

surreal events of the last 10 days. In the last several days, the Democratic candidate has dropped out of the race, and the Republican candidate has survived an assassination attempt. You couldn't make this up. If you wrote this as a novel, people wouldn't believe it.

This Presidential race is unprecedented and with high stakes, but there is more on the line this November than just the future of the White House. From the top of the ballot to the bottom of the ballot, the American people will vote for candidates to represent their interests at every level of government—at the local level: mayors, city councilmen; to Governors; to Members of Congress, including the U.S. Senate.

As we know, election years are not known for their productivity here in the Senate. Our colleagues are always eager to spend more time at home campaigning, which does present some serious scheduling problems.

Historically, the prospects of legislating grows dimmer as election day grows closer. Even still, the outlook for the next few months looks pretty shocking and pretty dismal.

Including today, the Senate is scheduled to be in session for 18 days. Let me say that again. We have 104 days until the election, and the Senate is scheduled to be in session for only 18 days. That is about 1 day a week.

If the Senate had already completed its most basic duties, this might not be quite shocking and alarming. But the truth is, we have a mountain of critical work that needs to be completed before the end of the fiscal year.

Before the end of September, which is the end of the fiscal year, we need to pass the National Defense Authorization Act—something we have done, I think it is, 63 years in a row—which is essential to our military's readiness. As I said earlier, this is the most dangerous time we have seen since World War II. You would think the National Defense Authorization Act would be a priority, but apparently not for Leader SCHUMER. I had hoped the Senate would take up and pass this bill before the end of July, but that is clearly looking unlikely at this point.

Then we have to pass all 12 annual appropriations bills to fund everything from national defense to processing passports, to veterans' benefits, to administering Social Security, Medicare—you name it. Failure to complete that job on time could result in a government shutdown.

We also need to pass a farm bill to support our mighty agriculture industry and the dedicated farmers and ranchers and producers who depend on it. This task should have been completed last fall, but Congress punted that deadline. We can't keep our ag producers, farmers, and ranchers in limbo forever, but that is what is happening.

These are three basic functions of governing: funding the government, strengthening our national defense,

and protecting our food supply. All these deadlines were known well in advance, but the Senate has not taken up or passed even one of these bills.

We know it is not uncommon for a single bill to occupy a couple weeks of floor time, but the majority leader has given us 18 days to complete 14 bills.

If the Senate had spent its time working on other important matters, I might understand the legislative pileup like we are facing today, but that has not been the case at all.

This Chamber is barely in session, and even when we are in Washington, our time is wasted on show votes and occasional nominees. The past few session weeks have been dominated by votes on radical nominees and partisan messaging bills—not the best use of our time.

The situation has been so common that I was shocked to hear that Senator SCHUMER planned to put two real bipartisan bills on the floor this week, and I am appreciative of his willingness to do so. We need to do more of that, not less of it.

We all know that the age of social media has created serious safety risks for America's children. We have heard countless stories about the devastating impact social media has on children's mental health. More and more children and teens are dealing with bullying and harassment online. It is no surprise teen depression rates are on the rise, and parents are eager for something to change. So this is one of the bright spots of bipartisan cooperation, where Republicans and Democrats have made this issue a priority.

We have held countless hearings across multiple committees to learn about the danger kids face online as well as Big Tech's failures to keep our children safe.

Senators have authored a number of bipartisan bills to keep kids safe, and we have been clamoring for a long time for the majority leader to put those bills on the Senate floor. So I am glad that Senator SCHUMER has hit the pause button on partisan show votes for at least a week so we can take action on two critical bills to address this crisis.

The first is the Kids Online Safety Act introduced by Senators BLUMENTHAL and BLACKBURN. It provides children and parents tools and safeguards they need to keep safe online. It includes keeping harmful content about suicide, eating disorders, and substance abuse out of children's algorithms. More than two-thirds of the Senate has cosponsored this bill, and I am proud to be one of them.

We are also expected to build on the Children and Teens' Online Privacy Protection Act introduced by Senators MARKEY and CASSIDY. This bill prohibits internet companies from collecting personal information from the youngest users and establishes better safeguards to protect children's privacy.

In short, it does what Big Tech has failed to do. It prevents Big Tech from

tracking and targeting kids with the most addictive content possible.

