

continue to undermine and test America's limits, making all of us less safe.

It is incumbent upon those here today that we continue the important work of ensuring that our soldiers have the support and resources necessary to continue keeping America safe.

Summer wouldn't be the same without the Missouri State Fair, a great opportunity to meet with and listen to Missourians from across our State. There was truly a lot of fun and food in Sedalia. I get asked that question: What is your favorite thing about the State fair? It has got to be the food, from the Cattlemen's Beef House to the Pork Palace and everywhere in between that has things like fried Oreos and everything else you can imagine that is fried. We were also proud to host our inaugural "Pork Steaks and Policy" at the State fair.

Safe to say, it was a success. A lot of food was eaten. But more importantly, we had a lot of great conversations, hearing directly from farmers and ranchers across Missouri on how I can continue to advocate for them here in the Senate.

Of course, there were also some fun moments from August, including visiting with Coach Eli Drinkwitz, the head football coach at Mizzou, the No. 6-ranked Mizzou Tigers, and the campus's new athletic director, Laird Veatch, and touring their new facilities.

Lastly, I was proud to join a group of bipartisan Senators on a congressional delegation to Asia, particularly Japan and South Korea, to better understand how the United States could continue to work with our partners in the Indo-Pacific, particularly as China continues to become an increasing threat to those countries and our country.

Meeting with leaders in Japan and South Korea gave us all a frontline view of what is needed in the region and how the United States, and especially Missouri, can continue to be a strong ally in the Indo-Pacific.

When I asked Missourians for their vote not even 2 years ago, I promised that I would fight for them. The most important part of my job will always be serving the people of my State. It was great to be back home in August, and I look forward to taking those conversations I had with Missourians and addressing their concerns right here in Washington.

I yield the floor.

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. 780, Mary Kay Lanthier, of Vermont, to be United

States District Judge for the District of Vermont.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Laphonza R. Butler, Benjamin L. Cardin, Mazie Hirono, Chris Van Hollen, Ben Ray Lujan, Brian Schatz, Thomas R. Carper, Margaret Wood Hassan, Christopher Murphy, Tammy Duckworth, Tina Smith, Jack Reed, Patty Murray, Amy Klobuchar.

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 Mary Kay Lanthier, of Vermont, to be United States District Judge for the District of Vermont, 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. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote or change their vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 235 Ex.]

YEAS—55

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

NAYS—42

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

NOT VOTING—3

Kennedy	Rounds	Vance
---------	--------	-------

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 55, the nays are 42.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Mary Kay

Lanthier, of Vermont, to be United States District Judge for the District of Vermont.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I rise today to discuss the confirmation of four pending U.S. attorney nominations.

Currently, in the United States, we have 85 U.S. attorneys. There are several from my State, and depending on your population, it really indicates how many numbers you have. Those U.S. attorney nominations are filled by the incumbent President of the United States. Recommendations are made to the U.S. Senate, and we advise and consent on those nominations. After examinations of their backgrounds, we vote on these individuals to become U.S. attorneys.

Now, we have an agreement that has endured for a number of Presidents over a number of years which says that these will be fairly routine—in fact, very routine. The fact is that each one of the U.S. attorney nominations goes through a review by the Senate Judiciary Committee, by both Democrats and Republicans, and if they pass that review without controversy, they move to the floor for a vote.

To give you an idea of how that works for the Members on the other side who are relatively new to the Senate, when President Donald Trump made nominations of U.S. attorneys, he made 85 nominations. Each one of those nominations came to the floor of the U.S. Senate, and they were approved by voice vote, unanimous consent. In other words, not even a rollcall was required. It was the routine approval of U.S. attorneys' nominations in a situation where a body like the Senate would have a majority of Democrats but approve a nomination from a Republican President by voice vote—no controversy moving forward.

Why is it even important to fill these vacancies? Because these 85 U.S. attorneys are literally the people who implement the policies of the Department of Justice. If the Department of Justice of the United States decides that we are going to have a serious effort under a President to go after fentanyl, for example, or narcotics, for example, or some crimewave in another area, it is the U.S. attorney who runs the play. He is the quarterback in that U.S. attorney's district. So these turn out to be fairly critical.

