valued collaboration, and he wanted our annual Defense bill to reflect the concerns of all of the committee members.

He was resolute in his views and fierce in their defense, but he was always kind and caring. He built strong friendships with all of his colleagues, and despite many disagreements, he would have these relationships, so much so that a close Democrat colleague once described him as a brother to her.

Of course, you cannot speak of Jim without speaking of his family. Anyone who knew him knew how much he loved his wife Kay. He was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. The only thing that convinced him to leave decades of public service to the people of Oklahoma was his desire to care for his wife.

My heart goes out to Kay and to his three surviving children, Molly,

Jimmy, and Katy. May God comfort them in their sorrow, and may Jim's long life of love and service be a balm to their grief.

America knew Jim. America will remember him as a principled man, deeply committed to his values. The people of Oklahoma knew exactly who he was, and that is why they reelected him to the U.S. Senate five times.

His legacy will live on as a friend, as a husband and father, as a veteran, as an Oklahoman, as a U.S. Senator, and as a very good man.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I think many of us come down here to the floor with prepared remarks because we want to be precise in what we say, but after listening to my friend from Nebraska and her remarks, I have to admit that some of the memories she has of Jim Inhofe are very similar to the memories I have of Jim.

Before I go into fully prepared remarks, I just want to share with you that I don't know that anybody else has the record that Jim had of the number of snowballs that have been tossed on the floor of the Senate. Jim is one of those guys who could get away with coming in with a snowball and then looking at a young page and saying, “Be ready to catch this when I throw it at you,” and then, in the middle of talking about climate change and the fact that he disagreed with a lot of the new ideas, he would pick up a snowball, show it to everybody, and then toss it over to one young page, who I am sure will never forget that for as long as he lives.

Jim made friends everywhere he went. Now, he had his own ideas about what things should look like and about how things should proceed—and I have to tell you that I think, in the vast majority of cases, he was right—but he also wanted to have a discussion with other people. He liked to have debate. They were friends as far as he was concerned. And you could have disagreements among one another, and you could still be friends. Jim was one of those guys who truly believed that, if you were his friend and you agreed with him 80 percent of the time, you were never going to be an enemy; you were always going to be a friend.

I traveled the world with Jim on more than one occasion, and no matter where he went, he went in what he called the spirit of Jesus. He believed that the Christian value he had was the conduit between people from all different faiths and that, in his opinion and as long as he was prepared to share his faith, he was going to be welcomed, and he was.

I don't think people realize that this guy from the middle part of the United States of America was a guy who later on could say that he was a man who shared a prayer with Muammar Qadhafi in Qadhafi's tent, but he did that because he thought it was the right thing to do.

Jim was my friend, he was a mentor and the way that he treated other people is the way that I think all the rest of us should treat people.

Jim's wife Kay became a very special friend to both myself and my late wife Jean. She treated both of us with that respect and acceptance that you don't always get; yet you see it as being very, very sincere. We became part of their family, and we will never forget that.

You see, Jim Inhofe was a true ambassador for his State, his country, and most importantly, Jesus. Whether he was in another country or attending our weekly Senate Prayer Breakfasts, he loved sharing his faith with others.

Jim and I traveled the world together, and we shared a love for aviation. He was one of my best friends in the U.S. Senate.

Jim often said that real friendship did exist in the Senate even if the news wouldn't necessarily show it. To Jim, it didn't matter if someone was a Republican, a Democrat, or an Independent; he put political parties aside to get things done and trusted and respected the colleagues he worked with. Many of us in this Chamber are lucky to have worked with Jim and to have called him a friend.

I especially appreciated his leadership and partnership while working together on the Senate Armed Services Committee. Jim worked tirelessly each year to make sure that the Senate passed legislation providing for our national security and for our servicemembers through the National Defense Authorization Act. It was fitting and well-deserved as a tribute to have the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for the fiscal year 2023 signed into law.

