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Senate

(Legislative day of Wednesday, July 10, 2024)

The Senate met at 10 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, the giver of every good and perfect gift, we thank You for the exemplary life and legacy of former Senator James Inhofe. Lord, we praise You for his life, which was like the light of morning at sunrise on a cloudless day and like the brightness after rain that brings the grass from the Earth.

Inspired by the footprints he left on the sands of time, may we seek to see You more clearly, to love You more dearly, and to follow You more nearly day by day.

And, Lord, use our lawmakers this day for Your glory.

We pray in Your loving Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore 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.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM FOR WOMEN ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). The clerk will report the pending business.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 420, S. 4554, a bill to express support for protecting

access to reproductive health care after the *Dobbs v. Jackson* decision on June 24, 2022.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM FOR WOMEN ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday was a very sad day for women in America. Yesterday, Senate Republicans blocked a bill that simply expressed support for a woman's right to choose. That is it; no more, no less.

Supporting a woman's right to make her own healthcare decisions should have been one of the easiest "yes" votes we have taken all year. By voting no, Republicans told every woman in America: "Your body, our choice."

Republicans are saying "We don't care" to all the women who live in States where reproductive rights are almost gone, from Texas to Florida, to Alabama, and beyond.

This is the terrible legacy of the Senate Republicans and the Trump administration: They cleared the way for the Supreme Court to overturn *Roe*.

Years ago, Donald Trump himself said overturning *Roe* was part of the plan. He said:

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

And then, Senate Republicans—even many who don't abide by the MAGA philosophy—just laid down and voted for all of the President's nominees.

To this day, Senate Republicans keep doubling down and tripling down on undermining women's rights, despite so much blowback from the American people. Senate Republicans voted no on protecting contraception. They voted no on protecting IVF. And they voted no again yesterday on supporting the right to choose.

So let me say to America: Do you want to know who is on your side protecting abortion and women's rights? It is the Democrats. Every Republican—with one or two exceptions—has

universally voted to take away women's rights. That is the truth of it.

Our Republican colleagues can run, but they can't hide. They are voting against women because extreme MAGA groups are pushing them to do it or maybe because of belief. Either way, they are out of touch with America.

Now, for all the chaos and disaster of the first Trump Presidency, it pales in comparison to the threat of a second Trump Presidency. We have all heard about the policy platform, 2025, drafted by the Heritage Foundation—a project overseen by former Trump officials and advisers and appointees. It is a manifesto for the second Trump Presidency.

What does it do? The Trump manifesto lays a groundwork for a nationwide abortion ban. That is the heart and soul of the Republican Party. That is where they always go when they are in power, folks. When they are not in power, they say some words here and there. When they are running for office, they try to run away from how they vote and how they feel. Then they come here, and they vote to roll over women's rights again and again and again. And each time they do it, it becomes more extreme and more extreme. And that is just the beginning on the issues.

The Trump manifesto, 2025, calls for the most conservative agenda America has ever seen. It calls for more tax cuts for the very wealthy, more tax cuts for corporate elites, more tax cuts for megacorporations. It calls for reversing Democrats' clean energy agenda while empowering the Nation's biggest oil and gas polluters. And the Trump manifesto even calls for silencing and attacking all of Donald Trump's political opponents.

Can you imagine? It is like a dictatorship. It is like a dictatorship, with nothing—Trump says: "I am going to prosecute people"—no evidence. Wow. What happened to rule of law in this

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



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grand country? What happens to the visions of the Founding Fathers when Donald Trump and the MAGA Court take over?

The hard right is done speaking euphemisms. They are smelling blood. They are saying it straight to our faces: If you disagree with Donald Trump, watch your back. It is bone-chilling. It is un-American. It is dangerous for our democracy.

The Trump manifesto is an auto-crats' dream. If MAGA Republicans get the chance to act on the Heritage Foundation's ideas, the damage to the America we all know and love may well be irreversible. We will never get it back. Our children and grandchildren will live in a less grand country than we have lived in. The destruction would be unthinkable, and it would betray everything America has represented for 248 years.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. President, on SCOTUS, above the entrance to the Supreme Court are these words: "Equal Justice Under Law."

