

S. RES. 811

Whereas, on September 4, 2024, a student violently opened fire at Apalachee High School in Winder, Georgia;

Whereas this reprehensible action resulted in the deaths of 2 students and 2 teachers—

(1) Christian Angulo, age 14, a son and brother;

(2) Richard William “Ricky” Aspinwall II, age 39, a husband, dad, son, coach, and teacher;

(3) Cristina Irimie, age 53, a teacher, wife, daughter, and friend; and

(4) Mason Schermerhorn, age 14, a son and brother;

Whereas 9 additional victims were injured and hospitalized;

Whereas countless other students, teachers, and staff experienced significant trauma and mental anguish as a result of this shooting;

Whereas the entire Winder, Georgia, community has been tragically and irrevocably affected by this tragedy; and

Whereas all children should be able to attend school without fearing for their lives: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the violence that occurred at Apalachee High School in Winder, Georgia, on September 4, 2024;

(2) honors the memory of the victims—

(A) Christian Angulo;

(B) Richard William “Ricky” Aspinwall II;

(C) Cristina Irimie; and

(D) Mason Schermerhorn;

(3) extends its deepest condolences and support to their friends and families, and to the communities of Apalachee High School and Winder, Georgia;

(4) expresses hope for those wounded to recover fully and quickly;

(5) offers appreciation and gratitude to law enforcement, first responders, healthcare workers, and teachers and faculty for their bravery and decisive action; and

(6) reaffirms its duty to protect the safety and security of all people in the United States.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3244. Mr. LUJÁN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3245. Mr. CASSIDY (for himself, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. SCHMITT, and Mr. KELLY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3246. Mr. KAINE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3247. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3248. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3249. Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. ROUNDS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3250. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him

to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3251. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3252. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3253. Mr. CASSIDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3254. Ms. ERNST submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3255. Mr. OSSOFF submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3256. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. WYDEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3257. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. PADILLA) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3258. Mr. LUJÁN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3259. Mr. WARNOCK (for himself and Mr. MORAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3260. Mr. BUDD (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3261. Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. CORNYN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3262. Mr. HICKENLOOPER (for himself and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3263. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3264. Mr. YOUNG (for himself and Mr. COONS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3265. Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. KELLY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3244. Mr. LUJÁN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title XXXI, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . EXPANSION OF AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF ENERGY REGARDING PROTECTION OF CERTAIN NUCLEAR FACILITIES AND ASSETS FROM UNMANNED AIRCRAFT.

Section 4510(e)(1)(C) of the Atomic Energy Defense Act (50 U.S.C. 2661(e)(1)(C)) is amended by striking “owned by the United States or contracted to the United States, to” and inserting “owned by or contracted to the Department of Energy, including facilities that”.

SA 3245. Mr. CASSIDY (for himself, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. SCHMITT, and Mr. KELLY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle H of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1095. ELIGIBILITY OF SPOUSES FOR SERVICES UNDER THE DISABLED VETERANS' OUTREACH PROGRAM.

Section 4103A of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “and eligible persons” after “eligible veterans”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (C), by inserting “, and eligible persons,” after “Other eligible veterans”;

(B) in paragraph (2), by inserting “and eligible persons” after “veterans” each place it appears; and

(C) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by inserting “or eligible person” after “veteran” each place it appears; and

(ii) by inserting “or eligible person’s” after “veteran’s”;

(2) in subsection (d)(1)—

(A) by inserting “and eligible persons” after “eligible veterans” each place it appears; and

(B) by striking “non-veteran-related”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subsection:
“(e) ELIGIBLE PERSON DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘eligible person’ means—

“(1) any spouse described in section 4101(5) of this title; or

“(2) the spouse of any person who died while a member of the Armed Forces.”.

SA 3246. Mr. KAINE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title VIII, add the following:

SEC. 855. WARM BASE MANUFACTURING PILOT PROGRAM TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE DOMESTIC MANUFACTURING SURGE CAPACITY FOR WARFIGHTER EMERGENCY MEDICAL-GRADE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF PILOT PROGRAM.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall establish a pilot program to be

known as the “Assuring Critical Infrastructure to Supply Warfighter Emergency Medical-grade Personal Protective Equipment Pilot Program”.

(b) SELECTION OF INSTALLATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Hemispheric Affairs, shall select geographically diverse locations in the United States that can surge medical-grade personal protective equipment for warfighters to respond to national or international public health emergencies.

(2) PRIORITIZATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In selecting locations under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Defense shall give priority to domestic facilities where the Department has already invested funds to transform medical-grade personal protective equipment raw materials into finished products that are essential to maintain warfighter health and safety in the event of a national or international public health emergency.

(B) ADDITIONAL PRIORITY.—In selecting locations under paragraph (1), preference should be given to installations that—

- (i) have the presence of critical transportation infrastructure immediately adjacent to the selected domestic facility that facilitates expedited inbound transportation of medical-grade personal protective equipment raw materials and outbound transportation of finished medical-grade personal protective equipment;
- (ii) are ISO 13815 certified;
- (iii) are subject to periodic audit by the Food and Drug Administration;
- (iv) have the ability to provide and quickly surge medical-grade personal protective equipment for warfighter use;
- (v) have the capacity to support expansion of non-woven fabric production; and
- (vi) can minimize raw material production waste by utilizing a scrap reclamation process.

SA 3247. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle F of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1291. PROHIBITION ON INVESTMENT BY UNITED STATES PERSONS IN ENERGY SECTOR OF VENEZUELA UNTIL THE LEGITIMATE RESULTS OF THE JULY 28, 2024, ELECTION ARE EXPECTED.

(a) PROHIBITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the following transactions are prohibited:

(A) Any transaction by a United States person, or an entity owned or controlled by a United States person, to invest, trade, or operate within the energy sector of Venezuela, including the provision of goods, services, or finance to—

- (i) Petroleos de Venezuela, S.A., or subsidiaries, representatives, or related companies of Petroleos de Venezuela, S.A.; or
- (ii) the regime of Nicolas Maduro or any nondemocratic successor government in Venezuela.

(B) Any transaction that evades or avoids, has the purpose of evading or avoiding,

causes a violation of, or attempts to violate the prohibition under subparagraph (A).

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The prohibitions under paragraph (1) shall apply—

(A) to the extent provided by law and regulations, orders, directives, or licenses that may be issued pursuant to this section; and

(B) notwithstanding any contract entered into or any license or permit granted before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION; PENALTIES.—

(1) IMPLEMENTATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, may take such actions, including prescribing regulations, as are necessary to implement this section.

(B) IEEPA AUTHORITIES.—The Secretary of the Treasury may exercise the authorities provided to the President under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) to the extent necessary to carry out this section.

(2) PENALTIES.—A person that violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of subsection (a) or any regulation, license, directive, or order issued to carry out that subsection shall be subject to the penalties set forth in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) to the same extent as a person that commits an unlawful act described in subsection (a) of that section.

(c) RESPONSIBILITY OF OTHER AGENCIES.—All agencies of the United States Government shall take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of this section.

(d) TERMINATION OF PROHIBITION.—The prohibitions under subsection (a) shall terminate on the date on which the President submits to Congress a determination that the regime of Nicolas Maduro has recognized the July 28, 2024, electoral victory of Edmundo Gonzalez and relinquished power to the legitimately democratically elected government in Venezuela.

(e) UNITED STATES PERSON DEFINED.—In this section, the term “United States person” means—

- (1) a United States citizen or alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States;
- (2) any entity organized under the laws of the United States or any jurisdiction within the United States (including a foreign branch of any such entity); and
- (3) any person physically located in the United States.

SA 3248. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title VI, add the following:

SEC. 630. EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR CERTAIN BENEFITS THAT ARISE FROM THE DEATH OF A MEMBER OF THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) DEATH GRATUITY.—Section 1475(a)(4) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by striking “for a period of more than 13 days”.

(b) RECOVERY, CARE, AND DISPOSITION OF REMAINS.—Section 1481(a) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(11) Any person not otherwise covered by this section whose death entitles a survivor of such person to a death gratuity under section 1475 of this title.”.

(c) ELIGIBILITY FOR ASSISTANCE FROM A CASUALTY ASSISTANCE OFFICER.—Section 633 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 (Public Law 113-66; 10 U.S.C. 1475 note) is amended—

- (1) in subsection (a)—
 - (A) in paragraph (1)—
 - (i) in subparagraph (A), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;
 - (ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and
 - (iii) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) an individual not described in subparagraph (A) or (B) who is entitled to a death gratuity under section 1475 of title 10, United States Code.”; and
 - (B) in paragraph (2)—
 - (i) by striking “spouses and dependents” each place it appears and inserting “survivors”; and
 - (ii) in subparagraph (A), by striking “spouses and other dependents of deceased members” and inserting “such survivors”; and
 - (2) in subsection (b)(2), by striking “the spouse and other dependents of a deceased member of the Armed Forces” and inserting “such a survivor”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to a death that occurs on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3249. Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. ROUNDS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . STUDY AND REPORT ON DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE USE OF CHINESE-MADE UNMANNED GROUND VEHICLE SYSTEMS AND PROHIBITION ON DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PROCUREMENT AND OPERATION OF SUCH SYSTEMS.

(a) STUDY AND REPORT ON USE IN DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SYSTEMS OF CHINESE-MADE UNMANNED GROUND VEHICLE SYSTEMS.—

(1) STUDY AND REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall—

- (A) conduct a study on the use in Department of Defense systems of covered unmanned ground vehicle systems made by covered foreign entities; and
- (B) submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the findings of the Secretary with respect to the study conducted pursuant to subparagraph (A).

(2) ELEMENTS.—The study conducted pursuant to paragraph (1)(A) shall cover the following:

- (A) The extent to which covered unmanned ground vehicle systems made by covered foreign entities are used by the Department, including a list of all such covered unmanned ground vehicle systems.
- (B) The extent to which covered unmanned ground vehicle systems made by covered foreign entities are used by contractors of the Department.
- (C) The nature of the use described in subparagraph (B).

(D) An assessment of the national security threats associated with using covered unmanned ground vehicle systems in applications of the Department. Such assessment shall cover concerns relating to the following:

- (i) Cybersecurity.
- (ii) Technological maturity of the systems.
- (iii) Technological vulnerabilities in the systems that may be exploited by foreign adversaries of the United States.

(E) Actions taken by the Department to identify covered foreign entities that—

- (i) develop or manufacture covered unmanned ground vehicle systems; and
- (ii) have a military-civil nexus on the list maintained by the Department under section 1260H(b) of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law 116-283; 10 U.S.C. 113 note).

(F) The feasibility and advisability of directing the Defense Innovation Unit, or another entity in the Department of Defense, to develop a list of United States manufacturers of covered unmanned ground vehicle systems.

(G) A recommendation on whether a prohibition on the procurement and operation of covered unmanned ground vehicle systems is in the best interest of the Department.

(b) PROHIBITION ON PROCUREMENT AND OPERATION BY DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OF COVERED UNMANNED GROUND VEHICLE SYSTEMS FROM COVERED FOREIGN ENTITIES.—

(1) PROHIBITION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, except as provided in paragraph (2), the Secretary of Defense may not procure or operate any covered unmanned ground vehicle system that is manufactured or assembled by a covered foreign entity.

(B) APPLICABILITY TO CONTRACTED SERVICES.—The prohibition under subparagraph (A) with respect to the operation of covered unmanned ground vehicle systems applies to any such system that is being used by the Department of Defense through the method of contracting for the services of such systems.

(2) EXCEPTION.—The Secretary of Defense is exempt from any restrictions under subsection (a) in a case in which the Secretary determines that the procurement or operation—

(A) is required in the national interest of the United States; and

(B) is for the sole purposes of—

(i) research, evaluation, training, testing, or analysis for electronic warfare, information warfare operations, cybersecurity, or the development of unmanned ground vehicle system or counter-unmanned ground vehicle system technology; or

(ii) conducting counterterrorism or counterintelligence activities, protective missions, Federal criminal or national security investigations (including forensic examinations), electronic warfare, information warfare operations, cybersecurity activities, or the development of unmanned ground vehicle system or counter-unmanned ground vehicle system technology.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED FOREIGN COUNTRY.—The term “covered foreign country” means any of the following:

- (A) The People’s Republic of China.
- (B) The Russian Federation.
- (C) The Islamic Republic of Iran.
- (D) The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

(2) COVERED FOREIGN ENTITY.—The term “covered foreign entity” means an entity that is domiciled in a covered foreign country or subject to influence or control by the

government of a covered foreign country, as determined by the Secretary of Defense.

(3) COVERED UNMANNED GROUND VEHICLE SYSTEM.—The term “covered unmanned ground vehicle system”—

(A) means a mechanical device that—

(i) is capable of locomotion, navigation, or movement on the ground; and

(ii) operates at a distance from one or more operators or supervisors based on commands or in response to sensor data, or through any combination thereof; and

(B) includes—

(i) remote surveillance vehicles, autonomous patrol technologies, mobile robotics, and humanoid robots; and

(ii) the vehicle, its payload, and any external device used to control the vehicle.

SA 3250. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle H of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1095. EXTENSION OF THE ALASKA NATIVE VIETNAM ERA VETERANS LAND ALLOTMENT PROGRAM.

Section 1119(b)(3)(B) of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (43 U.S.C. 1629g-1(b)(3)(B)) is amended by striking “5-year period” and inserting “10-year period”.

SA 3251. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SECTION 1228. SUPPORTING SYRIAN CIVILIANS.

(a) SHORT TITLES.—This section may be cited as the “Supporting Syrian Civilians Act” or the “Caesar Act 2.0”.