These are complex issues, and I want to commend my colleagues Senators BLACKBURN and CASSIDY for their work in this area. They managed to draft legislation that balances the First Amendment rights of online users with the safety of our children. These bills are on the verge of passing the Senate, and that would not be the case without their dedication and tireless efforts.

Again, I am proud to cosponsor these bills, and I am glad the Senate will finally vote on them this week. They will make critical advancements to keep kids safe from the dangers lurking online and finally provide parents across the country with a little peace of mind.

It is great the Senate is finally doing some productive work for a change, but it is embarrassing that it has taken this long to put this legislation on the floor, which only the majority leader can do. He sets the schedule.

Once it passes, we hardly have time, though, to celebrate because of the mountain of bills we need to advance before the end of September: the NDAA—the Defense Authorization Act—12 appropriations bills, the farm bill. All of those need to be dealt with by the end of September. But to state the obvious, this was entirely avoidable, this crunch time.

Again, election day is 104 days away, and in my book, it can't come soon enough.

The past 3½ years have brought us one crisis after another under the current administration, most notably at the border.

We need new leadership, and I am eager for the American people to make their voices heard at the ballot box in just a few months. Until then, we have a lot of work to do. I just hope the majority leader will give us the opportunity to do it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, two or three times lately, I have been coming to the floor to have a conversation with my colleagues on the subject of national security.

Remember, all of us, that wars are being waged right now in Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan, and I presume elsewhere on this globe. We have uncertainty and unrest looming on the horizon in the South China Sea and the Horn of Africa.

There are also serious national security concerns right here in the United States. For the last 3 years, our own southern border, hundreds of thousands of migrants from around the world have come to America without our permission, including people on the Terrorist Watchlist.

Earlier this month, we celebrated the 75th anniversary of NATO, the most successful military alliance in modern history. Winston Churchill sowed the

seeds for the idea of NATO. He did this in the aftermath of the failed League of Nations. He delivered his speech called "Sinews of Peace"—he did this in America's heartland—a famous speech at a college campus in Fulton, MO.

Churchill spoke of two great dangers that imperil the hearth and home of common people. Those two dangers are war and tyranny. In his speech, he called for a military coalition to build what he called a "temple of peace" that would be, as he said in a quote, a "force for action, and not merely a frothing of words." That was Churchill's way of saying a blueprint for peace that actually worked.

No European NATO member was invaded post-World War II because of NATO. By contrast, the nations that wanted to be very aggressive during the Cold War, particularly the Soviet Union, instigated conflicts in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, but they didn't mess around with Europe. Churchill's words of wisdom, then, stand the test of time.

I would like to further quote Churchill:

From what I have seen of our Russian friends and Allies during the war, I am convinced that there is nothing they admire so much as strength, and there is nothing for which they have less respect than for weakness, especially military weakness.

The fall of the Iron Curtain opened the lane to freedom, symbolizing victory over tyranny that we must never take for granted. It is no secret that Russian President Vladimir Putin—remember, a former KGB officer—wants to resurrect the Soviet Empire from the ash heap of history. You can consider Russia's recent timeline of aggression.

In 2008, Russia invaded the Republic of Georgia. In 2014, Moscow annexed Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula and occupied parts of eastern Ukraine. And then 3 years ago, Putin launched what we now know as a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Appeasement was a key ingredient in Putin's recipe for Russian expansion.

Let's not forget that Russia marked NATO's 75th anniversary—celebrated here in Washington, DC—by, at that time, launching 40 missiles into Ukraine, targeting a children's hospital, killing scores of innocent civilians. Putin very much has hitched his horse to America's foreign adversaries by getting supplies for his war efforts from China, Iran, and North Korea—kind of the 21st century axis similar to Germany, Italy, and Japan during World War II. Just as dangerous for us now as that other axis was dangerous and brought great conflict during World War II.

With global conflicts and terrorist threats in mind, history must inform our Nation's path forward. History shows a strong U.S. military is an impenetrable instrument of peace. A weakened U.S. military is, for sure, an invitation for our foreign adversaries to keep pushing the envelope.

Now, make no mistake, Russia and Russian allies' mission is to do whatever it takes to undermine the United States as a leader of the free world. We didn't seek that title—being leader of the free world—but we learned the hard way that allowing dictators to get away with aggression eventually threatens American freedom.