Some of us stayed up late last night to watch the debate, and in that debate, there was a discussion of crime in the United States and what we were going to do to stop it. Well, both of the candidates—regardless of party—would be in favor of reducing crime. I am assuming that every one of my colleagues who is on the floor now and wishes to speak would put themselves in the same category. We want to stop crime in our States and in our country,

and we rely on the Department of Justice to do that. The one who leads the effort in each and every State is the U.S. attorney.

In this circumstance, we have four nominees for U.S. attorney who have been waiting patiently for the approval of the U.S. Senate. On seven previous occasions, I have requested unanimous consent—the same process that was followed with every single one of Donald Trump's U.S. attorneys. I requested unanimous consent of the Senate to take up and confirm law enforcement nominees nominated by President Joseph Biden. Each and every time, the junior Senator from Ohio—now running for Vice President of the United States—has objected.

I asked him on many occasions when we came to the floor and raised this question: What objection do you have to this U.S. attorney nominee?

He said at the time: I don't have any objection to this nominee. I object to the Department of Justice, and I want to stop U.S. attorneys from being appointed nationwide.

Communities across America desperately need their top Federal prosecutors in place. U.S. attorneys lead the Nation's effort to prosecute violent criminals and protect our communities from violent crime, child exploitation, terrorism, and much more. The U.S. Attorney's Offices in the four districts I am talking about today are no exception.

I just left a meeting this morning. We gathered about 40 or 50 leaders from across the United States to talk about child trafficking. Child trafficking, of course, is a Federal crime, prosecuted by the Department of Justice in each and every one of our States where it happens. I can't think of a more awful situation for a person to live through as those this morning who talked about what they lived through before the prosecution took place and the person was removed from the State. I would not want to play political games with those nominations.

Those U.S. attorneys do critical work in each and every State. We felt that way under President Trump, and that is why we allowed his U.S. attorney nominees to move forward by voice vote. I think President Biden is entitled to the same treatment.

The entire Nation has been impacted by the opioid epidemic. Ohio is one of the States that has been hit the hardest. In 2023, nearly 4,500 Ohio residents died from accidental drug overdoses. This story can be told over and over in State after State. The U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Ohio can focus her attention on combating this drug crisis with the DEA's Operation Overdrive. This operation is set up at a location in Toledo due to the city's "copious violent crimes, including homicides, shootings, assaults, and drug overdoses."

We are talking about serious prosecutions and a team of effective professionals to fight them, not just in Ohio

or in Illinois but around the Nation. Instead, this nomination—one of them today which I am suggesting, the nomination of Rebecca Lutzko—has languished for more than a year because of the objection of the junior Senator from Ohio. It may have helped that Senator to make that decision for some other reason, but it certainly doesn't help the fighting of crime in his home State to have a vacancy in this office. He is harming Americans and undermining public safety across the country for reasons I can't explain.

The Senate has a long history of confirming U.S. attorney nominees as I said. We have done it by unanimous consent. We have made it fairly routine, as it should be. All 85 of President Donald Trump's nominees for U.S. attorney were filled by unanimous consent. The Senate has a long history of following that practice. Before President Biden took office, the last time the Senate required a rollcall on a U.S. attorney was in 1975—49 years ago. You have to go back 49 years to find an objection to a U.S. attorney nominee.

At the beginning of a new Presidential administration, it is customary for the U.S. attorney to step down and for the new President to select replacements. That is why, during the Trump administration, we moved so many so quickly. Senate Democrats allowed every single one of President Trump's nominees to be confirmed by unanimous consent, many of whom we would not have personally selected, but it is just as a courtesy to a new President to fill the vacancy. It wouldn't have been fair or realistic to force the Senate to debate and vote on every single one of these nominees. Each one of these votes is a process which eats up several days of the calendar. We already do that for nominations for the Federal bench. It would not have been fair or realistic to expect it for U.S. attorneys. So we respected the then-President. We respected our colleagues, and we respected the need for the Senate to have confirmed leadership in the U.S. Attorney's Office.