Last week, the conservative Justices put some new writing on those walls, figuratively: "The President of the United States is above the law." Instead of "Equal justice under the law," they replaced it with "The President of the United States is above the law."

In the aftermath of the 2020 elections, Donald Trump and his allies conspired for weeks to undermine the will of the people and halt the peaceful transfer of power. These efforts culminated in the violent insurrection on January 6. These are the facts. Many of us in the Senate lived through it. I was within 30 feet of the hooligans who invaded the Capitol.

No free Nation can condone a tyrant who abuses his office to try and cling to power, but that is, in effect, what the conservative majority on the Supreme Court has done. By ruling Donald Trump enjoys broad immunity from criminal prosecution for his actions as President after the 2020 election, the conservative majority has violated the most basic premise of our Constitution that no man is above the law.

Most Americans will see what the Court did and think it was grossly political, a shameless attempt to help Donald Trump out.

I worry that over time, Americans will increasingly lose trust in what the courts say. They have already begun to lose that trust with these rightwing MAGA decisions, very few of them founded in any precedent at all. It could be the unraveling of trust in our democratic institutions.

The good news is that the Constitution provides a remedy to the Supreme Court's terrible decision: Congress has the authority to exercise strong checks on the judiciary through legislation. We should look precisely into that. One possible avenue: clarifying that Donald Trump's election-subversion acts do not count as official acts of the Presi-

dency. Such a notion should hardly be controversial, and I am working with my colleagues on legislation to see what kind of proposals would be appropriate.

We were all taught in grade school that there are no kings here in America, but what the conservative Justices have done is placed a crown on the head of Donald Trump. They declared, in effect, the same thing Nixon told David Frost in 1977 when he said—this is what Nixon said, chased out of office for potential criminal acts:

When the President does it, that means it is not illegal.

That is going to be the new "rule of law" in America with these Justices? What a bone-chilling proposition. If future Presidents no longer fear prosecution for their conduct in office, then what the heck is going to rein them in? One election every 4 years? That is cold comfort if a corrupt President can use their office to undermine elections in the first place. It is a catch-22, a very evil one. It is autocracy 101. What if future Presidents order the DOJ to arrest election workers? What if they escalate their attacks on the press? What if they take bribes in exchange for favors or money? What if, in each of these instances, they claim they were acting in an official capacity? America would be in a state of constitutional pandemonium.

The American people are tired of Justices who think they are beyond accountability. We in Congress should be open to sensible, reasonable solutions to restore the checks and balances that the MAGA Court has taken away.

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 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.

The Republican leader is recognized.

NATO

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as NATO's Washington summit draws to a close today, there is clearly tremendous resolve among many of our allies to make the transatlantic alliance fit for purpose for another 75 years. But a strong and effective NATO has always required strong and effective American leadership, and here at home, there is reason for cautious optimism that support for leadership on collective defense is widespread.

Last month, the Reagan Institute released the findings of its latest poll on the American people's views of global issues. Here is what it found: A majority of Americans support "a more engaged U.S. foreign policy" and hold favorable views of the NATO alliance and support lethal assistance to Ukraine. Despite the media spending years amplifying views from the fringes of our politics, a majority of Republicans be-

lieve that "U.S. involvement in international events" benefits America.

When asked recently whether peace, prosperity, and security were products of American leadership and sacrifice—listen to this—more Republicans than Democrats actually agreed with that.

Here is the kicker: They are not just telling this to pollsters; they are actually demonstrating it at the ballot box. By massive, double-digit margins, Republican primary voters have picked candidates who supported the national security supplemental earlier this spring. Let me say that again. Not a single Republican incumbent who voted to help America's friends resist authoritarian aggression and rebuild the arsenal of democracy lost their primary. Not one lost their primary. Across the country, voters rejected fringe candidates who peddled isolationist pabulum and voted instead for American leadership.

