

at a dangerous moment in its war against Putin. Ukrainian fighters remain determined and have not lost their resolve to defend their homeland, but what they are losing are ammunition and armaments, which America has played a leading role in providing. That aid is running out, much to Putin's delight.

Every Senator needs to understand the stakes. If the Senate does not approve more aid to Ukraine, the war, which is already trending in Russia's direction, could, a month from now, dramatically shift in Russia's favor. It is only trending in Russia's direction now because of the lack of armaments. As I quoted yesterday, a Ukrainian officer said that for every five salvos the Russians fire at his troops, he can only fire one salvo back.

A Russian victory in Ukraine would commence an ominous domino effect across the Europe continent of expanded Russian influence. That is not a world any of us want to return to.

In generations past, Democrats and Republicans would have bent heaven and Earth to stand up to Russian dictators, we would have balked at showing weakness to autocratic thugs who invade their neighbors and hope for America's demise.

We find ourselves in a new moment in history where democracy is under siege yet again. We heard directly from President Zelenskyy a few weeks ago about what is at stake if we fail. So fail we must not. It is, therefore, essential that we finish the work of passing the supplemental. It is one of the hardest things the Senate has done in a very long time; but for the sake of our national security, of our friends abroad, of our fundamental values, we must stay the course.

Of course, there are many difficulties with the supplemental, but we must keep our eye on the ball. We must get this done. Ukraine hangs in the balance.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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 ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, negotiations continue on border security reforms to be included in the national security supplemental, and I am thankful that after 3 years of chaos at our southern border, Democrats have, at least, finally come to the table, because it is long past time to get the situation under control.

As I said, for 3 years—almost since the day President Biden took office—we have confronted chaos at our southern border. Rather than improving, this crisis has just grown worse and

worse with time. Fiscal year 2021 saw a recordbreaking 1,734,686 migrant encounters at our southern border. Then fiscal year 2022 broke that record, and then fiscal year 2023 broke that record.

And if fiscal year 2024 continues on its current trajectory, we will, yet again, end up breaking another record. December reportedly saw a staggering 302,000 migrant encounters at our southern border—not only the highest December number ever recorded, but the highest number ever recorded for any month, period.

My colleague from Pennsylvania recently compared September's nearly 270,000 border encounters to having the entire population of Pittsburgh crossing our southern border in one month—in one month. The comparison is even more apt with December's numbers. We can't afford to have a major city's worth of illegal immigrants crossing our southern border every single month.

As border cities have long known and as major Democratic cities are now finding to their cost, this simply isn't sustainable. New York City, which has seen 150,000-plus migrants enter the city since last spring, is facing cuts to city services as a result of the influx. In fact, just yesterday, it was reported that Mayor Adams is actually temporarily removing students from their classrooms to house migrants.

It is not just New York that is overwhelmed; so are cities like Denver and Chicago. The mayor of Chicago recently noted that the situation his city and others are facing is "unsustainable." So there are massive practical problems associated with having a city's worth of people coming across our southern border each and every single month.

But that isn't the worst of it. The even bigger concern is the national security crisis that this represents. Our Nation cannot be secure while we have hundreds of thousands of migrants flooding across our southern border each month, frequently to end up released into the United States with court dates that are, literally, years into the future. The sheer volume smooths the way for criminals, terrorists, and other dangerous individuals to make their way into our country.

And there are dangerous individuals trying to make their way into our country. Make no mistake about that. During the first 2 months of fiscal year 2024 alone, 30 individuals on the Terrorist Watchlist were apprehended on our southern border. That is, literally, one every other day. Fiscal year 2023 saw 169 individuals on the Terrorist Watchlist apprehended at our southern border, which was more than the previous six fiscal years combined. If we continue on our current trajectory, we will break the 2023 record this year. And that is deeply concerning.

Those are just the individuals the Border Patrol is actually apprehending. We have no way of knowing how many dangerous individuals have

entered our country over the past years without—without being apprehended. Since the beginning of fiscal year 2021, there have been more than 1.7 million known "got-aways," and those are individuals the Border Patrol saw but was unable to apprehend. Since October 1 alone, there have been more than 83,000 known "got-aways." That is 83,000 individuals entering our country without our knowing who they are, why they are here, or where in the United States they are going. And there is no way—no way—of telling how many unknown "got-aways" there have been.

With the current chaos at our southern border, there is no question that some individuals are managing to make it into the United States completely undetected.

With so many illegal immigrants arriving at our border these days, planning to get caught so they can take advantage of the Biden administration's lax asylum and parole policies, it is especially concerning to see these "got-aways" who are working to evade Border Patrol. Some of them may, indeed, be entering the United States simply hoping for a better life, but it is highly likely that a number of them have more malign intentions.

I mean, think about it. You look at the number of people just in the month of October: 1,569 convicted criminals got in the country, 50 gang members, 93 people who have had warrants for their arrest, and 12 terrorists. That was one month—just one month. And those are the people that were apprehended. Think about those "got-aways," which I mentioned—83,000 known "got-aways" since October 1—and then the unknown "got-aways" who you assume are people who know how to evade law enforcement and figured out how to get into the country illegally. The point simply is this: Our southern border has become a portal for people with all kinds of malign interests to get into this country.

Now, arguably, there was a time when people came here from places like Central and South America in pursuit of a better life; and, obviously, you can't blame them for leaving the places where they lived and wanting to live in the United States. They come here legally. We have ways of people getting into this country legally; laws that should be followed. We are a nation of laws. But the fact that people like terrorists, like criminals, like cartels who are trafficking in who knows what—weapons, drugs, humans—we know how many people are dying every year from fentanyl in this country—our southern border is out of control. It is a danger to our national security, and it is a threat to the safety and security of every community in this country, whether you are on the border or not.