We put public safety and the needs of law enforcement ahead of politics. We have done it always when it has come to U.S. attorneys until now. The Senator from Indiana and some of his colleagues have set an unfortunate standard. They are putting us on a path to require cloture and confirmation votes on every U.S. attorney nominee. Talk about a waste of time. That would be a terrible waste of time. This is entirely unsustainable, which is something everyone here knows.

Without Senate-confirmed leadership for U.S. attorneys, public safety will suffer across the United States. Candidates cannot vote to delay these nominations and then stand up and say they are for law and order, and they want to fight crime. We shouldn't be playing politics. I don't know the reason behind this—I believe it is entirely political—but I hope my colleagues will think twice about it. What we do

to one another will likely be revisited and become a precedent in the Senate to the detriment of everyone.

These highly qualified nominees that I nominate today—the four of them—have the strong support of their home State Senators, including of several members of the Republican caucus. If President Biden has been accused of misuse of the Justice Department, we shouldn't take that out on these individuals who are competent and qualified to keep us safe.

Until we confirm them, law enforcement agencies in Iowa, Massachusetts, and Ohio will be stymied in their ability to fight crime.

Don't be giving a speech that says "I want to have a real assault on crime in my State or my district" and then turn around and stop the prosecutor from being appointed who has that job. Otherwise, that would be a temporary appointment, and the effort cannot be as effective as it might be. That is a loss to the Nation, and it creates a danger to the people living in that particular State.

So, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 544, 545, 604, and 605—those are the nominations of Matthew Gannon to serve as U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Iowa, Rebecca Lutzko to serve as U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, Joshua Levy to serve as U.S. attorney for the District of Massachusetts, and David Waterman to serve as U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Iowa; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc without any intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The junior Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. HAGERTY. Madam President, reserving the right to object, these are Biden-Harris Department of Justice nominees. What is the Biden-Harris Department of Justice focused on right now? Multiple prosecutions of former President Donald J. Trump.

Never before in history has a major American Presidential candidate been criminally charged, much less by his campaign opponent's Department of Justice. Yet, in the middle of this Presidential election, the Biden-Harris Justice Department has brought two different prosecutions against their Presidential election opponent. Other Democrat prosecutors have brought three other sets of charges. These cases have been timed to peak during the election.

So right now, President Biden's election opponent is on trial in five separate jurisdictions—all by partisan Democrat prosecutors, all on different charges, and all peaking right in the middle of this Presidential campaign.

This begs a simple question: Is this coordinated election interference or is this merely a coincidence?

It is beyond credulity that these charges would have been brought against anyone but President Trump—especially five different prosecutions all brought during the Presidential election. The contortions of fact and law underlying these prosecutions testify to that.

So do the political campaign promises and Presidential commands behind the prosecutions underscore this? Of course they do.

The New York Times reported in April of 2022 that President Biden told advisers that he wanted his Justice Department to prosecute President Trump. Shortly thereafter, his Justice Department dutifully appointed Jack Smith to prosecute President Trump.

When Alvin Bragg ran for district attorney, he campaigned on getting Trump. He did just that, using a made-up, never-before-pursued theory.

When Letitia James ran for New York attorney general, she said that her entire campaign was about getting President Trump. Even Democrat Representative DAN GOLDMAN called it “an individualized political vendetta.” Five years later, in the middle of the campaign, she brought a baseless case for a \$454 million fine—unheard of. This is a case of “show me the man, and I will show you the crime.” It is also blatant election interference. It is outrageous to many Americans. It violates our basic principles of blind justice and the rule of law.

I am not going to consent to the expeditious confirmation of any more Biden Department of Justice nominees until the American people get a chance to reject this politicized administration of justice.

I will say this: If these nominees were truly important to Senate Democrats, they would schedule votes on them. Senate Democrats held me for 30 hours of cloture when I came through this process. They are not doing the same here.

Therefore, I would like to reserve the right to object, and I want to withhold my objection to allow the junior Senator from Missouri to be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Missouri.

Mr. SCHMITT. Madam President, before I get started on this, I thank my colleague from Tennessee.

I also want to note to my friend from Illinois that we are not doing anything else on this floor. We are certainly not moving an appropriations process. We could be doing appropriations bills in September, but CHUCK SCHUMER doesn't want to do any of that. So all we are doing is nominations. If you feel so strongly about these individuals, go through the process.