This brings me back then to square one. The core responsibility of the Federal Government is national security, and that fundamental responsibility begins and ends with a strong national defense. An impenetrable U.S. military safeguards America's food security, energy security, infrastructure security, and cyber security.

In a nutshell, the U.S. Armed Forces are the nucleus for peace and prosperity at home and abroad. So when the Senate takes up the must-pass National Defense Authorization Act and the Defense appropriations bill, I urge my colleagues to invest in America. Doing so will cement our national security interests for generations to come.

First, we must enhance pay and benefits for members of the military and their families. Next, we must restock America's arsenal and boost our military preparedness.

In recent decades, Washington has allowed our Armed Forces to lose their wartime footing. When we lose our footing on any one of those rungs, know that our enemies are circling the waters to take us down a notch.

My colleague from Mississippi, Senator WICKER, serves as ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. I reviewed his plan that outlines where the U.S. military most needs defense dollars.

As it stands, the United States is ill-equipped to meet the emerging global threats to our national security. Senator WICKER's blueprint would put us back on the right path to secure peace through strength. The plan estimates that the annual defense budget needs to grow to 5 percent of gross domestic product.

Our defense spending as a share of GDP has been falling and is nearing a historic low. Meanwhile, many of our European NATO allies have been dramatically increasing defense expenditures because they see how dangerous the world has become.

Another key NATO metric is the percentage of defense funds going toward equipment—in other words, warfighting capability. The United States is in the bottom of the pack among our NATO allies on this very score.

It is no coincidence that the United States became the leader of the free world by leveraging its commitment to peace around the world through unsailable military power.

In the first quarter of the 21st century and a key period in history, America stands at the crossroads. We cannot bury our heads in the sand when China's spending on defense is on a pace to

match our own country. And that is according to estimates from our intelligence community.

To be sure, China is plotting to leapfrog America as the global superpower: China leveraging every tool at its disposal, China infiltrating our education system, China manipulating data on TikTok, China deploying debt-trap diplomacy, and, finally, China unleashing military exercises in the Taiwan Straits and even close to Alaska, in the Bering Sea.

We can't afford to ignore what is really obvious: A diminished military puts our national security at risk and our troops very much in harm's way.

Today, I call upon my colleagues here in the Congress to stand by our duty and our constitutional obligation of national security being the No. 1 responsibility of the Federal Government. We must stand shoulder to shoulder to meet this moment. In fact, we have a responsibility to do so on behalf of our constituents and, more importantly, getting future generations protected, and that is a long-term responsibility.

As Senator WICKER's report details, we must modernize U.S. nuclear programs, revive homeland defense sites, and restore the U.S. Navy and fleet readiness. And we need to bolster the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Space Force, bring Cyber Command up to speed, and provide our servicemembers better training, technology, and modernized munitions to fulfill their missions.

There is no time for dillydallying. Right now, our foreign adversaries are cobbling alliances to skirt sanctions, undermine freedom, and secure their own self-interests.

In closing, I will finish with three messages. First, we can avoid war by anticipating war. Second, preparing for war does not mean writing a blank check to the Pentagon. You can be sure that I will continue my oversight work to get the most bang for our defense buck. Thirdly, we must respond to the writing on the wall. If we allow ourselves to be lulled into a false sense of security about our military power, historians will write about America's twilight instead of an American-led 21st century.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BRAUN. 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 Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President, I would like unanimous consent to complete my remarks.

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

CONGRATULATING THE FIGHTING IRISH OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME MEN'S LACROSSE TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2024 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I MEN'S LACROSSE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President, I rise today with great pride to honor the Fighting Irish. This May, the University of Notre Dame men's lacrosse team won the 2024 NCAA Division I title with a resounding victory over the Maryland Terrapins. The final score was 15 to 5.

This year's victory marked the second national lacrosse title for the Fighting Irish. It was also a consecutive national championship—very hard to do in this day and age in the competitive arena of college sports.

The Fighting Irish is the first team since 2019 and 2021 to win those back-to-back men's lacrosse national championships and only the eighth team in division I history to accomplish the feat.