The way Speaker JOHNSON put it earlier this week, he has had people come up to him at events in 31 different States in recent months to say the same thing: We are glad Congress delivered the supplemental.

So, Mr. President, it can often seem like the loudest voices in Washington are the ones that bemoan the responsibilities of American leadership while enjoying the peace and prosperity it underwrites, but these voices are increasingly estranged from the views of most Americans. The American people know instinctively that leadership on the world stage isn't some handout to allies and partners; it is an investment—an investment—in our own security. They know this leadership is what preserves the U.S.-led order that has underpinned peace and prosperity for decades. Now they just need a President who is willing to exercise that leadership.

For years, the American people watched the Biden administration dither and wring its hands over fears that standing with a sovereign democracy might invite escalation from a tyrant who was already conducting a full-scale war of conquest. Since last fall, they have heard the President insist in one breath that America's commitment to a close ally was ironclad and then withhold urgent assistance in another.

It is well and good to talk about American leadership, but talk is cheap. This week would have been a great opportunity for the Commander in Chief to start backing up his words with firm commitments to start investing seriously—seriously—in hard power. It should have been the week the Democratic leader brought the NDAA up for Senate consideration. It could have been a great week to lead.

Fortunately, the most successful military alliance in history has had some strong leadership in Brussels with Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg. I am deeply grateful for his tireless work on both urgent and

long-term challenges facing the alliance and for his deep devotion to the cause of collective defense.

The Secretary General took office months—just months—after Russia launched its unprovoked invasion of Ukraine back in 2014, and after a pivotal decade, he will leave the alliance with renewed clarity and resolve to face even graver Russian aggression and linked authoritarian threats all around the world.

For 10 years, he has worked relentlessly to expand allies' focus to include serious challenges emanating from beyond NATO's borders.

Recognizing the links between major threats to global security, he has improved the alliance's engagement with critical Indo-Pacific nations like Japan, South Korea, and Australia.

Just yesterday, he led allies in making clear that China is the "decisive enabler" of Russia's war against Ukraine and that "the PRC cannot enable the largest war in Europe in recent history without this negatively impacting its interests and reputation."

He has successfully expanded NATO, most recently welcoming Sweden and Finland as highly capable additions to our ranks.

In the face of Russian aggression, the Secretary General has been an extraordinarily effective advocate and spokesman for collective defense, rallying renewed investment from allies and leading the most significant NATO rearmament since the Cold War.

As he navigated the predictably diverse and spirited views of dozens of allies, the Secretary General demonstrated a keen appreciation for America's legitimate, longstanding, and bipartisan concerns about burden-sharing across the alliance and has repeatedly urged allies to take on more responsibility for our shared security.

On a personal note, I am immensely grateful for the time the Secretary General and I have spent working closely together. I have appreciated his candor, his professionalism, and his devotion to our common cause. I was particularly proud to welcome him to address a joint meeting of Congress earlier in his term.

As he departs his post, Secretary General Stoltenberg should take great pride in the historic accomplishments of his tenure and remain optimistic, as I am, in the course he has set for the alliance. He has the gratitude of allies and partners all across the free world, and he will leave big shoes for his successor, Mark Rutte, to fill.

NOMINATION OF SARAH NETBURN

Mr. President, now on another matter, I have spoken before about the New York magistrate judge with a bad habit of engaging in political activism from the bench and lying about it under oath. Unfortunately, the red flags on Judge Netburn's record aren't limited to the inappropriate actions she does commit; there is also the important work she has inexplicably chosen to ignore.

Take it from the family members of victims of 9/11 who wrote recently to our colleagues on the Judiciary Committee. As these loved ones sought a small piece of justice for the lives that terrorist killers snuffed out, Judge Netburn failed to rule on the unopposed motions they submitted that would have entitled them to participate in the next round of compensation for grieving families.

As they put it:

We cannot understand how a Magistrate Judge could treat 9/11 family members so callously or so blithely disregard her duties.