(b) MODIFICATIONS TO THE CAESAR SYRIA CIVILIAN PROTECTION ACT OF 2019.—

(1) CAESAR SYRIA CIVILIAN PROTECTION ACT OF 2019.—Section 7412(a) of the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019 (title LXXIV of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020; 22 U.S.C. 8791 note) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “the President shall impose” and all that follows and inserting the following: “the President—

“(A) shall impose the sanctions described in subsection (b) with respect to a foreign person that the President determines—

“(i) knowingly engages, on or after such date of enactment, in an activity described in paragraph (2); or

“(ii) is owned or controlled by a foreign person described in clause (i); and

“(B) may impose the sanctions described in subsection (b) with respect to a foreign person that the Secretary of State determines knowingly provides, on or after such date of enactment, significant financial, material, or technological support to a foreign person engaging in an activity described in any of

subparagraphs (B) through (H) of paragraph (2).”;

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by amending clause (i) to read as follows:

“(i) the Government of Syria (including any entity owned or controlled by the Government of Syria), a senior political figure of the Government of Syria, a member of the People’s Assembly of Syria, or a senior foreign political figure (as defined in section 101.605 of title 31, Code of Federal Regulations) of the Arab Socialist Ba’ath Party of Syria, including any such senior foreign political figure who is a member of the Central Command, Central Committee, or Auditing and Inspection Committee of such Party;”;

(II) in clause (ii), by striking “; or” and inserting a semicolon;

(III) in clause (iii), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(IV) by adding at the end the following:

“(iv) Syria Arab Airlines, Cham Wings, or any foreign person owned or controlled by Syria Arab Airlines or Cham Wings;”;

(ii) by amending subparagraph (C) to read as follows:

“(C) knowingly sells or provides aircraft or spare aircraft parts—

“(i) to the Government of Syria; or

“(ii) on behalf of the Government of Syria to any foreign person operating in an area directly or indirectly controlled by the Government of Syria or foreign forces under the direction or control of the Government of Syria;”;

(iii) in subparagraph (D), by striking “or” at the end;

(iv) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(v) by adding at the end the following:

“(F) purposefully engages in or directs—

“(i) the significant diversion of valuable goods (including agricultural commodities, food, medicine, and medical devices) or any international humanitarian assistance intended for the people of Syria; or

“(ii) the dealing in the significant misappropriation of proceeds from the sale or resale of such significant diverted goods or international humanitarian assistance, as the case may be;

“(G) knowingly engages in, or attempts to engage in, the significant seizure, confiscation, theft, or expropriation for personal gain or political purposes of significant property, including real property, in Syria or owned by a citizen of Syria; or

“(H) knowingly and directly engages in, or attempts to engage in, a transaction or transactions for or with seized, confiscated, stolen, or expropriated property described in subparagraph (G).”.

(2) REPORT ON CAESAR SYRIA CIVILIAN PROTECTION ACT OF 2019.—

(A) DEFINED TERM.—In this paragraph, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(i) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(ii) the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate;

(iii) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives; and

(iv) the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives.

(B) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for the following 3 years, the Secretary of the Treasury, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees describing the implementation of sanctions under the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019, as amended by this section.

(C) ELEMENTS.—Each report submitted pursuant to subparagraph (B) shall describe—

(i) all individuals or entities sanctioned under the authorities granted by the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019;

(ii) all individuals and entities determined to be eligible for sanction under the authorities granted by the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019 who have not yet been sanctioned under such authorities;

(iii) all individuals and entities currently under consideration for sanction under the authorities granted by the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019; and

(iv) the steps taken to explain to financial institutions sanctions liability under the authorities granted by the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019 and the date such steps were taken.

(D) FORM.—Each report required under subparagraph (B) shall be submitted in an unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex that is submitted separately from the unclassified report.

(3) EXCEPTIONS.—Section 7432 of the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019 (22 U.S.C. 8791 note) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 7432. EXCEPTIONS.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY.—The term ‘agricultural commodity’ has the meaning given such term in section 102 of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 (7 U.S.C. 5602).

“(2) GOOD.—The term ‘good’ means any article, natural or manmade substance, material, supply, or manufactured product, including inspection and test equipment, and excluding technical data.

“(3) MEDICAL DEVICE.—The term ‘medical device’ has the meaning given the term ‘device’ in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).

“(4) MEDICINE.—The term ‘medicine’ has the meaning given the term ‘drug’ in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).

“(b) EXCEPTION TO COMPLY WITH UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES.—Sanctions under this Act shall not apply with respect to the admission of an alien to the United States if admitting or paroling such alien into the United States is necessary—

“(1) to permit the United States to comply with the Agreement regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, between the United Nations and the United States, or other applicable international obligations of the United States; or

“(2) to carry out or assist authorized law enforcement activity in the United States.

“(c) EXCEPTION TO COMPLY WITH INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES.—Sanctions under this Act shall not apply to any activity subject to the reporting requirements under title V of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3091 et seq.) or any authorized intelligence activities of the United States.

“(d) HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE.—Sanctions under this Act shall not apply to—

“(1) the conduct or facilitation of a transaction for the provision of agricultural commodities, food, medicine, medical devices, or humanitarian assistance, or for other humanitarian purposes; or

“(2) transactions that are necessary for, or related to, the activities described in paragraph (1).”

(4) EXTENSION OF SUNSET.—Section 7438 of the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019 is amended by striking “the date that is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act” and inserting “December 31, 2028”.

(5) DETERMINATIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE SYRIA TRUST FOR DEVELOPMENT.—

(A) DEFINED TERM.—In this paragraph, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(i) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(ii) the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate;

(iii) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives; and

(iv) the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives.

(B) DETERMINATIONS.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall—

(i) determine whether the nonprofit organization chaired by Asma Al-Assad, the First Lady of Syria, known as the “Syria Trust for Development” meets the criteria for the imposition of sanctions—

(I) under section 7412(a) of the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019, as amended by paragraph (1);

(II) under Executive Order 13894 (84 Fed. Reg. 55851; relating to blocking property and suspending entry of certain persons contributing to the situation in Syria); or

(III) by nature of being owned or controlled by a person designated under any executive order or regulation administered by the Office of Foreign Assets Control; and

(ii) submit to the appropriate congressional committees each such determination, including a justification for the determination.

(C) FORM.—Each determination required to be submitted under subparagraph (B)(ii) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but the justification specified in such paragraph may be included in a classified annex. The unclassified determination shall be made available on a publicly available website of the Federal Government.

(c) STATEMENT OF POLICY REGARDING THE PROHIBITION OF RECOGNITION OF THE ASSAD REGIME.—It is the policy of the United States—

(1) to not recognize or normalize relations with any Government of Syria that is led by Bashar al-Assad due to the Assad regime’s ongoing crimes against the Syrian people, including failure to meet the criteria outlined in section 7431(a) of the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019 (22 U.S.C. 8791 note);

(2) to actively oppose recognition or normalization of relations by other governments with any Government of Syria that is led by Bashar Al-Assad, including by fully implementing the mandatory primary and secondary sanctions in the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019 and Executive Order 13894 (84 Fed. Reg. 55851; relating to blocking property and suspending entry of certain persons contributing to the situation in Syria);

(3) to continue to actively advance the national interests of the United States in Syria, including—

(A) counterterrorism and counternarcotic operations;

(B) the provision of humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people, including earthquake-related early recovery; and

(C) significant diplomatic efforts towards the advancement of a political solution to the Syrian conflict in adherence with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254 (2015); and

(4) to take all necessary steps to secure—

(A) the release of Austin Tice and other hostages and unjustly detained United States nationals within Syria; and

(B) the repatriation of the remains of United States nationals killed by the Assad regime or by the Islamic State in Syria, including Majd Kamalmaz, Kayla Mueller, James Foley, Peter Kassig, and Steven Sotloff.

(d) INTERAGENCY STRATEGY TO COUNTER NORMALIZATION WITH ASSAD REGIME.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(A) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(i) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(ii) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate;

(iii) the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate;

(iv) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives;

(v) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

(vi) the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives.

(B) COVERED TRANSACTION.—The term “covered transaction” means a transaction, including an investment, grant, contract, or donation (including a loan or other extension of credit) by a foreign person that is a representative, citizen, or entity incorporated exclusively under the laws of the Republic of Türkiye, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Libya, or Lebanon to a recipient located in any area of Syria controlled by the Assad regime.

(2) REPORT REQUIRED.—

(A) SUBMISSION.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for a period not to exceed 3 years, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury and the heads of other appropriate Federal departments and agencies, shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that describes—

(i) the steps taken or planned to be taken by foreign governments to normalize or upgrade political, diplomatic, or economic ties with the regime led by Bashar al-Assad in Syria (referred to in this Act as the “Assad regime”); and

(ii) the actions taken by the United States Government to counter such steps.

(B) ELEMENTS.—The report submitted pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall include—

(i) a description of—

(I) violations of international law and human rights abuses committed by Bashar al-Assad, the Government of the Russian Federation, or the Government of Iran; and

(II) progress made towards achieving justice for the Syrian people and accountability for the violators;

(ii) a list, including the identification of—

(I) any single covered transaction exceeding \$2,500,000; and

(II) any combination of covered transactions by the same source within a 12-month period that exceed \$2,500,000, in the aggregate;

(iii) for each identified single transaction or aggregate transactions, as the case may be, included in the list described in clause (ii), a determination of whether such transaction subjects any of the parties to the transaction to sanctions under the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019, as amended by subsection (b);

(iv) a description of the steps the United States is taking to actively deter recognition or normalization of relations by other governments with the Assad regime, including specific diplomatic engagements and the use of economic sanctions authorized by Federal statutes or implemented through Executive Orders, including—

(I) the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019 (22 U.S.C. 8791 note);

(II) the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act (22 U.S.C. 2151 note);

(III) the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8501 et seq.);

(IV) Executive Order 13894 (84 Fed. Reg. 55851; relating to blocking property and suspending entry of certain persons contributing to the situation in Syria);

(V) the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act (22 U.S.C. 10101 et seq.);

(VI) the Countering American Adversaries through Sanctions Act (22 U.S.C. 9401 et seq.); and

(VII) the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act (title VIII of Public Law 106-120; 21 U.S.C. 1901 et seq.); and

(v) an assessment of how recognition of, or normalization of relations with, the Assad regime by other governments impacts—

(I) the national security of the United States;

(II) the material benefits of such recognition or normalization to the Assad regime;

(III) the normalizing government prospects for the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254;

(IV) prospects for justice and accountability for war crimes in Syria; and

(V) the benefits derived by the Government of the Russian Federation or the Government of Iran.

(3) TEMPORAL SCOPE.—The initial report required under paragraph (2) shall address the period beginning on January 1, 2022, and ending on the date of the enactment of this Act. Each subsequent report shall address the 1-year period immediately following the last day covered by the most recently submitted report.

(4) FORM.—Each report required under paragraph (2) shall be submitted in an unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

(e) REPORTS ON MANIPULATION OF UNITED NATIONS BY THE ASSAD REGIME IN SYRIA.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for a period not to exceed 5 years, the Secretary of State shall submit a report to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives that describes the manipulation of the United Nations by the Assad regime, including—

(A) a description of conditions, both explicit and implicit, set by the Assad regime with respect to United Nations operations in Syria, including with respect to implementing partners, hiring practices, allocation of grants and contracts, and procurement of goods and services;

(B) the identification of officials or employees of the United Nations (including funds, programs, and specialized agencies of the United Nations) with ties to the Assad regime, or persons designated for sanctions by United Nations donor countries;

(C) an account of access restrictions imposed by the Assad regime and the overall impact of such restrictions on the ability of the United Nations to equitably deliver international assistance to target beneficiaries in areas outside the control of the Assad regime;

(D) a description of ways in which United Nations aid directly benefits the Assad regime and its associates;

(E) a description of the due diligence mechanisms and vetting procedures in place to ensure entities contracted by the United Nations to ensure goods, supplies, or services provided to Syria do not have links to the Assad regime, known human rights abusers, or persons designated for sanctions by United Nations donor countries;

(F) the identification of entities affiliated with the Assad regime (including the Syria Trust for Development and the Syrian Arab

Red Crescent), foreign government ministries, and private corporations owned or controlled by the Assad regime, which have received United Nations funding, contracts, or grants or have otherwise entered into a formalized partnership with the United Nations;

(G) an assessment of how the Assad regime sets arbitrary or punitive exchange rates to extract funding from the United Nations, and the total amount extracted by such means; and

(H) a strategy for—

(i) reducing the ability of the Assad regime to manipulate or otherwise influence the United Nations and other aid operations in Syria; and

(ii) ensuring that United States and international aid is delivered in a neutral and impartial manner consistent with basic humanitarian principles.

(2) FORM.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

(f) BRIEFING BEFORE FORCE POSTURE CHANGE.—Not later than 15 days before any decision to withdraw United States forces from any part of Syria where such forces are being deployed, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State shall jointly brief the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate, the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives on the likely impacts of such withdrawal.

(g) ECONOMIC SUPPORT FUNDS FOR SYRIA.—

(1) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(A) the humanitarian situation in areas of northwest Syria that are not controlled by the Assad regime remains dire, which is due in large part to ongoing attacks, diversion of cross-line assistance, and corruption by the Assad regime;

(B) Syrian refugees and their host communities—

(i) are under significant strain due to the prolonged conflict in Syria; and

(ii) require significant assistance from the international community;

(C) it remains unsafe for Syrian refugees to return to Syria absent a formal cessation of hostilities and significant implementation of the principles laid out in United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254 (2015);

(D) the forced return of Syrian refugees to Syria absent their consent or the aforementioned conditions violates the principle of non-refoulement; and

(E) host countries must not forcibly return refugees to Syria without their consent absent a formal cessation of hostilities and significant implementation of the principles laid out in United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254 (2015).

(2) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States—

(A) to provide humanitarian funding to northwest Syria outside of mechanisms controlled by the Assad regime;

(B) to maintain basic services for communities in northwest Syria outside of Assad regime control;

(C) to oppose the refoulement or otherwise forcible return of Syrian refugees and provide significant assistance to Syrian refugees and their host communities; and

(D) to work with partners and allies to support the efforts described in subparagraphs (A) through (C).

(3) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE FOR NORTHWEST SYRIA.—There is authorized to be appropriated, in addition to amounts already appropriated for such purpose, \$10,000,000 in Economic Support Funds for the Syria Civil

Defense (commonly known as the “White Helmets”).

(4) REPORT AND STRATEGY ON STABILIZATION FUNDING FOR NORTHWEST SYRIA.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, shall submit a report to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives that assesses—

(i) the feasibility of providing stabilization funding to areas of northwest Syria that are not under the control the Assad regime; and

(ii) the risks that such funds will be diverted and steps to counter such risks.

(B) FORM.—The report required under subparagraph (A) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

(5) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(A) STABILIZATION ASSISTANCE FOR NORTHWEST SYRIA.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated \$20,000,000 in Economic Support Funds for stabilization funding in areas of northwest Syria that are not under the control of the Assad Regime.