Also, it is curious to mention precedent being raised here in this. I, in my first term here in the Senate, just witnessed for the first time in American history—first time ever—an Articles of

Impeachment coming over to this Chamber, and we didn't have a trial. So forgive me if I don't want to be lectured about precedence. There is a process to get this done. We will never have an opportunity to have a trial on Mayorkas like we should have had.

But I digress. My objection here today is not specific to the qualifications of the individuals who have been nominated. My objection instead is to the fact that we live in a time right now—and as a lawyer, this is deeply saddening—where the Department of Justice and other government Agencies are being politicized and weaponized. This is angering the American people, and it should.

American history has no shortage of important moments marked by statesmen making difficult decisions which balance the outrages of the moment with the long-term stability of our Republic.

Throughout this last year, many of us have denounced here the weaponization of the Justice Department by Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS. What many in the political establishment don't care to acknowledge is that this is resonating even more with American working folks who believe that there is a two-tiered system of justice in our country, and it is being unlawfully applied.

From Hillary Clinton's “mis-handling” of classified information to President Joe Biden doing the same, the American public has watched certain people be immune from consequences for their actions.

Biden-Harris are attempting to throw their political opponent, Donald Trump, in jail for the rest of his life. It is wrong. They are trying to interfere with this election, and that is why we stand here on the floor today.

So if you are not part of the exclusive club or if you dare to fight back against its monopoly on power, you are held to a different standard. Those brave enough to fight the system are not only expected to play by the rules but also subject to capricious, legal, and inconsistent lawfare—banana republic stuff. If this were happening in another country, our State Department would be warning us about it. It is happening right here under our noses.

These political attacks undermine the American people's faith in their government—a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. We all are one people, and we must only have one standard of which we are judged in our courts. We must immediately halt our creep toward tyranny.

So until the Justice Department resumes its focus on applying equal justice under the law instead of engaging in partisan lawfare against President Trump, I will join my colleagues here today.

I withhold my objection to allow the senior Senator from Alabama to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I rise today to join my colleagues in objecting to the fast-tracking of Biden-Harris's U.S. attorney nominations. This is a commitment we publicly made in June because of President Biden and HARRIS's unprecedented attacks on Donald Trump. It didn't have to be this way, but the Biden-Harris administration chose to target its political opponent in an election year. This is the direct result of the weaponization of a justice system they created.

This administration has shown time and time again that it is willing to do whatever it takes to maintain power. Whether it is lawfare against President Trump or allowing illegals to vote in elections, this administration is hell-bent on election interference.

If we don't return to the principles of our Constitution, we will be no better than Venezuela or communist China.

As long as this administration remains weaponized against the will of the American people, my answer is no. This is why I am objecting to unanimous consent of these U.S. attorney nominees today. It is not my intent to attack these nominees individually; rather, it is my intent to use my right as a Senator to restore the faith in the rule of law in the United States of America. It won't end well if we continue down this path.

I, for one, will never stop fighting against this weaponization of the Federal Government, I don't care who it is. By continuing to stand up for what is right, I believe Americans' faith in our institutions will be restored.

I withhold my objection to allow the junior Senator from Tennessee to be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. HAGERTY. Reserving the right to object, Madam President, I want to thank my colleagues from Missouri, from Alabama, and my colleague from Ohio who has led this effort.

For the reasons I stated earlier, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Did you hear that? The Department of Justice is too partisan. The Department of Justice is too partisan. It is interesting to note that two of the prosecutions of Donald Trump are not even starting at the Department of Justice. They come from State prosecutions in the States of Georgia and New York, not Washington.

So these nominees for U.S. attorney are being held up because of decisions made by some other prosecutor in another State? Apparently, that is the case in this situation.

I just have to say that at least in one of the prosecutions in New York, they have been successful in bringing a case against the former President and convicting him of felony counts—34, if I

am not mistaken. So there is some merit to it that goes beyond any question of intrigue in Washington, DC.