Mr. President, I have posed this question before on another of the administration's nominees, Nancy Maldonado. But I will ask it again: Why on Earth do our Democratic colleagues continue to entertain lifetime promotions for nominees with a demonstrated inability to do the job?

This sort of gross negligence is damning. It is disqualifying. And, frankly, the Netburn nomination isn't worth another second of the Judiciary Committee's time, let alone the Senate's.

INFLATION

Mr. President, on one final matter, cumulative inflation since President Biden took office now sits at 21 percent, and working families across America are still feeling the pinch in their wallets, especially when it comes to basic necessities like housing.

In New Jersey, one man who has watched his rent soar said:

I thought things were going to taper off, but it doesn't appear to be tapering.

In my State of Kentucky, one resident said he was "sticker-shocked" at the skyrocketing costs of homeowners' insurance, property taxes, and utility bills. And he is certainly not alone. One survey showed nearly one in five homeowners could not afford a \$500 emergency repair on their home.

Last month, 46 percent of Americans reported that they are struggling to keep pace financially, and only 25 percent of this group said they planned on supporting President Biden.

The American people know which party ignored the warnings of top economists, lit money on fire with reckless taxing-and-spending sprees, and fueled the worst inflation this country has seen since the Carter administration. The American people are sick and tired of Bidenomics. I expect they will have more to say about it this November.

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

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

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, last month's arrest of eight men from Tajikistan with suspected ties to ISIS

further underscores what we have known for a long time, and that is that President Biden's 3-year-plus border crisis is a threat to our national security. All eight of these individuals had made their way into our country across our southern border, and they are hardly the only dangerous individuals to have made their way into our country on President Biden's watch.

An illegal immigrant who had successfully evaded the Border Patrol to enter the United States has been arrested for the murder of a mother in Maryland. An illegal immigrant released into the country on parole has been charged with the murder of a nursing student in Georgia. Two illegal immigrants are charged with the killing of a 12-year-old girl in Texas.

Unfortunately, I could go on.

In another alarming case, 50 out of 400 illegal immigrants who entered the United States through an ISIS-linked smuggling network are still unaccounted for. It is, of course, impossible to predict or stop every crime, but the chaos at our southern border that President Biden has allowed to rage for 3-plus years has unquestionably created an environment that facilitates the entry of dangerous individuals into our country.

Since President Biden took office, approximately 10 million individuals, that we know of, have made their way illegally into our country—10 million.

That is larger than the population of the vast majority of American States. We have had 3 successive years of record-breaking illegal immigration on President Biden's watch—3. And we can only hope that we will manage to avoid yet a fourth.

The situation is so bad that President Biden finally realized that if he didn't do something, his disastrous record on the border might tank his reelection prospects. And while it would be nice if the executive action he took last month had been motivated by the clear national security dangers the situation presents and not by fear of losing an election, at least he finally conceded that he had to do something—inadequate and full of exemptions as it might be.

But while this might—and I emphasize "might"—be a case of better late than never, I am afraid it is also a case of too little, too late. Because a tremendous amount of damage has been done that President Biden can't fix, even if he should succeed in restricting future flows.

As I said, roughly 10 million illegal immigrants have entered our country on President Biden's watch. And while I am sure that many of these individuals were simply in search of a better life, we can be pretty confident that there are others, like the recently arrested individuals with suspected ties to ISIS, who have more malign intentions.

Of particular concern are the roughly 1.8 million known "got-aways." Those are individuals who the Border Patrol

saw but was unable to apprehend, who have made their way into the country over the course of this administration.

U.S. Border Patrol Chief Jason Owens, speaking earlier this year about the number of “got-aways” at the border said:

[T]hose are the numbers that really keep us up at night, because if you know that all you need to do is turn yourself into the Border Patrol and go through the process, what possible reason would you have for wanting to evade capture? Could it be that those are the folks that probably have criminal intent?