He made many contributions on the national and international stage, including his deep love and appreciation for the people of Africa, particularly Ethiopia. He developed meaningful relationships across the world through a shared love of Jesus, and our world is better off because of it.

My thoughts and my prayers go out to Jim's wife Kay and to their family.

Jim has slipped the surly bonds of Earth. Now he can put out his hand and touch the face of God.

I will miss my friend Jim.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, in honor of Jim Inhofe, I would like to ask unanimous consent to speak as long as I so desire.

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

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I am standing today at not my desk location; I am standing at my senior Senator's desk location. This was the location for Jim Inhofe's desk 2 years ago when he retired from the Senate. And as you have heard from multiple different Members today, he will be deeply missed.

I still have a moment every time someone says "the senior Senator from

Oklahoma"—and they are speaking to me—that I turn around and look for Jim. He will be sorely missed.

Jim was my friend. He was my colleague. He was a mentor. He was a person to be able to work side by side with. Our staffs worked very well together because we chose to work well together and to be able to get things done for our State of Oklahoma.

My task today is to tell a little bit of his story. I can't do that in a few minutes, but I am going to try to give as much as I can.

James Mountain Inhofe—and everyone loved that middle name of his. James Mountain Inhofe was actually born in Iowa in 1934. His parents: Perry Dyson Inhofe and his mom, Blanche Phoebe Mountain. That is where the "Mountain" came from. Most folks don't even know.

But the Nation and our State was forever changed when, at 8 years old, their family moved from Iowa to Tulsa, OK. They stayed, and he graduated from Central High School in 1953, later graduating from the University of Tulsa but actually attending classes all over the place to be able to get to that graduation.

He served in the U.S. Army from 1957 to 1958, stationed in Fort Lee, VA. He became a licensed pilot in 1958, and that was one of the loves of his life. But the real love of his life was his relationship with Jesus and his beautiful wife Kay, whom he married in 1959.

He was first elected to public office in Oklahoma at 32 years old, actually. He served in the Oklahoma House of Representatives, sat on multiple committees, and then was elected to be the mayor of Tulsa in 1978. He loved Tulsa, OK.

He later served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1987 to 1994, and then was elected, in a special election, into this body in 1994. He was sworn in on November 17, actually, 1994, on his 60th birthday. He then served five terms after that, serving the U.S. Senate, serving as chairman of Environment and Public Works; serving as chairman of Armed Services; serving on multiple different committees, including the Intelligence Committee, Indian Affairs Committee, Committee on Foreign Relations, Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, Committee on Small Business. He was engaged in this body and worked to be able to find ways to be able to make a difference for our State of Oklahoma and for the Nation.

He loved flying and had over 11,000 flight hours. In fact, he did a crazy thing. He did multiple crazy things, but he did a crazy thing in that he replicated—I should say recreated—Oklahoman Wiley Post's historic flight around the world when he got in a twin-engine Cessna and flew from DC to Iceland to Berlin to Moscow, all the way back around to Alaska so he could circumnavigate the globe, following after Wiley Post, the famous Oklahoman's circumnavigation of the globe as well.

He was passionate about infrastructure, which has been mentioned often. He would often say, as a conservative, he was passionate about national defense and about infrastructure, and those were constitutional responsibilities. And he fulfilled that well.

He was passionate about trying to find ways to be able to help veterans and those who were serving in our military and to be able to maintain energy.

There is a great story of a debate that he held about energy taxes on the floor of the Senate here, and it was a full-on debate, which rarely occurs in this body very often. But it was led by Senator Inhofe on this side of the aisle and by Senator BERNIE SANDERS on the other side. And they had an hourslong debate between the two of them about energy taxation. And at the end of that, there was a vote, and Senator Inhofe won that vote 2 to 1. At the end of it, Senator SANDERS came to him and said: We don't do that often enough. We should do that more.

Senator Inhofe never hesitated to be able to talk about the hard issues with the people he disagreed with and to be able to say: Let's figure it out.