Let me also add that, as far as I can tell, this Department of Justice has tried to take a reasonable position to avoid conflicts of interest. In this circumstance, we have a special attorney who is appointed to prosecute the President's own son—the President's own son—this Department of Justice, which is being accused of being partisan in this situation. There is no precedent for that in history. It is a clear effort by the Biden administration to deal fairly with a painful situation personally.

Well, you look at this and you say: Well, what point have colleagues made today? They have made the point that in these four places in the United States—Iowa on two occasions, Massachusetts, and in Ohio—that the competent professionals for prosecutor—that these competent positions will not be filled with individuals who they admitted on the floor they have no objection to.

What is the net result of this? It means that crimes that are being committed or allegedly being committed in these States are not going to be prosecuted as aggressively as they should.

Don't give me a speech about wanting law and order and safety in community and then turn around and say: To make a political point, we are going to stop sending prosecutors to these areas. It is inconsistent, it doesn't follow, and it is unfortunate.

I am sorry, for these four individuals who are worthy candidates to be U.S. attorneys, that this happened today. It has happened before.

It is a sad day if this is going to be a new precedent, that any President coming in a new term is going to face this kind of an obstacle course for the routine appointment of individuals to enforce the law across the United States. We will not be a safer nation because of this political strategy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. HAGERTY. If the Senator from Illinois would allow, I would just like to respond to two points regarding the politicization of the Justice Department.

One of them is the fact that Mr. Colangelo from the Department of Justice was moved to the State of New York to undertake subsequent State-level prosecutions. That is certainly deep involvement by this Department of Justice in the State-level prosecutions that has taken place here.

The other is the reference to the son of the sitting President and his prosecution. I will point out that this Department of Justice allowed and made certain that the statute of limitations on far more serious charges expired. That is politicization in the Department of Justice.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Connecticut.

23RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2001
ATTACK

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, as all of us know and the Nation today commemorates, 23 years ago we experienced the unthinkable. Our Nation went through an unspeakable, massive terrorist attack on our own soil for the first time in our history.

The attacks on September 11 reshaped the world as we know it even today and changed our country to its core. Nearly 3,000 innocent lives were lost, and countless more were forever impacted as families and loved ones carry their memory. Thousands survived the attacks, but they were forever changed as well—physically, emotionally, and in many other ways.

No matter how many years go by, the survivors and victims of the September 11 attacks and their families will always be in our hearts. And many of them live in Connecticut, and we remember them and their loved ones today.

As all of us know, this unimaginable loss shook our Nation to its core, and now, more than two decades later, we remain committed to honoring the survivors and the fallen. We remember the people we lost, but we should also remember the survivors; the loved ones of the fallen; the first responders, who continue to bear the wounds of that day and the successive days; the veterans, who bear the visible and invisible wounds of war because the ripple effects of that attack on September 11 continue to haunt us. And we should remember not just the horror of that day but also the heroism, because in the days and weeks afterward as well as on that day, that heroism helped to bring us together as a nation as never before or since.

We were as one in those days. And all of us have memories—especially in Connecticut and other States impacted directly in our losses—of the vigils, the conversations, and the acts of kindness and generosity, most of them totally unrecorded and many of them now perhaps unremembered.

But in remembering the great heroes whom we lost, in their honor, we should also remember the loved ones who survived them. That is the reason that we have the Victim Compensation Fund, and that is the reason that we are fighting for justice, for them, so that their rights are vindicated. Whether it is in court or through diplomatic channels, they deserve justice against all who were complicit in the unspeakable, horrific acts of that day, all who supported them and who enabled them.

That is the reason why, in Congress, I have helped to lead efforts to keep the courthouse doors open to their legal action, along with a bipartisan group that, in fact, overrode the veto of a President on JASTA. So, justice for the loved ones.

And the wounds of that day will never completely heal because we suffered losses that we will never forget—

our friends who lost lives. In Connecticut, we gather every year in one of our most beautiful parks, Sherwood Island in Westport, where there is a memorial. Every year, many of those loved ones come for a ceremony that is both solemn and exquisitely beautiful, and every year we lay flowers at that memorial as part of our remembering.

But we also know that on that day, first responders rushed toward danger. They ran into burning buildings. And many of the firemen and police from Connecticut spent weeks breathing in toxic chemicals from burning jet fuel and concrete filled with asbestos that has led thousands of them to develop chronic medical conditions that require ongoing medical treatment and consistent monitoring for the delayed onset of illnesses such as cancer.