Chief Owens was referring to the fact that under the Biden administration’s lax asylum system, individuals who show up at the border claiming asylum have frequently been released into the country with court dates as much as a decade into the future.

And his point, of course, is that when turning yourself into the Border Patrol when a claim for asylum is likely to result in years of, essentially, legal permanent residence, it is especially concerning that we have had hundreds of thousands of individuals choosing not to turn themselves in and escaping into the interior of our country.

So, again, even if President Biden’s executive action from last month does do something to help reduce the flow of illegal immigration—which very much remains to be seen—we will still be left with the effects of the chaos he has allowed to rage at our southern border for 3-plus years. And we will still be left with the effects of his other disastrous border and immigration policies from offering mass amnesty to hundreds of thousands of individuals whose asylum cases have been closed without a decision to fast-tracking mass parole through the CBP One app to placing unaccompanied children with possibly dangerous guardians in the United States—something, by the way, that Senator GRASSLEY is currently working to prevent in the future.

And I expect we will still be dealing with the consequences of President Biden’s dangerous policies for a long time to come.

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 proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 8369

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I rise at a time of widespread and acute peril for the national security of the United States and for America’s allies. Led by China, our enemies and our adversaries—Russia, Iran, North Korea—are actively cooperating to target us and our allies all over the world. In extreme cases, they seek nothing less than the physical annihilation of the countries they are targeting.

In Europe, Russia has launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. In Asia, China is engaged in day-by-day aggression against our allies and is threatening another full-scale invasion of Taiwan. And in the Middle East, Israel is fighting for its survival in the face of a war of extermination being waged against it by the Iranian regime. October 7 was the worst 1-day mass murder of Jews since the Holocaust. Iran and its terrorists have attacked Israel from the Gaza Strip, from Lebanon, from Syria, from Judea and Samaria, from Yemen, from Iraq, and from Iran.

And what has the Biden administration’s policy been? Since the opening days of this administration, they have pursued an obscene policy of denying weapons to our allies while allowing resources to flow to our enemies.

They immediately halted arms to our Arab allies that they were using against Iran’s Houthi terrorists while lifting sanctions simultaneously on the Houthi terrorists. The Houthis immediately launched a vast offensive and today are significantly blocking shipping through the Red Sea. The administration denied critical weapons such as ATACMS to Ukraine at a period that they could have stalled Russia’s offensive, providing both time and space for Iran to flood drones to be used by Russian forces against Ukraine.

And, of course, the Biden administration flooded unaccountable hundreds of millions of dollars into the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip, which they knew would benefit Hamas. Joe Biden sent that money to Gaza, even though he was warned that the money would inevitably go to Hamas and be used for terrorism.

I joined 19 Senators in making that point explicitly: If you send this money to Gaza, it will be used by Hamas for terrorism. And we now know that the Biden administration agreed with me. The Biden administration concluded that it was “highly likely”—that is their assessment—“highly likely” that the money going to Gaza would be used by Hamas for terrorism.

Now, ordinarily, under U.S. anti-terrorism law, that is the end of the matter. If it is highly likely the money will be used for terrorism, you don’t send it.

Do you know what they did instead? They waived our anti-terrorism law and said: Send it anyway.

I guess they are OK if Hamas uses U.S. dollars to murder Israelis because that is exactly what happened.

After October 7, the administration didn’t change. Even after October 7, the Biden administration has slowed and halted critical weapons that our Israeli allies need to counter Hamas.

That utter incoherence has entangled this body. During the debate over the last national security supplemental, I and many other lawmakers found ourselves unable to support the policy, in part, because we did not believe that the Biden administration would faith-

fully implement the authorities and appropriations Congress would be providing.

Those doubts were subsequently publicly confirmed. President Biden has explicitly said that he is blocking precision weapons to Israel and that he would even block artillery if Israel moves to fully root out Hamas from Rafah.

I will add, Mr. President, that this policy is particularly egregious in the context of the Gaza pier because the Biden administration requires Israelis to provide force protection for the pier while denying them the weapons they need to do so.