(ii) BRIEFING REQUIRED.—None of the funds appropriated pursuant to clause (i) may be expended until a senior official of the Department of State provides a briefing regarding such expenditure to—

(I) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(II) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(III) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives; and

(IV) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(B) FUNDS FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES.—There is authorized to be appropriated \$50,000,000 in Economic Support Funds to support Syrian refugees and host communities in the Middle East and North Africa.

(h) COUNTERING CAPTAGON TRAFFICKING.—

(1) REPORT ON STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for the following 3 years, the Secretary of State shall submit a report to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives describing the implementation of the strategy submitted by the Secretary of State pursuant to section 1238(c) of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117-263).

(B) ELEMENTS.—Each report required under subparagraph (A) shall include—

(i) the amount of funds obligated for the previous fiscal year in support of the strategy referred to in such subparagraph; and

(ii) a description of how such funds have supported each of the elements described in such strategy.

(C) FORM.—Each report required under subparagraph (A) shall be submitted in an unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex that is transmitted separately from the unclassified report.

(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated, in addition to any funds already appropriated for such purpose, \$10,000,000 from the International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE) account to counter the production and trafficking of Captagon in the Middle East and North Africa, especially such trafficking carried out by the Assad Regime and Hezbollah.

(i) BRIEFING ON STEPS TO FREE AUSTIN TICE AND REPATRIATE AMERICAN REMAINS FROM SYRIA.—

(1) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:
(A) Austin Tice, an American journalist, was kidnapped on August 14, 2012.

(B) Majd Kamalmaz, an American psychotherapist, was detained by the Assad regime in February 2017, and subsequently murdered in captivity by the Assad regime.

(C) Kayla Mueller and Peter Kassig, 2 American aid workers, and James Foley and Steven Sotloff, 2 American journalists, were all United States citizens who were murdered in Syria while being held in captivity by the Islamic State.

(2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the Sense of Congress that the United States Government should take all necessary steps—

(A) to secure the release of Austin Tice and other Americans unjustly detained in Syria; and

(B) to secure the return of the remains of Majd Kamalmaz, Kayla Mueller, James Foley, Peter Kassig, and Steven Sotloff.

(3) BRIEFING REQUIRED.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and annually thereafter for the following 5 years, the President shall provide a briefing to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives regarding—

(A) efforts by the United States Government—

(i) to secure the release of Austin Tice and other unjustly detained Americans in Syria; and

(ii) to secure the return of the remains of Majd Kamalmaz, Kayla Mueller, James Foley, Peter Kassig, Steven Sotloff, and other United States nationals killed in captivity in Syria; and

(B) the steps the United States Government is taking to keep the families of such persons informed of its efforts to secure the release of such persons or the return of their remains.

SA 3252. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title XII, add the following:

Subtitle G—Supporting Democracy and the Rule of Law in the Republic of Georgia

SEC. 1291. SHORT TITLES.

This subtitle may be cited as the “Georgian People’s Act” or the “GPA Act”.

SEC. 1292. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) On April 9, 1991, the Republic of Georgia declared independence from the Soviet Union, and on March 24, 1992, the United States and Georgia established formal diplomatic relations.

(2) Since 1993, the territorial integrity of Georgia has been reaffirmed by the international community and numerous United Nations Security Council resolutions.

(3) At the 2008 Summit in Bucharest, NATO recognized the aspirations of Georgia to join NATO and committed that Georgia would become a member of the Alliance.

(4) On August 7, 2008, the Russian Federation invaded Georgia and thereafter occupied 20 percent of its territory, all of which it continues to occupy.

(5) On January 9, 2009, the United States and Georgia signed the United States-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership, affirming the close relationship between the United States and Georgia based on the shared principles of democracy, free markets, defense and security cooperation, and cultural exchanges.

(6) Georgia made significant contributions to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and was the largest troop contributor among NATO partners to the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan.

(7) The United States and Georgia have maintained a strong security partnership, including the U.S.-Georgia Security Cooperation Framework, signed in November 2019, and the Georgia Defense and Deterrence Enhancement Initiative, launched in October 2021.

(8) The United States supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders and condemns the continued occupation by Russia of the Georgian regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

(9) The United States has continuously supported the democratic wishes of the Georgian people, who have long maintained their aspirations to join the European Union and NATO.

(10) During and following her tenure as United States Ambassador and Plenipotentiary to Georgia between 2020 and 2023, Kelly Degnan has been the subject of slander and verbal abuse from members of the Government of Georgia.

(11) As recently as October 2023, reputable polling indicates that 86 percent of the Georgian public support Georgia becoming a member of the European Union.

(12) Since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Georgia—

(A) has not imposed its own sanctions on Russia; and

(B) has increased economic ties, including initiating many direct flights to and from Russia;

(C) has eased visa requirements for Russians visiting Georgia; and

(D) is perceived as a conduit of Russia’s sanctions evasion endeavors.

(13) Since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, and the subsequent rounds of international sanctions placed on Russia as a result of such invasion, Georgia saw its trade with Russia grow by 34 percent between January and June 2023.

(14) Georgia’s geographic position as both a Black Sea littoral nation and its proximity to the Caspian Sea could further strengthen Georgia’s economy by transporting natural gas through the Trans-Caspian Gas Pipeline Project.

(15) In June 2022, when the Governments of Ukraine and Moldova received candidate status for membership in the European Union, the European Council stated it would only be ready to grant Georgia candidate status once the country has addressed the 12 priorities outlined by the European Commission.

(16) In December 2023, the European Union granted Georgia the status of candidate country, with the understanding that Georgia would act consistent with the recommendations of the European Commission by continuing to advance the outlined reform priorities and increasing its alignment with the European Union’s foreign and security policy positions.

(17) On February 24, 2023, a foreign agents bill was introduced in the Parliament of Georgia—

(A) to impose restrictions on civil society organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and independent media organizations; and

(B) to stigmatize such organizations as “foreign agents”.

(18) On March 7, 2023, the Parliament of Georgia accelerated the passage of that bill, which led to—

(A) large-scale protests that Georgian authorities confronted by deploying tear gas and water cannons; and

(B) the withdrawal of the bill by the Parliament.

(19) On April 15, 2024, the foreign agents bill, which was renamed “the Law on Transparency of Foreign Influence”, was reintroduced in the Parliament of Georgia with minor changes that did not reflect the express wishes of the Georgian people, which led to—

(A) large-scale protests in Tbilisi and around the country;

(B) harassment and intimidation of civil society activists and journalists; and

(C) the ejection of opposition parliamentarians from parliamentary hearings.

(20) On April 29, 2024, former Georgian Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili, who is currently the Honorary Chairman of the ruling Georgian Dream Party, gave a speech in which he—

(A) harshly attacked American and European partners;

(B) alleged that the goal of foreign funding of civil society and nongovernmental organizations in Georgia is to deprive Georgia of its state sovereignty; and

(C) promised to punish opposition political groups.

(21) In the face of massive, nation-wide protests against the foreign agents law, Georgian authorities have, in some cases, deployed disproportionate force against largely peaceful protestors, including—

(A) reportedly attacking journalists covering the protests and members of the political opposition; and

(B) threatening civil society leaders and family members of protestors at their homes.

(22) On May 14, 2024, the Parliament of Georgia passed the foreign agents bill against the wishes of the Georgian people.

(23) On May 21, 2024, the Venice Commission issued an opinion regarding Georgia’s foreign influence law in which it “strongly recommend[ed] repealing the Law in its current form, as its fundamental flaws will involve significant negative consequences for the freedoms of association and expression, the right to privacy, the right to participate in public affairs as well as the prohibition of discrimination.”

SEC. 1293. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States—

(1) to call on all political parties and elected Members of the Parliament of Georgia to continue working on addressing the reform plan outlined by the European Commission to advance Georgia’s recently granted candidate status, which the people of Georgia have freely elected to pursue;

(2) to call on the Government of Georgia to institute the required reforms, which are to be developed through an inclusive and transparent consultation process with opposition parties and civil society organizations;

(3) to express serious concern that impediments to strengthening the democratic institutions and processes of Georgia, including the foreign agents law, will slow or halt Georgia’s progress toward achieving its Euro-Atlantic aspirations, be perceived as stagnating the democratic trajectory of Georgia, and result in negative domestic and international consequences for the Government of Georgia;

(4) to impose swift consequences on individuals who are directly responsible for leading or have directly and knowingly engaged

in leading, actions or policies that significantly undermine the peace, security, stability, sovereignty, or territorial integrity of Georgia;

(5) to emphasize the importance of contributing to international efforts—

(A) to combat Russian aggression, including through sanctions on trade with Russia and the implementation and enforcement of worldwide sanctions on Russia; and

(B) to reduce, rather than increase, trade ties between Georgia and Russia;

(6) to call on all political parties, elected Members of the Parliament of Georgia, and officers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia to respect the freedoms of peaceful assembly, association, and expression, including for the press, and the rule of law, and encourage a vibrant and inclusive civil society;

(7) to call on the Government of Georgia to release all persons detained or imprisoned on politically motivated grounds and drop any pending charges against them;

(8) to call on the Government of Georgia to ensure that the national elections scheduled for October 2024 are free, fair, and reflective of the will of the Georgian people; and

(9) to continue impressing upon the Government of Georgia that the United States is committed to sustaining and deepening bilateral relations and supporting Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

SEC. 1294. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle:

(1) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives; and

(D) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(2) **FOREIGN AGENTS LAW.**—The term “foreign agents law” means the “On Transparency of Foreign Influence” law, which was passed by the Parliament of Georgia in May 2024.

(3) **GEORGIA.**—The term “Georgia” means the Republic of Georgia.

(4) **NATO.**—The term “NATO” means the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

(5) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of State.

CHAPTER 1—CONDITIONS ON ENGAGEMENT WITH GOVERNMENT OF GEORGIA

Subchapter A—Sanctions

SEC. 1295. DEFINITIONS.

In this chapter:

(1) **ADMISSION; ADMITTED; ALIEN.**—The terms “admission”, “admitted”, and “alien” have the meanings given such terms in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101).

(2) **APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.**—The term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(3) **FOREIGN PERSON.**—The term “foreign person” means any individual or entity that is not a United States person.

(4) **IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS.**—The term “immediate family members” has the meaning given the term “immediate relatives” in section 201(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1201(b)(2)(A)(i)).

(5) **KNOWINGLY.**—The term “knowingly”, with respect to conduct, a circumstance, or a result, means that a person has actual knowledge, or should have known, of the conduct, the circumstance, or the result.

(6) **UNITED STATES PERSON.**—The term “United States person” means—

(A) a United States citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States;

(B) an entity organized under the laws of the United States or any jurisdiction within the United States, including a foreign branch of such an entity; or

(C) any person within the United States.

SEC. 1295A. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—It shall be the policy of the United States to support the constitutionally stated aspirations of Georgia to become a member of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which—

(1) is made clear under Article 78 of the Constitution of Georgia; and

(2) is supported by an estimated 86 percent of the citizens of Georgia.

(b) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) acts of blocking Euro-Atlantic integration in Georgia, due to undue influence from corrupt or oligarchic forces, constitute a form of corruption;

(2) the United States should consider travel restrictions or sanctions on individuals responsible for any actions preventing Georgia from moving toward Euro-Atlantic integration, which include acts of violence or intimidation against Georgian citizens, members of civil society, and members of an opposition political party;

(3) the United States, in response to recent events in Georgia, should reassess whether recent actions undertaken by individuals in Georgia should result in the imposition of sanctions by the United States for acts of significant corruption and human rights abuses; and

(4) the United States should consider revoking the visas of nationals of Georgia and their family members who—

(A) live in the United States; and

(B) are determined to meet the criteria described in section 103(a).

SEC. 1295B. INADMISSIBILITY OF OFFICIALS OF GOVERNMENT OF GEORGIA AND CERTAIN OTHER INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN BLOCKING EURO-ATLANTIC INTEGRATION.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall identify and make a determination as to whether any of the following foreign persons has knowingly engaged in significant acts of corruption, or acts of violence or intimidation in relation to the blocking of Euro-Atlantic integration in Georgia:

(1) Any individual who, on or after January 1, 2014, has served as a member of the Parliament of the Government of Georgia or as a current or former senior official of a Georgian political party.

(2) Any individual who is serving as an official in a leadership position working on behalf of the Government of Georgia, including law enforcement, intelligence, judicial, or local or municipal government.

(3) An immediate family member of an official described in paragraph (1) or a person described in paragraph (2).

(b) **CURRENT VISAS REVOKED.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in subsections (d) and (e), the visa or other entry documentation of any alien described in subsection (a) is subject to immediate revocation regardless of the issue date of such visa or documentation.

(2) **IMMEDIATE EFFECT.**—A revocation of a visa or other entry documentation of any alien pursuant to paragraph (1) shall, in accordance with section 221(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1201(i))—

(A) take effect immediately; and

(B) cancel any other valid visa or entry documentation that is in the possession of such alien.

(c) **BRIEFING.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall brief the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives about—

(1) any foreign person for whom the Secretary has determined has knowingly engaged in an activity described in subsection (a); and

(2) the specific facts that justify each such positive determination.

(d) **WAIVER.**—The Secretary may waive the application of subsection (b) if the Secretary determines that—

(1) such waiver would serve a compelling national interest; or

(2) the circumstances which caused the individual to be ineligible for a visa have sufficiently changed.

(e) **EXCEPTION TO COMPLY WITH INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES.**—Subsection (b) shall not apply with respect to an alien if admitting or paroling such alien into the United States is necessary—

(1) to permit the United States to comply with the Agreement regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, between the United Nations and the United States, or other applicable international obligations of the United States; or

(2) to carry out or assist authorized law enforcement activity in the United States.

Subchapter B—Improving Bilateral Relations With Georgia

SEC. 1296. UNITED STATES STRATEGY TOWARD GEORGIA.

(a) **STATEMENT OF POLICY ON GEORGIA.**—It is the policy of the United States—

(1) given that the Government of Georgia has passed the foreign agents law and other legislation further inhibiting its ability to advance its accession into the European Union—

(A) to take into consideration these new laws when formulating the United States Government's policy toward Georgia; and

(B) to review all forms of foreign and security assistance made available to the Government of Georgia; and

(2) to reevaluate its policy toward the Government of Georgia if the Government of Georgia takes the required steps—

(A) to reorient itself toward its European Union accession agenda; and

(B) to advance policy or legislation reflecting the express wishes of the Georgian people.