When I attended Dianne Feinstein's funeral not that long ago, Senator Barbara Boxer from California immediately found me at the funeral and said: How is my friend Jim? A very conservative Oklahoman had a long-standing friendship with a very liberal Californian, and they found ways to be able to work together.

As JACK REED mentioned earlier, a Democrat from Rhode Island and a Republican from Oklahoma worked very hard on national defense and found their common ground together.

Though there are many things that Jim Inhofe will be recognized for, he will be remembered for his work in Africa. Jim Inhofe conducted 172 African country visits in the time he served in the Senate, more than any other Senator in the history of the Senate, he spent in Africa. He visited leaders over and over and over again in Africa, developing deep relationships and friendships.

Every time I meet an African leader here in Washington, DC, and they hear that I am from Oklahoma, either the first or second thing that they will say to me is: Do you know my friend Jim Inhofe? And I will proudly say: Yes. And that African leader will say: He has been my friend for years—because Jim Inhofe intentionally went to Africa, developing relationships.

The reason we have an AFRICOM military focus in that area is because of Jim Inhofe. There are relationships that he built across the years there that brought down violence in Africa—because when violence began to erupt in some countries, Jim would get on a plane and would fly and would get the two leaders who were in conflict—because he knew them both—together and say: We are going to pray together, and we are going to resolve this right now. And he did.



And while most of the world doesn't know what Jim Inhofe did in Africa, he will be long remembered for his faith, his love for his family, and for what he did over and over again for the people of Oklahoma and for Africa.

He was the longest serving Senator for the State of Oklahoma, and he will be long remembered and appreciated in my great State. He will be appreciated by many of the staff members who worked alongside of him, I can assure you of that. He had 34 staff members who worked for him for more than 10 years.

Now, for anyone in this body, we know how rare that is because staff members tend to come and go. But for Jim, he wanted to be able to build camaraderie among his team. He wanted to be able to do serious, hard things, but he often did it among his staff in a nonserious way. He was notorious for the way, quite frankly, he tormented his staff, bugged them, hazed them, and challenged them to be able to step up and to be able to do hard things and figure out how to be able to get things done.

Ryan Jackson—who was his future chief of staff—on his first day on the job as a young campaign staffer, Jim Inhofe picked him up in Oklahoma City. They drove out for a campaign event in Western Oklahoma for that event, and then Jim went back to Tulsa not through Oklahoma City and told Ryan: Figure out how to get home—which he did to multiple staff members over the years because he wanted to be able to push them and to say: Figure it out. That was always his challenge to his staff: Figure it out. By the way, that didn't scare Ryan off. He stayed with him 18 years, and that young campaign staff member later became his chief of staff.

He had many rules, but the top rule that he had was, on his airplane, no one touch the door of his airplane but him. That was a fireable offense for any staff member that wanted to be able to touch the airplane door except for him.

He also had a book that he would pass out to his staff all the time called "Message to Garcia." Many of us know that book. That book is a story about a young soldier who was given a task by a general and was basically told he has to be able to figure things out. So he would hand that book to staff members and would say: Read this. You need to be able to know this.

And a staff member on his team, when he turned a memo in to Jim Inhofe and it wasn't sufficient, would get just the message "MTG" written on it; in other words, "Message to Garcia," go figure this out, and come back and tell me what needs to be done.

He was also, as has been mentioned by multiple of my colleagues, an extremely hard worker. His staff often said they only worked half a day for Jim; that is, from 7:30 in the morning until 7:30 in the evening; that they would just work half-days. In Jim Inhofe's office, if you arrived at 8:30, he

would greet you with a "good afternoon" statement to you to be able to welcome you in.

He had, as I mentioned, many opportunities to be able to do ministry and challenges to people in Africa, and there was a deep love for him in multiple countries, but probably no more so than in Western Sahara, where he fought tenaciously for the independence of those individuals in Western Sahara with Morocco—in fact, so much so that Western Sahara officials gave him a camel, which, obviously, he couldn't accept nor bring home; and so he told them: Just hang onto it; I can't actually accept this camel and take it home.