Senate Democrats have, unfortunately, found themselves in the position of knowing that this policy is both incoherent and catastrophic. But at the same time, it is their party’s policy so they defend it anyway.

What we should be doing is providing Israel weapons now and denying Hamas the resources it needs to continue its war of terror against Israel.

That is why, in a moment, I am going to propound a unanimous consent request to ensure that the Biden administration delivers to Israel the weapons that the Biden administration is withholding.

This legislation has already passed the House. In a moment, it might pass the Senate.

For folks at home who are watching, you should watch very carefully. When I raise the unanimous consent request, a Democrat Senator will stand up and begin speaking. He will begin by saying: “Reserving the right to object,” and then he will give some remarks.

Listen for two words: “I object” because this is binary. If at the end of his remarks he says “I object,” it will defeat this motion, and it will mean that Senate Democrats have decided they agree with Joe Biden in blocking weapons to Israel. And if he doesn’t—if he gives the identical speech and just pulls out his pen and crosses out those two words written at the bottom of the speech, he just doesn’t say “I object”—do you know what happens? The legislation that has already passed the House would pass the Senate unanimously, 100 to 0, and go to the President’s desk for signature.

Just about every Member of this body goes and gives speeches and says: I support Israel.

Well, talk is cheap. If you support Israel, provide them the weapons they need in a time of war. We are going to find out if the Democrats are willing to do so or not.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 398, H.R. 8369; I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, the war in Gaza has been a humanitarian catastrophe, and tens of thousands of civilians have been killed and wounded. Thousands of children are not able to obtain medical care that they urgently need. Hundreds of thousands of people in northern Gaza have been told to relocate again and again and again. There is no safe place for these innocent people to go in Gaza. Also, 100 precious lives of hostages do remain in Hamas control. And I am very upset about the escalation of anti-Israel sentiment here in our own country.

But everyone is painfully aware that Hamas built its underground system of tunnels and military command beneath Gaza schools, hospitals, and other civilian structures. It is a very difficult dilemma, but the answer is not the entire destruction of Gaza.

And Secretary of Defense Austin said that “there’s a better way” to prosecute the military campaign and to eliminate Hamas while protecting civilians. That is our military leader. And that is a sentiment that is shared by many U.S. military officers, both active and retired and, incidentally, many Israeli officers.

Israel has received, as my colleague from Texas knows—and as my colleague from Texas also knows—Israel has continued to receive massive amounts of U.S. weapons, ammunition, and other military aid. And the Congress passed an emergency supplemental, in addition to the fiscal year 2024 appropriations bill. And together, they provide, literally, billions of dollars—billions of dollars—in military aid for Israel. So the suggestion that Israel is lacking for U.S. weapons and ammunition is without any merit whatsoever.

The conflict between Israelis and Palestinians will not be solved with more bombs, particularly when the Netanyahu government has yet to articulate achievable goals or a credible plan for what comes next after the war ends—something that many Israeli citizens are pointing out and objecting to the manner in which Prime Minister Netanyahu is conducting this war.

In the meantime, starvation is escalating for women and children—innocent people in Gaza—who had nothing to do with what happened on October 7. And, incidentally, as the Senator from Texas knows, every single one of us in the Senate is absolutely horrified by what Hamas did on that day, October 7. And as my good friend from Texas said, that was the worst mass murder of innocent Jewish people since the Holocaust—horrifying.

I think it is fair to say that everybody in this body wants the war to end. They want a secure, peaceful Israel, and we want a secure, peaceful Palestinian State. But the suggestion that the U.S. Government is not providing significant aid to Israel, which I have objected to but this Congress has supported by a very large margin, is flatout wrong.

So for these reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Texas.

MOTION TO DISCHARGE—S.J. RES.

89

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I move to discharge S.J. Res. 89 from the Foreign Relations Committee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the joint resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to discharge from the Committee on Foreign Relations, S.J. Res. 89, a joint resolution to direct the termination of the use of United States Armed Forces for the construction, maintenance, and operation of the Joint Logistics Over-the-Shore pier on the coast of the Gaza Strip that has not been authorized by Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is debatable for 1 hour.