I would like to personally congratulate Notre Dame men's lacrosse team for claiming the 2024 title. It is a university that has distinguished itself in so many ways over the years. Blessed to be in my home State and I'm very proud of them across the board.

Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 768, which is at the desk.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 768) congratulating the Fighting Irish of the University of Notre Dame men's lacrosse team for winning the 2024 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Men's Lacrosse National Championship.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. BRAUN. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 768) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 3 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 11:49 a.m., recessed until 3 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. BALDWIN).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Oregon.

NOMINATIONS OF ADAM B. LANDY, KASHI WAY, AND ROSE E. JENKINS

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I come to the floor today to again voice my strong support for the nominations of Adam Landy and Kashi Way to serve as judges of the United States Tax Court. The Senate will be voting on their nominations soon, Mr. Way's in just a few minutes and I believe Mr. Landy's later this afternoon.

The U.S. Tax Court is the judicial backbone of the Federal Tax Code. Americans rely on the Tax Court to dispute tax bills before they need to pay them. It is key to making sure taxpayers are heard in a timely manner and an essential way to protect fairness in our tax system.

The nominees for these positions have never been controversial. And as I am about to make clear, both these nominees have the right experience and the qualifications for the job.

Adam Landy has served as a special trial judge on the Tax Court since 2021. He also has several years of experience at the Office of the IRS Chief Counsel in Baltimore, San Francisco, and in the private sector.

Kashi Way is a senior legislative counsel with the Joint Committee on Taxation staff. During his 18 years at the joint committee, Mr. Way had a major impact on just about every piece of energy tax legislation that has gotten any traction in the Congress, as well as a host of other tax bills. This committee and our staff will be sorry to lose Mr. Way on the joint committee, but he is, in my view, going to make an excellent Tax Court judge.

These two Tax Court nominees have experience in both the public and private sector. Their broad experience will be invaluable to take on the role as Tax Court judges.

I would also like to reiterate my strong support for the nomination of Rose Jenkins to serve on the Tax Court. She is a qualified nominee and will make an excellent judge. I will be working with my colleagues to ensure we can bring her nomination to the floor for a final confirmation vote as soon as possible so she can get to work for the American people.

Madam President, and let me just close by way of saying, I think it is particularly important—I see a number of my colleagues on the Finance Committee here—that we continue to work in a bipartisan way on this and that we make this experience more bearable and understandable for the citizens who are a part of it. And I think these nominees will help to do that.

So I close by saying, in my view, there is no question that these nominees are highly qualified for the roles that they are nominated to fill. We have worked on these in a bipartisan way. I support each of them. And when the Senate votes on their nominations, I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

Madam President, I would ask unanimous consent that the scheduled vote occur immediately.

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 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. 701, Kashi Way, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court for a term of fifteen years.

Charles E. Schumer, Ron Wyden, Alex Padilla, Debbie Stabenow, Catherine Cortez Masto, Mark Kelly, Jack Reed, Tim Kaine, John W. Hickenlooper, Christopher Murphy, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Richard Blumenthal, Benjamin L. Cardin, Christopher A. Coons, Margaret Wood Hassan, Chris Van Hollen, Tammy Baldwin, Tina Smith.

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 Kashi Way, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court for a term of fifteen years, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. Menendez), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. Warren), are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. Hagerty), the Senator from Utah (Mr. Lee), and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. Vance).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 78, nays 16, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 215 Ex.]

YEAS—78

Baldwin	Duckworth	Murkowski
Barrasso	Durbin	Murphy
Bennet	Fetterman	Murray
Blumenthal	Fischer	Ossoff
Booker	Gillibrand	Padilla
Boozman	Graham	Peters
Braun	Grassley	Reed
Britt	Hassan	Ricketts
Brown	Heinrich	Risch
Budd	Hickenlooper	Romney
Butler	Hirono	Rosen
Cantwell	Hoeven	Rounds
Capito	Johnson	Sanders
Cardin	Kelly	Schatz
Carper	King	Schumer
Casey	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cassidy	Lankford	Sinema
Collins	Lujan	Smith
Coons	Lummis	Stabenow
Cornyn	Manchin	Tester
Cortez Masto	Markey	Thune
Cotton	Merkley	Tillis
Crapo	Moran	Van Hollen
Daines	Mullin	Warner