So when he visited Western Sahara, every time, they would bring the camel back to the airport to show him they are still hanging onto his camel; they still have it.

I have to say, there are a million stories about his leadership and his interaction, but his staff tells great stories about their friendships and relationships.

I have been to many a place where Jim would turn and look into the crowd and would identify what he called the "has-beens" that were in the crowd. Those were the staff that were his former staff that showed up at just about every event he would go to because of their deep love for him, even though they had left the staff.

Wendi Price, when she first got her job as scheduler, was put on probation because Jim felt she was too young. She stayed on probation for 20 years and would still be working with him today if he hadn't retired.

I have to tell you, there are a lot of caricatures about Jim Inhofe, and I have read some of the stories in the newspaper of things that some of the press writes about him. I can only read those stories and shake my head and say: Jim would have loved that—because he didn't allow liberal press to be able to define him.

He worked across the aisle. He worked to get things done. And he spent time doing the things that needed to be done for the future of the country, including at a moment when President Trump was elected and many of Jim Inhofe's staff were actually put into the EPA. And it drove the Washington Post crazy that many of Jim Inhofe's staff with the EPW went to the EPA. And the Washington Post wrote a blistering story about it.

Jim Inhofe bought a ton of the copies of that Washington Post and then just started handing it out to people so that they would all read and would know he is fully aware of what people say but he is going to work to get stuff done for the country.

I will miss my friend. And I will continue to pray for Kay and for his family as they grieve.

And I say to them, Psalm 34:18:

The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and He saves those who are crushed in spirit.

They grieve for their husband, their dad, their grandfather. Many of us

grieve for our friend. But this Senate will miss Jim Inhofe. So will our Nation.

With that, I yield the floor.

#### VOTE ON WILLOUGHBY NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Willoughby nomination?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) would have voted "nay."

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 43, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 208 Ex.]

##### YEAS—50

Baldwin	Heinrich	Rosen
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Sanders
Blumenthal	Hirono	Schatz
Booker	Kaine	Schumer
Brown	Kelly	Shaheen
Butler	King	Smith
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Cardin	Lujan	Tester
Carper	Manchin	Tillis
Casey	Merkley	Van Hollen
Collins	Murkowski	Warner
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Warnock
Duckworth	Murray	Warren
Durbin	Ossoff	Welch
Fetterman	Padilla	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Peters	Wyden
Hassan	Reed	

##### NAYS—43

Barrasso	Graham	Paul
Blackburn	Grassley	Ricketts
Boozman	Hagerty	Risch
Braun	Hawley	Rounds
Britt	Hoeven	Rubio
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Capito	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tuberville
Cramer	Lummis	Vance
Crapo	Marshall	Wicker
Daines	McConnell	Young
Ernst	Moran	
Fischer	Mullin	

##### NOT VOTING—7

Coons	Menendez	Sinema
Cruz	Romney	
Markey	Scott (FL)	

The nomination was confirmed.

(Ms. ROSEN assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The Senator from Minnesota.



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

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

### 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 senior assistant 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. 623, Anne Marie Wagner, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of five years expiring July 1, 2029. (Reappointment)

Charles E. Schumer, Gary C. Peters, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Tammy Duckworth, John W. Hickenlooper, Christopher Murphy, Angus S. King, Jr., Tina Smith, Jeanne Shaheen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Thomas R. Carper, Laphonza R. Butler, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Raphael G. Warnock, Chris Van Hollen, Chris Coons, Tim Kaine.

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 Anne Marie Wagner, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of five years expiring July 1, 2029. (Reappointment), shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) would have voted "nay."

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 38, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 209 Ex.]