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, the Gaza pier is a perfect example of the Biden administration’s foreign policy incoherence. This was a nearly half-billion-dollar stunt trying to buy a few votes in Michigan. It has been an unconscionable waste of American taxpayer dollars, and, simultaneously, it has undermined America’s geopolitical credibility with our allies.

The pier is unnecessary. We can debate whether sufficient aid is getting to the Gaza Strip, but I believe that our Israeli allies have taken unprecedented steps to ensure that indeed there is. I understand that many Democrats disagree.

What is undeniable, however, is that whatever aid is coming in, it has not, will not, and, indeed, could not have come through this God-forsaken pier. The operation was simply too insignificant and too convoluted.

Moreover, we know that Hamas diverts aid delivered through this pier. The pier has also been reportedly attacked by Palestinian terrorists, and three U.S. servicemembers have been injured because of pier operations.

Further, the pier has cost American taxpayers a minimum of \$320 million to construct. And that was an estimate from April, so it is surely higher now.

Meanwhile, we have required our Israeli allies to provide a “security bubble” around the pier. We are pressuring them to protect this operation, which is bringing supplies hijacked by Hamas.

Joe Biden is asking Israel to protect the Gaza pier from Hamas while denying Israel the weapons to counter Hamas. And as we just saw, Senate Democrats are endorsing that policy. I find it difficult to think of a more ridiculous policy.

Let’s be clear. American policy should be unequivocal: We need to ensure that Israel has the military and diplomatic support to utterly eradicate Hamas. That is good for Israel, and it is good for America.

Unfortunately, we have seen a recurring theme from the Biden administration and from Senate Democrats: Undermine Israel at every step of the way and aid terrorists at every step of the way.

In fact, this administration has been the greatest friend to Hamas and Hezbollah and the greatest ally to Ayatollah Khamenei on the entire planet. Under the Biden Presidency, over \$100 billion has flowed to Iran, and \$6 billion of it was in ransom for five Americans—a policy which I warned at the time would lead to more Americans being taken hostage. Tragically, on October 7, we saw that come to pass.

Where we are now is the Biden administration is sending money to Gaza, and they are combining it with blocking weapons to Israel. The policy is utterly backward. If you were to ask anyone on the street “What should we do on foreign policy?” they would say that we should support our friends and stand up to our enemies. Unfortunately, Joe Biden and the Democrats—their policy—has blocked weapons to our friends, blocked weapons to Israel, and sent billions of dollars to our enemies who are actively trying to kill Israelis and actively trying to kill Americans. It is Alice in Wonderland through the looking glass.

What the Senate should be doing is voting on the legislation the House has already passed to provide the weapons Israel needs now. Just a minute ago, I tried to pass that here on the floor of the Senate, and you saw Senate Democrats object to that. Why is it that we are not voting right now on providing the weapons to Israel that Joe Biden has blocked? Because Senate Democrats do not want to vote on it.

The only reason it didn’t pass a minute ago is that a Senate Democrat objected and did so on behalf of all of the Democrats, and we know that it is all of the Democrats because CHUCK SCHUMER is the majority leader of this body. Senator SCHUMER could schedule the House bill for a vote anytime he wants, and he said he will not allow it to come to a vote.

So understand, if you support Israel, the reason the Biden administration is able to block weapons from going to Israel is because every Senate Democrat is standing in solidarity with this White House in blocking weapons from going to Israel in a time of war.

The reason you heard the words “I object” is some Senate Democrats don’t want to go on the record for that. They don’t want to actually cast the vote.

The Senator who objected is from the State of Vermont. Vermont is a bright-blue State—a State that they comfortably believe is safe to make an objection. Senators who are on the ballot in red or purple States are not eager to go on record on this question.

Procedurally, I do not have the ability to force a vote on passing the already passed House bill that would provide immediate weapons to Israel.