(b) **5-YEAR UNITED STATES STRATEGY FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH GEORGIA.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, in coordination with the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a detailed strategy that—

(1) outlines specific objectives for enhancing bilateral ties which reflect the current domestic political environment in Georgia;

(2) determines what tools, resources, and funding should be available and assess whether Georgia should remain the second-highest recipient of United States funding in the Europe and Eurasia region;

(3) determines the extent to which the United States should continue to invest in its partnership with Georgia;

(4) explore how the United States can continue to support civil society and independent media organizations in Georgia; and

(5) determine whether the Government of Georgia remains committed to expanding trade ties with the United States and Europe and whether the United States Government should continue to invest in Georgian projects.

SEC. 1296A. REPORT ON REVIEW OF FOREIGN ASSISTANCE TO GEORGIA.

(a) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in coordination with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development and other relevant Federal agencies, shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that—

(1) outlines all assistance provided by any United States Government agency to the Government of Georgia that primarily provides material aid, reputational advantage, or sustenance to state actors, officials, or their proxies who undermine the democracy of Georgia and enable Russian aggression within and outside of Georgia;

(2) provides a detailed overview of each project; and

(3) sets forth associated funding allocations, including projected funding for each project.

(b) **SUSPENSION OF PROJECTS.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall suspend all programming in Georgia carried out by the Department of State that primarily provide material aid, reputational advantage, or sustenance to state actors, officials, or their proxies who undermine the democracy of Georgia and enable Russian aggression within and outside of Georgia unless the Secretary certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that such programming is in the national security interests in the United States.

(c) **REPROGRAMMING FUNDS.**—The Secretary may reprogram any amounts used for programming that is suspended pursuant to subsection (b) to other initiatives taking place in other countries in the Eurasia region after notifying the appropriate congressional committees.

SEC. 1296B. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING SUSPENSION OF UNITED STATES-GEORGIA STRATEGIC DIALOGUE.

It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary should suspend the United States-Georgia Strategic Partnership Commission, established through the United States-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership on January 9, 2009, until after the Government of Georgia takes measures—

(1) to represent the democratic wishes of the citizens of Georgia; and

(2) to uphold its constitutional obligation to advance the country towards membership in the European Union and NATO.

CHAPTER 2—ADDITIONAL MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE GEORGIAN PEOPLE

SEC. 1297. STATEMENT OF POLICY IN SUPPORT OF THE GEORGIAN PEOPLE.

It is the policy of the United States—

(1) to continue supporting the ongoing development of democratic values in Georgia, including free and fair elections, freedom of association, an independent and accountable judiciary, an independent media, public-sector transparency and accountability, the rule of law, countering malign influence, and anticorruption efforts;

(2) to support the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders;

(3) to continue to support the Georgian people and civil society organizations that reflect the aspirations of the Georgian people for democracy and a future with the people of Europe;

(4) to continue supporting the capacity of the Government of Georgia to protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity from further Russian aggression or encroachment;

(5) to support domestic and international efforts, including polling, pre-election and election-day observation efforts, to support the execution of free and fair elections in Georgia in October 2024;

(6) to continue supporting the right of the Georgian people to freely engage in peaceful protest, determine their future, and make independent and sovereign choices on foreign and security policy, including regarding Georgia's relationship with other countries and international organizations, without interference, intimidation, or coercion by other countries or those acting on their behalf; and

(7) to underscore the unwavering bipartisan support from Congress in supporting the democratic aspirations of the Georgian people.

SEC. 1297A. DEMOCRACY AND RULE-OF-LAW PROGRAMMING.

(a) **STATEMENT OF POLICY REGARDING EFFECT OF NATIONAL ELECTIONS IN GEORGIA.**—It is the policy of the United States to undertake efforts, in partnership with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, to ensure that the national elections in Georgia that are scheduled to be held in October 2024 are conducted in a manner that is free, fair, and reflective of the will of the Georgian people and show evidence of a broader and sustainable democratic trajectory.

(b) **FUNDING.**—From the amounts appropriated to the Assistance for Europe, Eurasia and Central Asia account under the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2024, or under the comparable appropriations Act for fiscal year 2025, \$50,000,000 is authorized to be made available—

(1) to strengthen democracy and civil society in Georgia, including for transparency, independent media, rule of law, anti-corruption efforts, countering malign influence, and good governance initiatives; and

(2) to support the Georgian people's efforts to advance their aspirations for membership in the European Union and Euro-Atlantic integration.

(c) **REVIEW OF SUPPORT.**—In response to the passage of the foreign agents law, the Secretary and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development shall undertake a review of efforts to determine—

(1) how best to continue providing support to civil society and independent media organizations in Georgia; and

(2) whether additional funds should be allocated to the National Endowment for Democracy for initiatives in Georgia.

SEC. 1297B. BRIEFING ON DISINFORMATION AND CORRUPTION IN THE REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in coordination with such agencies as the Secretary considers relevant, shall brief the appropriate congressional committees regarding—

(1) the efforts within and outside of Georgia to spread disinformation within Georgia to mischaracterize or undermine the bilateral relationships between the United States and Georgia and the European Union and Georgia;

(2) sources that have played an active role in advancing disinformation campaigns to erode public support for the United States, the European Union, and NATO within Georgia; and

(3) efforts undertaken by the Government of Georgia to sanction actors involved in the

spread of disinformation that limits its Euro-Atlantic aspirations;

(4) the extent to which corrupt actors are undermining the ability of political parties and democratic institutions in Georgia to uphold and adhere to the principles of transparency and good governance;

(5) policy options to assist the Government of Georgia in helping protect democracy and the rule of law by punishing bad actors;

(6) efforts in Georgia designed—

(A) to suppress a free and independent media; or

(B) to harass and intimidate civil society;

(7) actors responsible for—

(A) the suppression of a free and independent media in Georgia; or

(B) harassment and intimidation of civil society in Georgia;

(8) the Secretary's assessment of—

(A) the Russian Federation's influence and information operations in Georgia; and

(B) connections between the influence and operations described in subparagraph (A) and the broader agenda of the Russian Federation in the region; and

(9) the Secretary's assessment of—

(A) the People's Republic of China's influence and information operations in Georgia; and

(B) connections between the influence and operations described in subparagraph (A) and the broader agenda of the People's Republic of China in the region.

(b) **FORM.**—The report required under subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form, with a classified annex.

SEC. 1297C. SUNSET.

This subtitle shall cease to have any force or effect beginning on the date that is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3253. Mr. CASSIDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of part I of subtitle F of title V, insert the following:

SEC. 578. REVIEW OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Director of the Department of Defense Education Activity (in this section referred to as "DODEA") shall review the special education processes and procedures in place within DODEA to locate, identify (through screening or other evidence-based tools), evaluate, and refer children with disabilities from birth to age 21 and provide evidence-based interventions and supports for students with disabilities.

(b) **CONSISTENCY WITH EXISTING LAW.**—The review required by subsection (a) shall be conducted consistent with child-find requirements under Department of Defense Instruction 1342.12, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), and part 300 of title 34, Code of Federal Regulations.

(c) **PROVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION MATERIALS AND INFORMATION TO CONGRESS.**—As part of the review required by subsection (a), the Director shall provide to the appropriate congressional committees the following:

(1) A briefing on the special education processes and procedures of DODEA, particularly those for locating, identifying, evaluating, and referring for specific learning disabilities, including dyslexia.

(2) Documents, including documents not publicly available, related to subsection (d).

(d) PROVISION OF MATERIALS AND INFORMATION TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, as part of the review required by subsection (a), the Director shall provide to the appropriate congressional committees the following information regarding any screening programs of DODEA as that information pertains to locating and identifying, including screening, for early literacy skill development in children in DODEA schools:

(A) A description of the following:

(i) The extent to which DODEA ensures that it locates and identifies, including by screening, children enrolled in an elementary school operated by DODEA for deficiencies in early literacy skill development.

(ii) The extent to which DODEA ensures that it locates, identifies, and screens new enrollees in each such school regardless of year, unless the new enrollee has already been identified with a specific learning disability, including dyslexia.

(iii) The extent to which DODEA ensures it provides comprehensive literacy instruction (as defined in section 2221(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6641(b)(1))).

(iv) The extent to which DODEA provides high-quality training for school personnel, particularly specialized instructional support personnel (as defined in section 8101(47)(A)(ii) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801(47)(A)(ii))) related to early literacy, reading, and specific learning disabilities, including dyslexia.

(v) The extent to which DODEA ensures that each district of schools operated by DODEA employs at least one specialized instructional support personnel who specializes in early literacy, reading, and specific learning disabilities, including dyslexia.

(B) Information with respect to the following:

(i) The number of children at schools operated by DODEA screened for deficiencies in early literacy skill development, including dyslexia, each year and the grade in which those children were screened.

(ii) The number and types of early literacy screening tools used by DODEA each year.

(iii) The total number of children evaluated and identified with specific learning disabilities, disaggregated by dyslexia and other reading disabilities, as applicable, that are served by DODEA.

(iv) The total number of such children described in subparagraph (C), disaggregated by each subgroup of student (as defined in section 1111(c)(2) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(c)(2))).

(v) The number of days, on average, from referral from the screening program to evaluation for specific learning disabilities, including dyslexia.

(vi) The type of professional conducting intervention programs for children with early literacy challenges and specific learning disabilities, particularly dyslexia.

(vii) A list of, and descriptions of materials related to, early literacy and reading interventions used by DODEA to provide special education and related services to children with specific learning disabilities, particularly dyslexia.

(viii) The number of trainings per year provided by DODEA to school personnel on screening for evaluating and providing serv-

ices to children with early literacy challenges and specific learning disabilities, particularly dyslexia.

(ix) A list of organizations outside of DODEA, if applicable, that are consulted with on such screening programs and related reading intervention programs.

(2) PROTECTION OF PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION.—The Director shall ensure that any information provided to the appropriate congressional committees under paragraph (1) does not reveal personally identifiable information.

(e) ASSESSMENT OF DEFINITIONS USED BY DODEA.—As part of the review required by subsection (a), the Director shall provide to the appropriate congressional committees a description of how DODEA's definitions of the following terms align with or differ from the following definitions:

(1) COMPREHENSIVE LITERACY INSTRUCTION.—The term “comprehensive literacy instruction” has the meaning given that term in section 2221(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6641(b)(1)).

(2) SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES.—The term “specific learning disabilities” has the meaning of that term under section 300.309 of title 34, Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) SCREENING PROGRAM.—The term “screening program” means a screening program that is—

(A) evidence-based and proven for validity and reliability to measure early literacy and reading skills;

(B) efficient and low-cost; and

(C) readily available.

(4) EVIDENCE-BASED.—The term “evidence-based” has the meaning given that term in section 8101(21)(A)(i) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801(21)(A)(i)).

(f) DYSLEXIA DEFINITION USED BY DODEA.—As part of the review required by subsection (a), the Director shall provide to the appropriate congressional committee the definition of “dyslexia” used by DODEA.

(g) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(1) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

SA 3254. Ms. ERNST submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title II, insert the following:

SEC. ____. TRACKING AND REPORTING ON DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FUNDS PROVIDED TO FOREIGN ENTITIES OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA OR FOREIGN ENTITIES OF CONCERN.

(a) TRACKING.—The Secretary of Defense shall track amounts provided by the Department of Defense to foreign entities located in a foreign country of concern, including the People's Republic of China, or foreign entities of concern in the form of a contract, grant, other transaction agreement, or any other type of funding.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the

Secretary shall submit to Congress a report—

(1) detailing the actions taken by the Department detailing the actions taken by the Department to carry out subsection (a);

(2) identifying research funded by the Department in the last three fiscal years that involves a foreign entity or a foreign entity of concern, including—

(A) the funding agency;

(B) the type of funding;

(C) which entities were involved;

(D) the type of research project, publication, or other funding associated with Department funding sources;

(E) the amount awarded or provided directly or indirectly, including grants, contracts, loans, cooperative agreements, other transaction agreements, subgrants, all levels of subawards, and other forms of financial assistance; and

(F) the justification for the funding; and

(3) addressing—

(A) what restrictions, if any, are placed upon the Department's basic research awards to performers with research ties to defense entities of foreign countries of concern, and

(B) what mechanisms, if any, exist to mitigate potential counterintelligence concerns.

(c) FORM.—The report submitted under subsection (b) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(d) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The Secretary shall make available to the public on a website of the Department the unclassified portion of the report submitted under subsection (b).

(e) DEFINITIONS OF FOREIGN COUNTRY OF CONCERN, FOREIGN ENTITY, AND FOREIGN ENTITY OF CONCERN.—The terms “foreign country of concern”, “foreign entity”, and “foreign entity of concern” have the meanings given such terms in section 9901 of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (15 U.S.C. 4651).

SA 3255. Mr. OSSOFF submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle H of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1095. RURAL EMERGENCY HOSPITAL FIX.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) RURAL EMERGENCY HOSPITAL FIX.—Section 1861(kkk)(3) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(kkk)(3)) is amended, in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “October 1, 2020, or” after “as of”.

(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Health and Human Services may implement the amendment made by paragraph (1) by program instruction or otherwise.

(b) OFFSET.—

(1) EXTENDING THE ADJUSTMENT TO THE CALCULATION OF HOSPICE CAP AMOUNTS UNDER THE MEDICARE PROGRAM.—Section 1814(i)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395f(i)(2)(B)) is amended—

(A) in clause (ii), by striking “2033” and inserting “2034”; and

(B) in clause (iii), by striking “2033” and inserting “2034”.

(2) MEDICARE IMPROVEMENT FUND.—Section 1898(b)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395iii(b)(1)) is amended by striking “\$0” and inserting “\$286,000,000”.

SA 3256. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. WYDEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle H of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1095. REAUTHORIZATION OF DESCHUTES RIVER CONSERVANCY WORKING GROUP.