#### YEAS—55

Baldwin	Coons	Kaine
Bennet	Cortez Masto	Kelly
Blumenthal	Cramer	Kennedy
Booker	Duckworth	King
Brown	Durbin	Klobuchar
Butler	Fetterman	Lankford
Cantwell	Gillibrand	Lujan
Capito	Hassan	Merkley
Cardin	Hawley	Murkowski
Carper	Heinrich	Murphy
Casey	Hickenlooper	Murray
Collins	Hirono	Ossoff

Padilla	Shaheen	Warnock
Peters	Smith	Warren
Reed	Stabenow	Welch
Rosen	Sullivan	Whitehouse
Sanders	Tester	Wyden
Schatz	Van Hollen	
Schumer	Warner	

#### NAYS—38

Barrasso	Graham	Ricketts
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Hagerty	Rounds
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Britt	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Budd	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Lee	Thune
Cornyn	Lummis	Tillis
Cotton	Marshall	Tuberville
Crapo	McConnell	Vance
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Mullin	Young
Fischer	Paul	

#### NOT VOTING—7

Cruz	Menendez	Sinema
Manchin	Romney	
Markey	Scott (FL)	

(Ms. CORTEZ MASTO assumed the Chair.)

(Ms. WARREN assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). On this vote, the yeas are 55, the nays are 38. The motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Anne Marie Wagner, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of five years expiring July 1, 2029. (Reappointment).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

#### BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I rise today to remind the American people that from the day he took office, President Biden and his administration have left much to be desired. As we look to the future, I think it is just imperative that we consider this administration's track record over the last 3½ years.

President Biden's record has made an enormous impact on Americans directly in their wallets—everybody feels it every day—as the people of our country continue to deal with the consequences with this reckless tax-and-spend agenda this administration has championed.

President Biden has long pledged to get a hold of inflation and actually passed the ironically misnamed Inflation Reduction Act that did exactly the opposite. That law, along with other spending spree passed with only Democratic support, have stifled economic growth.

Though President Biden talks about the middle class, he has failed to actually deliver for them. Truly, as we know, and we have always heard in our lives: Actions speak louder than words. Instead, what we have been dealing with is a continuous impact of an economy that just isn't working. We have out-of-control prices at the grocery

store and the gas pump; a housing market that has made homeownership impossible for many families; and for those locked out of the housing market, long-term rent inflation that continues to threaten renters and small businesses.

Just last week, we celebrated a great time in our Nation, our Nation's independence on the 4th of July. And what is normally a joyous time for Americans to come together, instead, became the most expensive Independence Day on record. This follows the most expensive Halloween and the most expensive Thanksgiving, leaving Americans little to celebrate. The cost of a cookout is up 5 percent over last year—5 percent. OK. But it is up 30 percent from 5 years ago. Additionally, gas prices this past weekend averaged \$3.50 a gallon, a 27-percent increase from 2019.

Couple those statistics with the June jobs report that showed our country's unemployment rate at the highest it has been at in 2½ years; or that home prices are up a whopping 49 percent since 2020, far outpacing any wage increases anybody has seen; and the Joint Economic Committee's recent report that the average American family has lost \$25,920 paying for the increased cost of living under President Biden and his policies.

It is clear to the American people that Bidenomics is not working and that President Biden's economic policies are failing. So this is something I hear frequently about from my constituents in West Virginia, that the savings they worked so hard for and that they have sacrificed to accumulate are dwindling in front of their eyes due to the skyrocketing costs of living under this administration.

There are policies to employ. There are policies that we can shrink and cut, regulations to cut, that would improve our economic standing. But, instead, Bidenomics—named by the President—has severely jeopardized the American dream for millions of people.

Additionally, we have seen immigration surge to the top of the mind for voters. And you always hear, immigration, it is only the States at the border, and why does everybody talk about it? It is a national issue. It impacts every single State.

The Biden administration has proven time and time again that they really have no genuine interest in controlling or closing our southern border or any desire in enforcing the immigration laws that we already have on the books.

President Biden has allowed over 10 million—10 million; that is 5 times the population of my State—10 million illegal border crossings throughout his tenure, all beginning with his decision to rescind the effective immigration policies of President Trump on day one of their administration.

The mass influx of unchecked immigration has led to widespread repercussions and endangered the lives of American citizens and of the migrants