That is why, in 2010, Congress created the World Trade Center Health Program to provide healthcare services with no out-of-pocket costs—none—to those directly impacted. This program treats first responders and survivors for many chronic illnesses and respiratory diseases, including asthma, sinusitis, obstructive pulmonary disease, and other kinds of health issues directly associated with the 9/11 attacks that continue to grow and evolve.

Over the years, there have been efforts to cut funding for this crucial program. To be clear, let us resolve on this day that defunding the World Trade Center Health Program would be an unforgivable betrayal of the thousands of individuals who risked their lives in the 9/11 attack. I will continue fighting against any attempt to strip even one first responder or survivor of the healthcare they deserve.

In Connecticut, as of June 2024, 1,365 individuals were enrolled in this program. They deserve that we continue this support, and that is also why I am proud to join my colleagues in introducing the 9/11 Responder and Survivor Health Funding Correction Act. It ensures that the World Trade Center Health Program receives permanent and mandatory funding while updating the outdated funding formula to prevent a shortfall that would put survivors and first responders at risk of losing access to healthcare.

We cannot afford, in terms of conscience and conviction, this betrayal of our solemn obligation to those first responders and their families—and likewise to veterans—thousands of them—who now bear the invisible wounds of war, from PTS to the cancer or hypertension or other kinds of medical conditions resulting from their exposure to the poisons and toxic chemicals in burn pits and elsewhere during their fight for our Nation in Iraq and Afghanistan. We need to keep faith with them.

The PACT Act should be fully funded, robustly supported by Congress, and never abandoned. I will continue to fight to support the PACT Act but also to support outreach so that more veterans are aware of these benefits and

the care that is offered by the Veterans Administration—the screening that can help save them from diseases that will be less severe if they are stopped earlier. Again, cancer is one of the great enemies.

We vow again today: Never forget. Those two words are probably repeated on this day, year after year, more often than any other time: Never forget. But never forgetting is more than just words. It is a commitment to honor the memories of the fallen with action—the fallen on 9/11, the fallen who died afterward from diseases that resulted from 9/11, the fallen among our veterans who gave their lives or now suffer medical conditions resulting from their service. We will never forget in action as well as in words—in deed, as well as in rhetoric. That has to be the promise that we keep today.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BUTLER). The majority leader is recognized.

23RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, ATTACK

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, this morning, I stood at Ground Zero in New York, joining President Biden, Vice President HARRIS, New York leaders, and thousands of New Yorkers to mark the 23rd anniversary of 9/11. So many of those who lost loved ones were there remembering. It has been 23 years.

Every day, I wear this flag pin in my lapel as a reminder of our sacred promise to never forget. Today, the pin is a little heavier. I called the day after 9/11—9/12—I called on Americans to wear the flag, to display it out their windows or wear it on their clothing as a show of solidarity and a show of our anguish over so many who were lost and, at that time, missing. I have worn the flag every day since—every day since—because I never forget.

I knew people who were lost: a guy I played basketball with in high school; a businessman who helped me on the way up; a firefighter I went around the city with, urging people to donate blood. And so it is a tough day.

It has been 23 years since 9/11, but I remember it like yesterday—the smell of the pile, the images of destruction that New Yorkers had never seen before. I remember the chilling and other-worldly images of people lining up on the sidewalks, hundreds of them with pictures because no one knew who was dead or who wasn't. Unfortunately, very few survived.

But the pictures: "Have you seen my daughter Mary?" "Have you seen my brother John?" I will never forget them. And I had some of those pictures donated to the 9/11 museum.

I remember people I knew, as I said, who died in the attack. But I also remember the heroism: first responders disregarding their own safety and running toward danger to save others. I remember New Yorkers going out of their way to help each other; complete

strangers joining to pray together, grieve together, and work together to rebuild and heal.

Many had run down those stairs to escape the conflagration in the towers and left their shoes behind. And right a block away was a guy with a shoestore just handing out shoes to people. That is the kind of people New Yorkers are and Americans are.