(a) **DEFINITION OF WORKING GROUP.**—Section 301(a) of the Oregon Resource Conservation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–208; 110 Stat. 3009–534; 122 Stat. 836) is amended by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) **WORKING GROUP.**—The term ‘Working Group’ means the Deschutes River Conservancy Working Group composed of a board of directors of not fewer than 10, but not more than 15, members nominated by the group represented by the member, of whom—

“(A) 2 members shall be representatives of the environmental community in the Deschutes River Basin;

“(B) 2 members shall be representatives of the irrigated agriculture community in the Deschutes River Basin;

“(C) 2 members shall be representatives of the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon;

“(D) 1 member shall be a representative of the hydroelectric production community in the Deschutes River Basin;

“(E) 1 member shall be a representative of 1 of the Federal agencies with authority and responsibility in the Deschutes River Basin;

“(F) 1 member shall be a representative of an agency of the State of Oregon with authority and responsibility in the Deschutes River Basin, such as—

“(i) the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife; or

“(ii) the Oregon Water Resources Department; and

“(G) 1 member shall be a representative of a unit of local government in the Deschutes River Basin.”.

(b) **REAUTHORIZATION; ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.**—Section 301 of the Oregon Resource Conservation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–208; 110 Stat. 3009–534; 122 Stat. 836) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (3), by striking “2016” and inserting “2032”; and

(B) in paragraph (6), by striking “5 percent” and inserting “10 percent”; and

(2) in subsection (h), by striking “2016” and inserting “2032”.

SA 3257. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. PADILLA) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle H of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1095. ADDITIONS TO THE SMITH RIVER NATIONAL RECREATION AREA; WILD AND SCENIC RIVER DESIGNATIONS.

(a) **ADDITIONS TO THE SMITH RIVER NATIONAL RECREATION AREA.**—

(1) **DEFINITIONS.**—Section 3 of the Smith River National Recreation Area Act (16 U.S.C. 460bbb–1) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “referred to in section 4(b)” and inserting “entitled ‘Proposed Smith River National Recreation Area’ and dated July 1990”; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “the Six Rivers National Forest” and inserting “an applicable unit of the National Forest System”.

(2) **BOUNDARIES.**—Section 4(b) of the Smith River National Recreation Area Act (16 U.S.C. 460bbb–2(b)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the first sentence, by inserting “and on the map entitled ‘Proposed Additions to the Smith River National Recreation Area’ and dated January 23, 2023” after “1990”; and

(ii) in the second sentence, by striking “map” and inserting “maps”; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “map” and inserting “maps described in paragraph (1)”.

(3) **ADMINISTRATION.**—Section 5 of the Smith River National Recreation Area Act (16 U.S.C. 460bbb–3) is amended—

(A) in subsection (b)—

(i) in paragraph (1), in the first sentence, by striking “the map” and inserting “the maps”; and

(ii) in paragraph (2)—

(I) in subparagraph (A), by striking “area shall be on” and inserting “area and any portion of the recreation area in the State of Oregon shall be on roadless”; and

(II) by adding at the end the following:

“(I) The Kalmiopsis Wilderness shall be managed in accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.)”;

(B) in subsection (c), by striking “by the amendments made by section 10(b) of this Act” and inserting “within the recreation area”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(d) **STUDY; REPORT.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall conduct a study of the area depicted on the map entitled ‘Proposed Additions to the Smith River National Recreation Area’ and dated January 23, 2023, that includes inventories and assessments of streams, fens, wetlands, lakes, other water features, and associated land, plants (including Port-Orford-cedar), animals, fungi, algae, and other values, and unstable and potentially unstable aquatic habitat areas in the study area.

“(2) **MODIFICATION OF MANAGEMENT PLANS; REPORT.**—On completion of the study under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

“(A) modify any applicable management plan to fully protect the inventoried values under the study, including to implement additional standards and guidelines; and

“(B) submit to Congress a report describing the results of the study.

“(e) **WILDFIRE MANAGEMENT.**—Nothing in this Act affects the authority of the Secretary (in cooperation with other Federal, State, and local agencies, as appropriate) to conduct wildland fire operations within the recreation area, consistent with the purposes of this Act.

“(f) **VEGETATION MANAGEMENT.**—Nothing in this Act prohibits the Secretary from conducting vegetation management projects (including wildfire resiliency and forest health projects) within the recreation area, to the extent consistent with the purposes of the recreation area.

“(g) **APPLICATION OF NORTHWEST FOREST PLAN AND ROADLESS RULE TO CERTAIN POR-**

TIONS OF THE RECREATION AREA.—Nothing in this Act affects the application of the Northwest Forest Plan or part 294 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (commonly referred to as the ‘Roadless Rule’) (as in effect on the date of enactment of this subsection), to portions of the recreation area in the State of Oregon that are subject to the plan and those regulations as of the date of enactment of this subsection.

“(h) **PROTECTION OF TRIBAL RIGHTS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Nothing in this Act diminishes any right of an Indian Tribe.

“(2) **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.**—The Secretary shall seek to enter into a memorandum of understanding with applicable Indian Tribes with respect to—

“(A) providing the Indian Tribes with access to the portions of the recreation area in the State of Oregon to conduct historical and cultural activities, including the procurement of noncommercial forest products and materials for traditional and cultural purposes; and

“(B) the development of interpretive information to be provided to the public on the history of the Indian Tribes and the use of the recreation area by the Indian Tribes.”.

(4) **ACQUISITION.**—Section 6(a) of the Smith River National Recreation Area Act (16 U.S.C. 460bbb–4(a)) is amended—

(A) in the fourth sentence, by striking “All lands” and inserting the following:

“(4) **APPLICABLE LAW.**—All land”;

(B) in the third sentence—

(i) by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(3) **METHOD OF ACQUISITION.**—The Secretary”;

(ii) by striking “or any of its political subdivisions” and inserting “, the State of Oregon, or any political subdivision of the State of California or the State of Oregon”; and

(iii) by striking “donation or” and inserting “purchase, donation, or”;

(C) in the second sentence, by striking “In exercising” and inserting the following:

“(2) **CONSIDERATION OF OFFERS BY SECRETARY.**—In exercising”;

(D) in the first sentence, by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary”; and

(E) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) **ACQUISITION OF CEDAR CREEK PARCEL.**—On the adoption of a resolution by the State Land Board of Oregon and subject to available funding, the Secretary shall acquire all right, title, and interest in and to the approximately 555 acres of land known as the ‘Cedar Creek Parcel’ located in sec. 16, T. 41 S., R. 11 W., Willamette Meridian.”.

(5) **FISH AND GAME.**—Section 7 of the Smith River National Recreation Area Act (16 U.S.C. 460bbb–5) is amended—

(A) in the first sentence, by inserting “or the State of Oregon” after “State of California”; and

(B) in the second sentence, by inserting “or the State of Oregon, as applicable” after “State of California”.

(6) **MANAGEMENT PLANNING.**—Section 9 of the Smith River National Recreation Area Act (16 U.S.C. 460bbb–7) is amended—

(A) in the first sentence, by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(a) **REVISION OF MANAGEMENT PLAN.**—The Secretary”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) **SMITH RIVER NATIONAL RECREATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN REVISION.**—As soon as practicable after the date of the first revision of the forest plan after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall revise the management plan for the recreation area—

“(1) to reflect the expansion of the recreation area into the State of Oregon under

section 1095(a) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025; and

“(2) to include an updated recreation action schedule to identify specific use and development plans for the areas described in the map entitled ‘Proposed Additions to the Smith River National Recreation Area’ and dated January 23, 2023.”.

(7) STREAMSIDE PROTECTION ZONES.—Section 11(b) of the Smith River National Recreation Area Act (16 U.S.C. 460bbb–8(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(24) Each of the river segments described in subparagraph (B) of section 3(a)(92) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1274(a)(92)).”.

(8) STATE AND LOCAL JURISDICTION AND ASSISTANCE.—Section 12 of the Smith River National Recreation Area Act (16 U.S.C. 460bbb–9) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking “California or any political subdivision thereof” and inserting “California, the State of Oregon, or a political subdivision of the State of California or the State of Oregon”;

(B) in subsection (b), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “California or its political subdivisions” and inserting “California, the State of Oregon, or a political subdivision of the State of California or the State of Oregon”;

(C) in subsection (c), in the first sentence—

(i) by striking “California and its political subdivisions” and inserting “California, the State of Oregon, and any political subdivision of the State of California or the State of Oregon”;

(ii) by striking “State and its political subdivisions” and inserting “State of California, the State of Oregon, and any political subdivision of the State of California or the State of Oregon”.

(b) WILD AND SCENIC RIVER DESIGNATIONS.—

(1) NORTH FORK SMITH ADDITIONS, OREGON.—

(A) FINDING.—Congress finds that the source tributaries of the North Fork Smith River in the State of Oregon possess outstandingly remarkable wild anadromous fish and prehistoric, cultural, botanical, recreational, and water quality values.

(B) DESIGNATION.—Section 3(a)(92) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1274(a)(92)) is amended—

(i) in subparagraph (B), by striking “scenic” and inserting “wild”;

(ii) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) through (C) as clauses (i) through (iii), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(iii) in the matter preceding clause (i) (as so redesignated), by striking “The 13-mile” and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The 13-mile”;

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) ADDITIONS.—The following segments of the source tributaries of the North Fork Smith River, to be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture in the following classes:

“(i) The 13.26-mile segment of Baldface Creek from its headwaters, including all perennial tributaries, to the confluence with the North Fork Smith in T. 39 S., R. 10 W., T. 40 S., R. 10 W., and T. 41 S., R. 11 W., Willamette Meridian, as a wild river.

“(ii) The 3.58-mile segment from the headwaters of Taylor Creek to the confluence with Baldface Creek, as a wild river.

“(iii) The 4.38-mile segment from the headwaters of the unnamed tributary to Biscuit Creek and the headwaters of Biscuit Creek to the confluence with Baldface Creek, as a wild river.

“(iv) The 2.27-mile segment from the headwaters of Spokane Creek to the confluence with Baldface Creek, as a wild river.

“(v) The 1.25-mile segment from the headwaters of Rock Creek to the confluence with Baldface Creek, flowing south from sec. 19,

T. 40 S., R. 10 W., Willamette Meridian, as a wild river.

“(vi) The 1.31-mile segment from the headwaters of the unnamed tributary number 2 to the confluence with Baldface Creek, flowing north from sec. 27, T. 40 S., R. 10 W., Willamette Meridian, as a wild river.

“(vii) The 3.6-mile segment from the 2 headwaters of the unnamed tributary number 3 to the confluence with Baldface Creek, flowing south from secs. 9 and 10, T. 40 S., R. 10 W., Willamette Meridian, as a wild river.

“(viii) The 1.57-mile segment from the headwaters of the unnamed tributary number 4 to the confluence with Baldface Creek, flowing north from sec. 26, T. 40 S., R. 10 W., Willamette Meridian, as a wild river.

“(ix) The 0.92-mile segment from the headwaters of the unnamed tributary number 5 to the confluence with Baldface Creek, flowing north from sec. 13, T. 40 S., R. 10 W., Willamette Meridian, as a wild river.

“(x) The 4.90-mile segment from the headwaters of Cedar Creek to the confluence with North Fork Smith River, as a wild river.

“(xi) The 2.38-mile segment from the headwaters of Packsaddle Gulch to the confluence with North Fork Smith River, as a wild river.

“(xii) The 2.4-mile segment from the headwaters of Hardtack Creek to the confluence with North Fork Smith River, as a wild river.

“(xiii) The 2.21-mile segment from the headwaters of the unnamed creek to the confluence with North Fork Smith River, flowing east from sec. 29, T. 40 S., R. 11 W., Willamette Meridian, as a wild river.

“(xiv) The 3.06-mile segment from the headwaters of Horse Creek to the confluence with North Fork Smith River, as a wild river.

“(xv) The 2.61-mile segment of Fall Creek from the Oregon State border to the confluence with North Fork Smith River, as a wild river.

“(xvi)(I) Except as provided in subclause (II), the 4.57-mile segment from the headwaters of North Fork Diamond Creek to the confluence with Diamond Creek, as a wild river.

“(II) Notwithstanding subclause (I), the portion of the segment described in that subclause that starts 100 feet above Forest Service Road 4402 and ends 100 feet below Forest Service Road 4402 shall be administered as a scenic river.

“(xvii) The 1.02-mile segment from the headwaters of Diamond Creek to the Oregon State border in sec. 14, T. 40 S., R. 10 W., Willamette Meridian, as a wild river.

“(xviii) The 1.14-mile segment from the headwaters of Acorn Creek to the confluence with Horse Creek, as a wild river.

“(xix) The 8.58-mile segment from the headwaters of Chrome Creek to the confluence with North Fork Smith River, as a wild river.

“(xx) The 2.98-mile segment from the headwaters Chrome Creek tributary number 1 to the confluence with Chrome Creek, 0.82 miles upstream from the mouth of Chrome Creek in the Kalmiopsis Wilderness, flowing south from sec. 15, T. 40 S., R. 11 W., Willamette Meridian, as a wild river.

“(xxi) The 2.19-mile segment from the headwaters of Chrome Creek tributary number 2 to the confluence with Chrome Creek, 3.33 miles upstream from the mouth of Chrome Creek in the Kalmiopsis Wilderness, flowing south from sec. 12, T. 40 S., R. 11 W., Willamette Meridian, as a wild river.

“(xxii) The 1.27-mile segment from the headwaters of Chrome Creek tributary number 3 to the confluence with Chrome Creek, 4.28 miles upstream from the mouth of Chrome Creek in the Kalmiopsis Wilderness,

flowing north from sec. 18, T. 40 S., R. 10 W., Willamette Meridian, as a wild river.

“(xxiii) The 2.27-mile segment from the headwaters of Chrome Creek tributary number 4 to the confluence with Chrome Creek, 6.13 miles upstream from the mouth of Chrome Creek, flowing south from Chetco Peak in the Kalmiopsis Wilderness in sec. 36, T. 39 S., R. 11 W., Willamette Meridian, as a wild river.

“(xxiv) The 0.6-mile segment from the headwaters of Wimer Creek to the border between the States of Oregon and California, flowing south from sec. 17, T. 41 S., R. 10 W., Willamette Meridian, as a wild river.”.

(2) EXPANSION OF SMITH RIVER, OREGON.—Section 3(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1274(a)) is amended by striking paragraph (111) and inserting the following:

“(111) SMITH RIVER, CALIFORNIA AND OREGON.—The segment from the confluence of the Middle Fork Smith River and the North Fork Smith River to the Six Rivers National Forest boundary, including the following segments of the mainstem and certain tributaries, to be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture in the following classes:

“(A) MAINSTEM.—The segment from the confluence of the Middle Fork Smith River and the South Fork Smith River to the Six Rivers National Forest boundary, as a recreational river.