Now, people used to think of this issue as something that just affects people along the southern border. It is not. I just mentioned New York, Chicago, Denver, facing very, very hard

decisions because they don't know how to manage this huge influx of migrants coming into their communities. And, again, many of them are coming here for reasons that are, perhaps, understandable; nevertheless, still in violation of our laws. But now what is most concerning is the very fact that so many of these people being apprehended have criminal records, are members of gangs, or, worse yet, are on the Terrorist Watchlist.

What do you think they are doing trying to get into this country? Seems pretty obvious to me. And some day, we are going to face something in this country, they are going to trace back some incident harmful to America that they are going to trace back to somebody who came across the southern border. And this administration and these lax policies and their unwillingness to enforce the law are going to be responsible for it.

Mr. President, we are a nation of immigrants. I have said that many times. My own grandfather was an immigrant. Immigrants have helped build this country into what it is today. I am a strong supporter of legal immigration. As I said, we have ways for people to come here; but we are, first and foremost and fundamentally and foundationally, a nation of laws. We will only be able to remain a nation of laws as long as the law is respected and enforced, meaning this: Immigration needs to be legal. We need to know who is coming into our country and why.

So I am very much hoping that in the very near future, the ongoing border negotiations will produce real reforms that will help us finally regain operational control of our southern border; because 3 years of chaos is 3 years too many. It is time to get this done.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, for the information of the Senate, on behalf of the leader, I ask that yesterday's order with respect to the Crews nomination be executed at 11:30 a.m. today.

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

NOMINATION OF S. KATO CREWS

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I am delighted the Presiding Officer is in the Chair for this conversation about Judge Kato Crews.

Today, I rise in strong support of President Biden's nominee for the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado, Judge Kato Crews.

Judge Crews is a true son of Colorado. He was born in Pueblo, in the

high desert, in the southern part of our State. His family didn't have a lot while he was growing up, but his parents worked hard and always put their kids first.

Since he was in middle school, Judge Crews knew he wanted to become a lawyer. His dad was a solo practitioner in Pueblo, and although Judge Crews didn't really know what his father did for work, he knew that he was helping people and that he had the respect of the community.

Judge Crews attended public high school in Rye, CO, which is a small town in the San Isabel foothills, where he was the only African-American male in his entire school. He earned a B.A. from the University of Northern Colorado and then a J.D. from the University of Arizona, where he served on the law review, where he made the dean's list, and offered pro bono services to survivors of domestic violence.

After law school, Judge Crews returned to Colorado to serve as an attorney for the National Labor Relations Board, where he investigated and prosecuted charges of unfair labor practices.

He spent the next 17 years after that in private practice—first at a large firm in Denver, where he made partner, and later at a smaller firm that he founded with colleagues. In private practice, Judge Crews focused on civil litigation and employment law, representing both workers and employers. He tried approximately 18 cases before Federal courts, State courts, and administrative agencies, serving as chief or sole counsel in jury trials, bench trials, and administrative proceedings.

For the last 5 years, he has served as a magistrate judge for the Federal District of Colorado. In this role, he has performed most tasks expected of a district court judge on the Federal bench, from handling evidentiary proceedings to all matters before, during, and after trial.

During his time on the bench, Judge Crews saw how pro se litigants often struggled to advocate for themselves. He also saw younger lawyers who were eager for courtroom experience. So he founded a program to connect the two, giving young lawyers in Colorado, for the first time, valuable time in court and pro se litigants free help to navigate certain proceedings that these young lawyers were capable of handling.

That is just one example of Judge Crews going the extra mile and of his commitment to making the legal system more accessible—a lifelong commitment to making the legal system more accessible to litigants, to future lawyers, and to the community it serves, most importantly.

As Colorado's first African-American magistrate, Judge Crews spends as much time as he can in the community by serving on nonprofit boards, mentoring students, and using the power of his example to help young Coloradans imagine a career in law for themselves.

Former mentors and colleagues all describe Judge Crews as a true public servant who works hard, who never loses his poise, and who never forgets where he came from. He is one of the most accessible judges on the bench in our State, and he knows the law as well as anyone.

Judge Crews knows what it means to try a case as a litigator and to preside over one as a judge. He has practiced law for the government and for firms both large and small. He has tried cases from the perspectives of employees and employers, for clients with a lot of money and resources and for clients with none at all.

If confirmed, Judge Crews will follow in the footsteps of Judge Moore, who has taken senior status, to become the only African-American judge on the district court. Judge Crews will become the only district court judge born and raised in Pueblo, CO, and that means something to me and to the Presiding Officer, bringing a really important perspective to the bench from a critical but sometimes overlooked part of our State.

With his experience, with his intellect, and with his character, Judge Crews will make a remarkable addition to Colorado's district court, and I urge my colleagues to confirm, this morning, Judge Crews with a strong bipartisan vote.

I would say, before I surrender the floor to my colleague from Colorado, what an extraordinary job he has done in providing leadership to the selection of these judges and to the nominations of these judges for President Biden to consider. It is extraordinary. We have had a number of vacancies on the district court, and we have worked very hard together to make sure those vacancies are filled in as expeditious a way as possible—in fact, I would argue, probably more expeditiously than any other Federal district court in the country. That would not have happened without the leadership of Senator HICKENLOOPER, who, with his team when he came into office, observed that the process that I had in place was a little bit creakier than maybe it should have been. Together, we have been able to improve it.

I want to say thank you also to the tireless advisory committee members of the bar in Colorado, who have given us their best recommendations all along the way, including the recommendation that has now led to the nomination of Judge Kato Crews and, hopefully, to his confirmation today.

With that, I yield the floor, and I look forward to the next speaker.

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

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