Twenty-three years later, our sacred obligation to care for the survivors and their families continues. In the last 2 years, I secured nearly \$1.7 billion in funding for the World Trade Center Health Program, which helps first responders and survivors treat cancers and respiratory sicknesses and mental health and more. I thank Senator GILLIBRAND, who has been a great partner on this, and the New York delegation in the House—bipartisan.

Earlier this year, we introduced legislation to make funding for this program permanent so that our 9/11 heroes and families don't have to keep coming down to Washington to ask and advocate for the care they deserve.

In the last Congress, I was proud to work with my colleagues to pass the Fairness for 9/11 Families Act, which finally compensated those who were wrongly left out of the Victims of State Sponsored Terrorism Fund.

That is what "never forget" means. It is not a passive promise. It is an active commitment to work every day to ensure that survivors of those terrible days are provided for. It is a prayer that America may find the strength and grace to always endure; to always weather the storm; to always come back from adversity stronger, more united than before, and never turn on each other but to be unified in our strength and our camaraderie.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Madam President, on the CR, a few hours ago, Speaker JOHNSON announced he delayed a vote scheduled for today on his partisan, insufficient, and deeply flawed CR proposal. Frankly, no one should be surprised that Speaker JOHNSON is having trouble with his bill. It is not a serious effort at keeping the government open. It is a political document, not a substantive one.

The Speaker's proposal suffers from many fatal flaws. Above all, it emits and shortchanges so many critical programs that Americans rely on every day. For one, the Speaker's proposal underfunds the Department of Veterans Affairs by \$12 billion. That means veterans exposed to burn pits and who develop cancers and other diseases would struggle to get the care they need.

The Speaker's proposal would also be a disaster for our Armed Forces. You can't run a military with a 6-month funding patch. The Secretary of Defense warned it would hurt defense readiness, hamstringing recruitment, risk crucial investments in our defense industrial base, and delay repairs and weapon modernization.

Again, you can't run a military at a 6-month patch at a time. They have to

have contracts. They have to do research. They have to do planning.

The Speaker's proposal is also a non-starter for border security and immigration and law enforcement. His bill would effectively end a crucial law enforcement effort to stop drug smuggling, cartels, and money laundering. It fails to extend funding for E-Verify, H-2B visas, and programs that have stopped drugs like fentanyl. All this from a Republican proposal, the party that supposedly loves to talk about border security. But talk is all it is if you take this stuff out of the bill.

And, of course, if you are one of the tens of millions of Americans who rely on Social Security or disability benefits, watch out. The Speaker's proposal contains no additional funding for the Social Security Administration's operating budget, which would lead to delayed benefits, understaffed or closed field offices, and longer wait times for applications.

The Speaker's CR fails on healthcare. It would endanger Federal funding for telehealth services, which is one of the most important ways rural Americans get access to the care they need.

The CR also fails to extend funding for community health centers, which is often the only resource for millions of Americans who live in poverty or near poverty but fall in that gray zone right above the Medicaid line. And with the community health centers, they get good healthcare. Those will be gone.

And the Speaker's plan fails to do anything on the farm bill, which if it expires would send farmers over the dairy cliff in December, risking closure of farms and sending costs of products like milk and cheese through the roof. So it would cost the average consumer.

Now, we all know the endgame here for the hard right, a 6-month stopgap measure means we have a funding fight all over again in March, at the beginning of a new administration. It is pretty transparent that the hard right wants to delay this fight until then in hopes of being able to pass the bulk of Donald Trump's Project 2025 agenda.

And we all know what 2025 is about, the hard right wants to turn our country inside out and institute the most conservative agenda America has seen in modern history. Project 2025 would mean the end of the Department of Education. It would eliminate Head Start Programs, which help millions of kids in poverty get a good start on their education.

It would wipe out funding that helps kids get free and reduced lunch at school. It would send the cost of childcare shooting up, leaving parents exasperated and making it harder for them to make a living.

Project 2025 would also betray our veterans. It would lead to cuts to disability benefits by shrinking medical conditions that qualify. It would revive a Trump-era commission that would defund VA hospitals, including the only VA hospital on Long Island, the Northport VA. How cruel can you get?