“(B) ROWDY CREEK.—

“(i) UPPER.—The segment from and including the headwaters to the California-Oregon State line, as a wild river.

“(ii) LOWER.—The segment from the California-Oregon State line to the Six Rivers National Forest boundary, as a recreational river.”.

SA 3258. Mr. LUJAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. —. HERMIT'S PEAK/CALF CANYON CLAIMS EXTENSION.

Section 104 of the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire Assistance Act (Public Law 117–180; 136 Stat. 2170) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by striking “Not later than 2 years after the date on which regulations are first promulgated under subsection (f)” and inserting “Not later than December 31, 2026”;

(2) in subsection (d)(4)(C)—

(A) in clause (vii), by striking “the date that is 3 years after the date on which the regulations under subsection (f) are first promulgated” and inserting “December 31, 2030”;

(B) by amending clause (viii) to read as follows:

“(viii) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a premium for flood insurance that is required to be paid on or before December 31, 2026, if—

“(I) as a result of the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire, a person that was not required to purchase flood insurance before the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire is required to purchase flood insurance; or

“(II) a person did not maintain flood insurance before the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire but purchased flood insurance after the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire due to fear of heightened flood risk.”;

(C) by redesignating clause (x) as clause (xi); and

(D) by inserting after clause (ix) the following:

“(x) Notwithstanding paragraph (1)(B), costs incurred not later than December 31, 2030 of reasonable efforts, as determined by the Administrator, by the State of New Mexico to design, construct, and operate a center with the purpose of researching, developing and generating native seedlings to successfully regenerate forests destroyed by the Hermit’s Peak/Calf Canyon Fire with native species.”.

SA 3259. Mr. WARNOCK (for himself and Mr. MORAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title X, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . DEFINITION OF SURVIVING SPOUSE FOR PURPOSES OF VETERANS BENEFITS.

Paragraph (3) of section 101 of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(3) The term ‘surviving spouse’ means (except for purposes of chapter 19 of this title) a person who was the spouse of a veteran at the time of the veteran’s death, and who lived with the veteran continuously from the date of marriage to the date of the veteran’s death (except where there was a separation which was due to the misconduct of, or procured by, the veteran without the fault of the spouse) and who has not remarried.”.

SA 3260. Mr. BUDD (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title X, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . EXPANDING COOPERATIVE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS TO PARTNERSHIPS WITH UNITED STATES TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENTS.

Section 12 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3710a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1), by striking “State or local government” and inserting “State, local, or territorial government”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(h) TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENTS.—For the purposes of this section, the government of a territory of the United States shall be considered a non-Federal party.”.

SA 3261. Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. CORNYN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of

Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title V, add the following:

SEC. 562. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING FLIGHT TRAINING COURSE AVAILABILITY FOR UKRAINIAN F-16 AIRCRAFT PILOTS.

It is the sense of Congress that during fiscal year 2025, the Department of Defense should continue to work with international partners to ensure that Ukraine’s military aviation needs are being met, including F-16 basic flight training in the United States and at allied nation facilities overseas.

SA 3262. Mr. HICKENLOOPER (for himself and Mr. DAINES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle F of title III, add the following:

SEC. 358. BRIEFING ON COMMERCIAL AIRLIFT REVIEW BOARD CERTIFICATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commander of the United States Transportation Command, in consultation with the Commercial Airlift Review Board, shall brief the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives on the certification process and criteria used by the Commercial Airlift Review Board.

(b) ELEMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The briefing required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(A) The total number of requests received for certification by the Commercial Airlift Review Board during the one-year period preceding the date of the briefing, disaggregated by domestic and international certification requests.

(B) The total number of such requests that were approved, disaggregated by domestic and international certification requests.

(C) The total number of such requests that are pending as of the date of the briefing, disaggregated by domestic and international certification requests, along with the reason for the delay in making a decision on each such request.

(D) The total number of such requests that were denied, disaggregated by domestic and international certification requests, along with the reason for the denial decision.

(2) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.—

(A) APPROVALS.—If any approval included under paragraph (1)(B) limits the area of contract performance under such approval, the briefing required under subsection (a) shall include information about all such limitations and the rationale for restricting certification based on area of performance.

(B) DENIALS.—If any denial included under paragraph (1)(D) is a repeat denial from an entity previously denied a certification during the one-year period preceding the date of the briefing required under subsection (a), the briefing shall include an explanation of the reason for the repeated denials.

SA 3263. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1239. PROMOTING DEMOCRACY AND PROSPERITY IN THE WESTERN BALKANS.—

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “Western Balkans Democracy and Prosperity Act”.

(b) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) The Western Balkans countries (the Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia, the Republic of Kosovo, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia and the Republic of Serbia) form a pluralistic, multi-ethnic region in the heart of Europe that is critical to the peace, stability, and prosperity of that continent.

(2) Continued peace, stability, and prosperity in the Western Balkans is directly tied to the opportunities for democratic and economic advancement available to the citizens and residents of those seven countries.

(3) It is in the mutual interest of the United States and the seven countries of the Western Balkans to promote stable and sustainable economic growth and development in the region.

(4) The reforms and integration with the European Union pursued by countries in the Western Balkans have led to significant democratic and economic progress in the region.

(5) Despite economic progress, rates of poverty and unemployment in the Western Balkans remain higher than in neighboring European Union countries.

(6) Out-migration, particularly of youth, is affecting demographics in each Western Balkans country, resulting in population decline in all seven countries.

(7) Implementing critical economic and governance reforms could help enable investment and employment opportunities in the Western Balkans, especially for youth, and can provide powerful tools for economic development and for encouraging broader participation in a political process that increases trade and prosperity for all.

(8) Existing regional economic efforts, such as the Common Regional Market, the Berlin Process, and the Open Balkan Initiative, could have the potential to improve the economic conditions in the Western Balkans, while promoting inclusion and transparency.

(9) Corruption, including among key political leaders, continues to plague the Western Balkans and represents one of the greatest impediments to further economic and political development in the region.

(10) Disinformation campaigns targeting the Western Balkans undermine the credibility of its democratic institutions, including the integrity of its elections.

(11) Vulnerability to cyberattacks or attacks on information and communication technology infrastructure increases risks to the functioning of government and the delivery of public services.

(12) The Department of State, along with other Federal agencies, plays a critical role in defending the national security interests of the United States, including by deploying cyber hunt forward teams at the request of partner nations to reinforce their cyber defenses.

(13) Securing domestic and international cyber networks and ICT infrastructure is a national security priority for the United States, which is exemplified by offices and programs across the Federal Government that support cybersecurity.

(14) Corruption and disinformation proliferate in political environments marked by autocratic control or partisan conflict.

(15) Dependence on Russian sources of fossil fuels and natural gas for the countries of the Western Balkans ties their economies and politics to the Russian Federation and inhibits their aspirations for European integration.

(16) Reducing the reliance of the Western Balkans on Russian natural gas supplies and fossil fuels is in the national interest of the United States.

(17) The growing influence of China in the Western Balkans could also have a deleterious impact on strategic competition, democracy, and economic integration with Europe.

(18) In March 2022, President Biden launched the European Democratic Resilience Initiative to bolster democratic resilience, advance anti-corruption efforts, and defend human rights in Ukraine and its neighbors in response to Russia's war of aggression.

(19) The parliamentary and local elections held in Serbia on December 17, 2023, and their immediate aftermath are cause for deep concern about the state of Serbia's democracy, including due to the final report of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, which—

(A) found “unjust conditions” for the election;

(B) found “numerous procedural deficiencies, including inconsistent application of safeguards during voting and counting, frequent instances of overcrowding, breaches in secrecy of the vote, and numerous instances of group voting”; and

(C) asserted that “voting must be repeated” in certain polling stations.

(20) The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe also noted that Serbian officials accused primarily peaceful protestors, opposition parties, and civil society of “attempting to destabilize the government”, a concerning allegation that threatens the safety of important elements of Serbian society.

(21) Democratic countries whose values are in alignment with the United States make for stronger and more durable partnerships.

(c) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is a sense of Congress that the United States should—

(1) encourage increased trade and investment between the United States and allies and partners in the Western Balkans;

(2) expand United States assistance to regional integration efforts in the Western Balkans;

(3) strengthen and expand regional economic integration in the Western Balkans, especially enterprises owned by and employing women and youth;

(4) work with allies and partners committed to improving the rule of law, energy resource diversification, democratic and economic reform, and the reduction of poverty in the Western Balkans;

(5) increase United States trade and investment with the Western Balkans, particularly in ways that support countries' efforts—

(A) to decrease dependence on Russian energy sources and fossil fuels;

(B) to increase energy diversification, efficiency, and conservation; and

(C) to facilitate the transition to cleaner and more reliable sources of energy, including renewables, as appropriate;

(6) continue to assist in the development, within the Western Balkans, of—

(A) strong civil societies;

(B) public-private partnerships;

(C) independent media;

(D) transparent, accountable, citizen-responsive governance, including equal representation for women and youth;

(E) political stability; and

(F) modern, free-market based economies.

(7) support the expeditious accession of those Western Balkans countries that are not already members to the European Union and to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (referred to in this section as “NATO”) for countries that desire and are eligible for such membership;

(8) support—

(A) maintaining the full European Union Force (EUFOR) mandate in Bosnia and Herzegovina as being in the national security interests of the United States;

(B) encouraging NATO and the European Union to review their mission mandates and posture in Bosnia and Herzegovina to ensure they are playing a proactive role in establishing a safe and secure environment, particularly in the realm of defense;

(C) working within NATO to encourage contingency planning for an international military force to maintain a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially if Russia blocks reauthorization of the mission in the United Nations; and

(D) a strengthened NATO headquarters in Sarajevo;

(9) continue to support the European Union membership aspirations of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia by supporting meeting the benchmarks required for their accession;

(10) continue to support the overarching mission of the Berlin Process and locally-driven initiatives that are inclusive of all Western Balkans countries and remains aligned with the objectives and standards laid out by the European Union as requirements for accession to the European Union;

(11) continue to support the cultural heritage, and recognize the languages, of the Western Balkans;

(12) coordinate closely with the European Union, the United Kingdom, and other allies and partners on sanctions designations in Western Balkans countries and work to align efforts as much as possible to demonstrate a clear commitment to upholding democratic values;

(13) expand bilateral security cooperation with non-NATO member Western Balkans countries, particularly efforts focused on regional integration and cooperation, including through the Adriatic Charter, which was launched at Tirana on May 2, 2003;

(14) increase efforts to combat Russian malign influence campaigns and any other destabilizing or disruptive activities targeting the Western Balkans through engagement with government institutions, political stakeholders, journalists, civil society organizations, and industry leaders;

(15) develop a series of cyber resilience standards, consistent with the Enhanced Cyber Defence Policy and Readiness Action Plan endorsed at the 2014 Wales Summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to expand cooperation with partners and allies, including in the Western Balkans, on cyber security and ICT infrastructure;

(16) articulate clearly and unambiguously the United States commitment to supporting democratic values and respect for international law as the sole path forward for the countries of the Western Balkans; and

(17) prioritize partnerships and programming with Western Balkan countries that demonstrate commitment toward strength-

ening their democracies and show respect for human rights.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate;

(D) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives;

(E) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

(F) the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives.

(2) ICT.—The term “ICT” means information and communication technology.

(3) WESTERN BALKANS.—The term “Western Balkans” means the region comprised of the following countries:

(A) The Republic of Albania.

(B) Bosnia and Herzegovina.

(C) The Republic of Croatia.

(D) The Republic of Kosovo.

(E) Montenegro.

(F) The Republic of North Macedonia.

(G) The Republic of Serbia.

(4) WESTERN BALKANS COUNTRY.—The term “Western Balkans country” means any country listed in subparagraphs (A) through (G) of paragraph (3).

(e) CODIFICATION OF SANCTIONS RELATING TO THE WESTERN BALKANS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each person listed or designated for the imposition of sanctions under an executive order described in paragraph (3) as of the date of the enactment of this Act shall remain so designated, except as provided in paragraphs (4) and (5).

(2) CONTINUATION OF SANCTIONS AUTHORITIES.—Each authority to impose sanctions provided for under an executive order described in paragraph (3) shall remain in effect.

(3) EXECUTIVE ORDERS SPECIFIED.—The executive orders specified in this paragraph are—

(A) Executive Order 13219, as amended by Executive Order 13304 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note); relating to blocking property of persons who threaten international stabilization efforts in the Western Balkans; and

(B) Executive Order 14033 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note); relating to blocking property and suspending entry into the United States of certain persons contributing to the destabilizing situation in the Western Balkans), as in effect on such date of enactment.

(4) TERMINATION OF SANCTIONS.—

(A) EXECUTIVE ORDER 14033.—The President may terminate the application of a sanction authorized under Executive Order 14033 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note); relating to blocking property and suspending entry into the United States of certain persons contributing to the destabilizing situation in the Western Balkans) with respect to a person if the President certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that—

(i) the person is not engaging in the activity that was the basis for the sanctions or has taken significant verifiable steps toward stopping the activity; and

(ii) the President has received reliable assurances that the person will not knowingly engage in activity subject to sanctions described in paragraph (1) in the future.

(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION REGARDING DELISTING PROCEDURES RELATING TO SANCTIONS AUTHORIZED UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDERS 13219 AND 13304.—Nothing in this Act may be construed to modify the delisting procedures used by the Department of the Treasury with respect to sanctions authorized under Executive Order 13219, as amended by Executive

Order 13304 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking property of persons who threaten international stabilization efforts in the Western Balkans).

(5) WAIVER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The President may waive the application of sanctions under this subsection for renewable periods not to exceed 180 days if the President—

(i) determines that such a waiver is in the national security interests of the United States; and

(ii) not less than 15 days before the granting of the waiver, submits to the appropriate congressional committees a notice of and justification for the waiver.

(B) FORM.—The waiver described in subparagraph (A) may be transmitted in classified form.

(6) EXCEPTIONS.—

(A) HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE.—Sanctions under this subsection shall not apply to—

(i) the conduct or facilitation of a transaction for the provision of agricultural commodities, food, medicine, medical devices, humanitarian assistance, or for humanitarian purposes; or

(ii) transactions that are necessary for, or related to, the activities described in clause (i).

(B) COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES.—Sanctions under this section shall not apply with respect to an alien if admitting or paroling such alien is necessary—

(i) to comply with United States obligations under—

(I) the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947;

(II) the Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963, and entered into force March 19, 1967; or

(III) any other international agreement; or

(ii) to carry out or assist law enforcement activity in the United States.

(C) EXCEPTION FOR INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES.—Sanctions under this section shall not apply to—

(i) any activity subject to the reporting requirements under title V of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3091 et seq.); or

(ii) any authorized intelligence activities of the United States.

(D) EXCEPTION RELATING TO IMPORTATION OF GOODS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The requirement to block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property under this section shall not include the authority or a requirement to impose sanctions on the importation of goods.

(ii) DEFINED TERM.—In this subparagraph, the term “good” means any article, natural or manmade substance, material, supply or manufactured product, including inspection and test equipment, and excluding technical data.

(7) RULEMAKING.—The President is authorized to promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this section (which may include regulatory exceptions), including under section 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1704).

(8) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to limit the authorities of the President under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

(9) SUNSET.—This subsection shall cease to have force or effect beginning on the date that is 8 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(f) DEMOCRATIC AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY INITIATIVES.—

(1) ANTI-CORRUPTION INITIATIVE.—The Secretary of State, through ongoing and new programs, shall develop an initiative that—

(A) seeks to expand technical assistance in each Western Balkans country, taking into account local conditions and contingent on the agreement of the host country government to develop new national anti-corruption strategies;

(B) seeks to share best practices with, and provide training to, civilian law enforcement agencies and judicial institutions, and other relevant administrative bodies, of the Western Balkans countries, to improve the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of such agencies and institutions;

(C) strengthens existing national anti-corruption strategies—

(i) to combat political corruption, particularly in the judiciary, independent election oversight bodies, and public procurement processes; and

(ii) to strengthen regulatory and legislative oversight of critical governance areas, such as freedom of information and public procurement, including by strengthening cyber defenses and ICT infrastructure networks;

(D) includes the Western Balkans countries in the European Democratic Resilience Initiative of the Department of State, or any equivalent successor initiative, and considers the Western Balkans as a recipient of anti-corruption funding for such initiative; and

(E) seeks to promote the important role of an independent media in countering corruption through engagements with governments of Western Balkan countries and providing training opportunities for journalists on investigative reporting.

(2) PRIORITIZING CYBER RESILIENCE, REGIONAL TRADE, AND ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS.—

(A) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(i) promoting stronger economic, civic, and political relationships among Western Balkans countries will enable countries to better utilize existing resources and maximize their economic security and democratic resilience by reinforcing cyber defenses and increasing trade in goods and services among other countries in the region; and

(ii) United States investments in and assistance toward creating a more integrated region ensures political stability and security for the region.

(B) 5-YEAR STRATEGY FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE IN WESTERN BALKANS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, in coordination with the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a regional economic development and democratic resilience strategy for the Western Balkans that complements the efforts of the European Union, European nations, and other multilateral financing institutions—

(i) to consider the full set of tools and resources available from the relevant agencies;

(ii) to include efforts to ensure coordination with multilateral and bilateral partners, such as the European Union, the World Bank, and other relevant assistance frameworks;

(iii) to include an initial public assessment of—

(I) economic opportunities for which United States businesses, or those of other like-minded partner countries, would be competitive;

(II) legal, economic, governance, infrastructural, or other barriers limiting

United States trade and investment in the Western Balkans;

(III) the effectiveness of all existing regional cooperation initiatives, such as the Open Balkan initiative and the Western Balkans Common Regional Market; and

(IV) ways to increase United States trade and investment within the Western Balkans;

(v) to develop human and institutional capacity and infrastructure across multiple sectors of economies, including clean energy, energy efficiency, agriculture, small and medium-sized enterprise development, health, and cyber-security;

(v) to assist with the development and implementation of regional and international trade agreements;

(vi) to support women-owned enterprises;

(vii) to promote government and civil society policies and programs that combat corruption and encourage transparency (including by supporting independent media by promoting the safety and security of journalists), free and fair competition, sound governance, judicial reform, environmental stewardship, and business environments conducive to sustainable and inclusive economic growth; and

(viii) to include a public diplomacy strategy that describes the actions that will be taken by relevant agencies to increase support for the United States relationship by citizens of Western Balkans countries.

(C) BRIEFING.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall provide a briefing to the appropriate congressional committees that describes the progress made towards developing the strategy required under subparagraph (B).

(3) REGIONAL TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE.—

(A) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, in coordination with the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies, may coordinate a regional trade and development initiative for the region comprised of each Western Balkans country and any European Union member country that shares a border with a Western Balkans country (referred to in this subsection as the “Western Balkans region”) in accordance with this paragraph.

(B) INITIATIVE ELEMENTS.—The initiative authorized under subparagraph (A) shall—

(i) promote private sector growth and competitiveness and increase the capacity of businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, in the Western Balkans region;

(ii) aim to increase intraregional exports to countries in the Balkans and European Union member states;

(iii) aim to increase United States exports to, and investments in, countries in the Balkans;

(iv) support startup companies, including companies led by youth or women, in the Western Balkans region by—

(I) providing training in business skills and leadership; and

(II) providing opportunities to connect to sources of capital;

(v) encourage and promote inward and outward trade and investment through engagement with the Western Balkans diaspora communities in the United States and abroad;

(vi) provide assistance to the governments and civil society organizations of Western Balkans countries to develop—

(I) regulations to ensure fair and effective investment; and

(II) screening tools to identify and deter malign investments and other coercive economic practices;

(vii) review existing assistance programming relating to the Western Balkans across Federal agencies—

(I) to eliminate duplication; and

(II) to identify areas of potential coordination within the Western Balkans region;

(viii) identify areas where application of additional resources could expand successful programs to 1 or more countries in the Western Balkans region by building on the existing experience and program architecture;

(ix) compare existing single-country sector analyses to determine areas of focus that would benefit from a regional approach with respect to the Western Balkans region; and

(x) promote intraregional trade throughout the Western Balkans region through—

(I) programming, including grants, cooperative agreements, and other forms of assistance;

(II) expanding awareness of the availability of loans and other financial instruments from the United States Government; and

(III) coordinating access to existing trade instruments available through allies and partners in the Western Balkans region, including the European Union and international financial institutions.

(C) **SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS.**—The initiative authorized under subparagraph (A) should facilitate and prioritize support for regional infrastructure projects, including—

(i) transportation projects that build roads, bridges, railways and other physical infrastructure to facilitate travel of goods and people throughout the Western Balkans region;

(ii) technical support and investments needed to meet United States and European Union standards for air travel, including screening and information sharing;

(iii) the development of telecommunications networks with trusted providers;

(iv) infrastructure projects that connect Western Balkans countries to each other and to countries with which they share a border;

(v) the effective analysis of tenders and transparent procurement processes;

(vi) investment transparency programs that will help countries in the Western Balkans analyze gaps and establish institutional and regulatory reforms necessary—

(I) to create an enabling environment for trade and investment; and

(II) to strengthen protections against suspect investments through public procurement and privatization and through foreign direct investments;

(vii) sharing best practices learned from the United States and other international partners to ensure that institutional and regulatory mechanisms for addressing these issues are fair, nonarbitrary, effective, and free from corruption;

(viii) projects that support regional energy security and reduce dependence on Russian energy;

(ix) technical assistance and generating private investment in projects that promote connectivity and energy-sharing in the Western Balkans region;

(x) technical assistance to support regional collaboration on environmental protection that includes governmental, political, civic, and business stakeholders; and

(xi) technical assistance to develop financing options and help create linkages with potential financing institutions and investors.

(D) **REQUIREMENTS.**—All programming under the initiative authorized under subparagraph (A) shall—

(i) be open to the participation of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia;

(ii) be consistent with European Union accession requirements;

(iii) be focused on retaining talent within the Western Balkans;

(iv) promote government policies in Western Balkans countries that encourage free and fair competition, sound governance, environmental protection, and business environments that are conducive to sustainable and inclusive economic growth; and

(v) include a public diplomacy strategy to inform local and regional audiences in the Western Balkans region about the initiative, including specific programs and projects.

(4) **UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE CORPORATION.**—

(A) **APPOINTMENTS.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, subject to the availability of appropriations, the Chief Executive Officer of the United States International Development Finance Corporation, in collaboration with the Secretary of State, should consider including a regional office with responsibilities for the Western Balkans within the Corporation's plans to open new regional offices.

(B) **JOINT REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Chief Executive Officer of the United States International Development Finance Corporation and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development shall submit a joint report to the appropriate congressional committees that includes—

(i) an assessment of the benefits of providing sovereign loan guarantees to countries in the Western Balkans to support infrastructure and energy diversification projects;

(ii) an outline of additional resources, such as tools, funding, and personnel, which may be required to offer sovereign loan guarantees in the Western Balkans; and

(iii) an assessment of how the United States International Development Finance Corporation can deploy its insurance products in support of bonds or other instruments issued to raise capital through United States financial markets in the Western Balkans.

(g) **PROMOTING CROSS-CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL ENGAGEMENT.**—

(1) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that—

(A) promoting partnerships between United States universities and universities in the Western Balkans, particularly universities in traditionally under-served communities, advances United States foreign policy goals and requires a whole-of-government approach, including the utilization of public-private partnerships;

(B) such university partnerships would provide opportunities for exchanging academic ideas, technical expertise, research, and cultural understanding for the benefit of the United States; and

(C) the seven countries in the Western Balkans meet the requirements under section 105(c)(4) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151c(c)(4)).

(2) **UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS.**—The President, working through the Secretary of State, is authorized to provide assistance, consistent with section 105 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151c), to promote the establishment of partnerships between United States universities and universities in the Western Balkans, including—

(A) supporting research and analysis on foreign policy, cyber resilience, and disinformation;

(B) working with partner governments to reform policies, improve curricula, strengthen data systems, train teachers and students, including English language teaching, and to provide quality, inclusive learning materials;

(C) encouraging knowledge exchanges to help provide individuals, particularly at-risk youth, women, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable, marginalized, or under-served communities, with relevant education, training, and skills for meaningful employment;

(D) promoting teaching and research exchanges between institutions of higher education in the Western Balkans and in the United States; and

(E) encouraging alliances and exchanges with like-minded institutions of education within the Western Balkans and the larger European continent.

(h) **PEACE CORPS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS.**—

(1) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that the Peace Corps, whose mission is to promote world peace and friendship, in part by helping the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women, provides an invaluable opportunity to connect the people of the United States with the people of the Western Balkans.

(2) **REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Peace Corps should submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that includes an analysis of current opportunities for Peace Corps expansion in the Western Balkans region.

(i) **YOUNG BALKAN LEADERS INITIATIVE.**—

(1) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that regular people-to-people exchange programs that bring religious leaders, journalists, civil society members, politicians, and other individuals from the Western Balkans to the United States will strengthen existing relationships and advance United States interests and shared values in the Western Balkans region.

(2) **BOLD LEADERSHIP PROGRAM FOR YOUNG BALKAN LEADERS.**—

(A) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—The Department of State, through BOLD, a leadership program for young leaders in certain Western Balkans countries, plays an important role to develop young leaders in improving civic engagement and economic development in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Montenegro.

(B) **EXPANSION.**—BOLD should be expanded, subject to the availability of appropriations, to the entire Western Balkans region.

(3) **AUTHORIZATION.**—The Secretary of State should further develop and implement BOLD, which shall hereafter be known as the “Young Balkan Leaders Initiative”, to promote educational and professional development for young adult leaders and professionals in the Western Balkans who have demonstrated a passion to contribute to the continued development of the Western Balkans region.

(4) **CONDUCT OF INITIATIVE.**—The goals of the Young Balkan Leaders Initiative shall be—

(A) to further build the capacity of young Balkan leaders in the Western Balkans in the areas of business and information technology, cyber security and digitization, agriculture, civic engagement, and public administration;

(B) to support young Balkan leaders by offering professional development, training, and networking opportunities, particularly in the areas of leadership, innovation, civic engagement, elections, human rights, entrepreneurship, good governance, public administration, and journalism;

(C) to support young political, parliamentary, and civic Balkan leaders in collaboration on regional initiatives related to good governance, environmental protection, government ethics, and minority inclusion;

(D) to provide increased economic and technical assistance to young Balkan leaders to promote economic growth and strengthen ties between businesses, investors, and entrepreneurs in the United States and in Western Balkans countries;

(E) to tailor such assistance to advance the particular objectives of each United States mission in the Western Balkans within the framework outlined in this subsection; and

(F) to secure funding for such assistance from existing funds available to each United States Mission in the Western Balkans.

(5) FELLOWSHIPS.—Under the Young Balkan Leaders Initiative, the Secretary of State shall award fellowships to young leaders from the Western Balkans who—

(A) are between 18 and 35 years of age;

(B) have demonstrated strong capabilities in entrepreneurship, innovation, public service, and leadership;

(C) have had a positive impact in their communities, organizations, or institutions, including by promoting cross-regional and multiethnic cooperation; and

(D) represent a cross-section of geographic, gender, political, and cultural diversity.

(6) PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP CENTER.—Under the Young Balkan Leaders Initiative, the Secretary of State shall take advantage of existing and future public diplomacy facilities (commonly known as “American Spaces”) to hire staff and develop programming for the establishment of a flagship public engagement and leadership center in the Western Balkans that seeks—

(A) to counter disinformation and malign influence;

(B) to promote cross-cultural engagement;

(C) to provide training for young leaders from Western Balkans countries described in paragraph (5);

(D) to harmonize the efforts of existing venues throughout Western Balkans countries established by the Office of American Spaces; and

(E) to annually bring together participants from the Young Balkan Leaders Initiative to provide platforms for regional networking.

(7) BRIEFING ON CERTAIN EXCHANGE PROGRAMS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall provide a briefing to the appropriate congressional committees that describes the status of exchange programs involving the Western Balkans region.

(B) ELEMENTS.—The briefing required under subparagraph (A) shall—

(i) assess the factors constraining the number and frequency of participants from Western Balkans countries in the International Visitor Leadership Program of the Department of State;

(ii) identify the resources that are necessary to address the factors described in clause (i); and

(iii) describe a strategy for connecting alumni and participants of professional development exchange programs of the Department of State in the Western Balkans with alumni and participants from other countries in Europe, to enhance inter-region and intra-region, people-to-people ties.

(j) SUPPORTING CYBERSECURITY AND CYBER RESILIENCE IN THE WESTERN BALKANS.—

(1) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(A) United States support for cybersecurity, cyber resilience, and secure ICT infrastructure in Western Balkans countries will strengthen the region’s ability to defend itself from and respond to malicious cyber activity conducted by nonstate and foreign actors, including foreign governments, that seek to influence the region;

(B) insecure ICT networks that are vulnerable to manipulation can increase opportunities for—

(i) the compromise of cyber infrastructure, including data networks, electronic infrastructure, and software systems; and

(ii) the use of online information operations by adversaries and malign actors to undermine United States allies and interests; and

(C) it is in the national security interest of the United States to support the cybersecurity and cyber resilience of Western Balkans countries.

(2) INTERAGENCY REPORT ON CYBERSECURITY AND THE DIGITAL INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT IN WESTERN BALKANS COUNTRIES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that contains—

(A) an overview of interagency efforts to strengthen cybersecurity and cyber resilience in Western Balkans countries;

(B) a review of the information environment in each Western Balkans country;

(C) a review of existing United States Government cyber and digital initiatives that—

(i) counter influence operations and safeguard elections and democratic processes in Western Balkans countries;

(ii) strengthen ICT infrastructure and cybersecurity capacity in the Western Balkans;

(iii) support democracy and internet freedom in Western Balkans countries; and

(iv) build cyber capacity of governments who are allies or partners of the United States;

(D) an assessment of cyber threat information sharing between the United States and Western Balkans countries;

(E) an assessment of—

(i) options for the United States to better support cybersecurity and cyber resilience in Western Balkans countries through changes to current assistance authorities; and

(ii) the advantages or limitations, such as funding or office space, of posting cyber professionals from other Federal departments and agencies to United States diplomatic posts in Western Balkans countries and providing relevant training to Foreign Service Officers; and

(F) any additional support needed from the United States for the cybersecurity and cyber resilience of the following NATO Allies: Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Croatia.

(k) RELATIONS BETWEEN KOSOVO AND SERBIA.—

(1) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(A) the Agreement on the Path to Normalization of Relations, which was agreed to by Kosovo and Serbia on February 27, 2023, with the facilitation of the European Union, is a positive step forward in advancing normalization between the two countries;

(B) Serbia and Kosovo should seek to make immediate progress on the Implementation Annex to the agreement referred to in subparagraph (A);

(C) once sufficient progress has been made on the Implementation Annex, the United States should consider advancing initiatives to strengthen bilateral relations with both countries, which could include—

(i) establishing bilateral strategic dialogues with Kosovo and Serbia; and

(ii) advancing concrete initiatives to deepen trade and investment with both countries; and

(D) the United States should continue to support a comprehensive final agreement between Kosovo and Serbia based on mutual recognition.

(2) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States Government that—

(A) it shall not pursue any policy that advocates for land swaps, partition, or other forms of redrawing borders along ethnic lines in the Western Balkans as a means to arbitrate disputes between nation states in the region; and

(B) it should support pluralistic democracies in countries in the Western Balkans as a means to prevent a return to the ethnic strife that once characterized the region.

(l) REPORTS ON RUSSIAN AND CHINESE MALIGN INFLUENCE OPERATIONS AND CAMPAIGNS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS.—

(1) REPORTS REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every two years thereafter, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the heads of other Federal departments or agencies, as appropriate, shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees regarding Russian and Chinese malign influence operations and campaigns carried out with respect to Balkan countries that seek—

(A) to undermine democratic institutions;

(B) to promote political instability; and

(C) to harm the interests of the United States and other North Atlantic Treaty Organization member and partner states in the Western Balkans.

(2) ELEMENTS.—Each report submitted pursuant to paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) an assessment of the objectives of the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China regarding malign influence operations and campaigns carried out with respect to Western Balkans countries—

(i) to undermine democratic institutions, including the planning and execution of democratic elections;

(ii) to promote political instability; and

(iii) to manipulate the information environment;

(B) the activities and roles of the Department of State and other relevant Federal agencies in countering Russian and Chinese malign influence operations and campaigns;

(C) a comprehensive list identifying—

(i) each network, entity and individual, to the extent such information is available, of Russia, China, or any other country with which Russia or China may cooperate, that is supporting such Russian or Chinese malign influence operations or campaigns, including the provision of financial or operational support to activities in a Western Balkans country that may limit freedom of speech or create barriers of access to democratic processes, including exercising the right to vote in a free and fair election; and

(ii) the role of each such entity in providing such support;

(D) the identification of the tactics, techniques, and procedures used in Russian or Chinese malign influence operations and campaigns in Western Balkans countries;

(E) an assessment of the effect of previous Russian or Chinese malign influence operations and campaigns that targeted alliances and partnerships of the United States Armed Forces in the Western Balkans, including the effectiveness of such operations and campaigns in achieving the objectives of Russia and China, respectively;

(F) the identification of each Western Balkans country with respect to which Russia or China has conducted or attempted to conduct a malign influence operation or campaign;

(G) an assessment of the capacity and efforts of NATO and of each individual Western Balkans country to counter Russian or Chinese malign influence operations and campaigns carried out with respect to Western Balkans countries;

(H) the efforts by the United States to combat such malign influence operations in

the Western Balkans, including through the Countering Russian Influence Fund and the Countering People’s Republic of China Malign Influence Fund;

(I) an assessment of the tactics, techniques, and procedures that the Secretary of State determines are likely to be used in future Russian or Chinese malign influence operations and campaigns carried out with respect to Western Balkans countries; and

(J) any additional authorities, resources, or activities that could increase the United States Government’s capacity to counter Russian and Chinese malign influence operations and campaigns in Western Balkans countries.

(3) FORM.—Each report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

SA 3264. Mr. YOUNG (for himself and Mr. COONS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

DIVISION —JUDICIAL UNDERSTAFFING DELAYS GETTING EMERGENCIES SOLVED

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This division may be cited as the “Judicial Understaffing Delays Getting Emergencies Solved Act of 2024” or the “JUDGES Act of 2024”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Article III of the Constitution of the United States gives Congress the power to establish judgeships in the district courts of the United States.

(2) Congress has not created a new district court judgeship since 2003 and has not enacted comprehensive judgeship legislation since 1990.

(3) This represents the longest period of time since district courts of the United States were established in 1789 that Congress has not authorized any new permanent district court judgeships.

(4) By the end of fiscal year 2022, filings in the district courts of the United States had increased by 30 percent since the last comprehensive judgeship legislation.

(5) As of March 31, 2023, there were 686,797 pending cases in the district courts of the United States, with an average of 491 weighted case filings per judgeship over a 12-month period.

(6) To deal with increased filings in the district courts of the United States, the Judicial Conference of the United States requested the creation of 66 new district court judgeships in its 2023 report.

SEC. 3. ADDITIONAL DISTRICT JUDGES FOR THE DISTRICT COURTS.

(a) ADDITIONAL JUDGESHIPS.—

(1) 2025.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The President shall appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate—

(i) 1 additional district judge for the central district of California;

(ii) 1 additional district judge for the eastern district of California;

(iii) 1 additional district judge for the northern district of California;

(iv) 1 additional district judge for the district of Delaware;

(v) 1 additional district judge for the middle district of Florida;

(vi) 1 additional district judge for the southern district of Indiana;

(vii) 1 additional district judge for the northern district of Iowa;

(viii) 1 additional district judge for the district of New Jersey;

(ix) 1 additional district judge for the southern district of New York;

(x) 1 additional district judge for the eastern district of Texas; and

(xi) 1 additional district judge for the southern district of Texas.

(B) TABLES.—The table contained in section 133(a) of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(i) by striking the items relating to California and inserting the following:

“California:	
Northern	15
Eastern	7
Central	28
Southern	13”;

(ii) by striking the item relating to Delaware and inserting the following:

“Delaware	5”;
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(iii) by striking the items relating to Florida and inserting the following:

“Florida:	
Northern	4
Middle	16
Southern	17”;

(iv) by striking the items relating to Indiana and inserting the following:

“Indiana:	
Northern	5
Southern	6”;

(v) by striking the items relating to Iowa and inserting the following:

“Iowa:	
Northern	3
Southern	3”;

(vi) by striking the item relating to New Jersey and inserting the following:

“New Jersey	18”;
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(vii) by striking the items relating to New York and inserting the following:

“New York:	
Northern	5
Southern	29
Eastern	15
Western	4”;

(viii) by striking the items relating to Texas and inserting the following:

“Texas:	
Northern	12
Southern	20
Eastern	8
Western	13”.

(C) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This paragraph shall take effect on January 21, 2025.

(2) 2027.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The President shall appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate—

(i) 1 additional district judge for the district of Arizona;

(ii) 2 additional district judges for the central district of California;

(iii) 1 additional district judge for the eastern district of California;

(iv) 1 additional district judge for the northern district of California;

(v) 1 additional district judge for the middle district of Florida;

(vi) 1 additional district judge for the southern district of Florida;

(vii) 1 additional district judge for the northern district of Georgia;

(viii) 1 additional district judge for the district of Idaho;

(ix) 1 additional district judge for the northern district of Texas; and

(x) 1 additional district judge for the southern district of Texas.

(B) TABLES.—The table contained in section 133(a) of title 28, United States Code, as amended by paragraph (1) of this subsection, is amended—

(i) by striking the item relating to Arizona and inserting the following:

“Arizona	13”;
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(ii) by striking the items relating to California and inserting the following:

“California:	
Northern	16
Eastern	8
Central	30
Southern	13”;

(iii) by striking the items relating to Florida and inserting the following:

“Florida:	
Northern	4
Middle	17
Southern	18”;

(iv) by striking the items relating to Georgia and inserting the following:

“Georgia:	
Northern	12
Middle	4
Southern	3”;

(v) by striking the item relating to Idaho and inserting the following:

“Idaho	3”;
and	

(vi) by striking the items relating to Texas and inserting the following:

“Texas:	
Northern	13
Southern	21
Eastern	8
Western	13”.

(C) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This paragraph shall take effect on January 21, 2027.

(3) 2029.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The President shall appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate—

(i) 1 additional district judge for the central district of California;

(ii) 1 additional district judge for the eastern district of California;

(iii) 1 additional district judge for the northern district of California;

(iv) 1 additional district judge for the district of Colorado;

(v) 1 additional district judge for the district of Delaware;

(vi) 1 additional district judge for the district of Nebraska;

(vii) 1 additional district judge for the eastern district of New York;

(viii) 1 additional district judge for the eastern district of Texas;

(ix) 1 additional district judge for the southern district of Texas; and

(x) 1 additional district judge for the western district of Texas.

(B) TABLES.—The table contained in section 133(a) of title 28, United States Code, as amended by paragraph (2) of this subsection, is amended—

(i) by striking the items relating to California and inserting the following:

“California:	
Northern	17
Eastern	9
Central	31
Southern	13”;

(ii) by striking the item relating to Colorado and inserting the following:

“Colorado 8”;

(iii) by striking the item relating to Delaware and inserting the following:

“Delaware 6”;

(iv) by striking the item relating to Nebraska and inserting the following:

“Nebraska 4”;

(v) by striking the items relating to New York and inserting the following:

“New York:
Northern 5
Southern 29
Eastern 16
Western 4”;

and

(vi) by striking the items relating to Texas and inserting the following:

“Texas:
Northern 13
Southern 22
Eastern 9
Western 14”.

(C) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This paragraph shall take effect on January 21, 2029.

(4) 2031.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The President shall appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate—

(i) 1 additional district judge for the district of Arizona;

(ii) 1 additional district judge for the central district of California;

(iii) 1 additional district judge for the eastern district of California;

(iv) 1 additional district judge for the northern district of California;

(v) 1 additional district judge for the southern district of California;

(vi) 1 additional district judge for the middle district of Florida;

(vii) 1 additional district judge for the southern district of Florida;

(viii) 1 additional district judge for the district of New Jersey;

(ix) 1 additional district judge for the western district of New York; and

(x) 2 additional district judges for the western district of Texas.

(B) TABLES.—The table contained in section 133(a) of title 28, United States Code, as amended by paragraph (3) of this subsection, is amended—

(i) by striking the item relating to Arizona and inserting the following:

“Arizona 14”;

(ii) by striking the items relating to California and inserting the following:

“California:
Northern 18
Eastern 10
Central 32
Southern 14”;

(iii) by striking the items relating to Florida and inserting the following:

“Florida:
Northern 4
Middle 18
Southern 19”;

(iv) by striking the item relating to New Jersey and inserting the following:

“New Jersey 19”;

(v) by striking the items relating to New York and inserting the following:

“New York:
Northern 5
Southern 29
Eastern 16
Western 5”;

and

(vi) by striking the items relating to Texas and inserting the following:

“Texas:
Northern 13
Southern 22
Eastern 9
Western 16”.

(C) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This paragraph shall take effect on January 21, 2031.

(5) 2033.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The President shall appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate—

(i) 2 additional district judges for the central district of California;

(ii) 1 additional district judge for the northern district of California;

(iii) 1 additional district judge for the district of Colorado;

(iv) 1 additional district judge for the middle district of Florida;

(v) 1 additional district judge for the northern district of Florida;

(vi) 1 additional district judge for the northern district of Georgia;

(vii) 1 additional district judge for the southern district of New York;

(viii) 1 additional district judge for the southern district of Texas; and

(ix) 1 additional district judge for the western district of Texas.

(B) TABLES.—The table contained in section 133(a) of title 28, United States Code, as amended by paragraph (4) of this subsection, is amended—

(i) by striking the items relating to California and inserting the following:

“California:
Northern 19
Eastern 10
Central 34
Southern 14”;

(ii) by striking the item relating to Colorado and inserting the following:

“Colorado 9”;

(iii) by striking the items relating to Florida and inserting the following:

“Florida:
Northern 5
Middle 19
Southern 19”;

(iv) by striking the items relating to Georgia and inserting the following:

“Georgia:
Northern 13
Middle 4
Southern 3”;

(v) by striking the items relating to New York and inserting the following:

“New York:
Northern 5
Southern 30
Eastern 16
Western 5”;

and

(vi) by striking the items relating to Texas and inserting the following:

“Texas:
Northern 13
Southern 23
Eastern 9
Western 17”.

(C) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This paragraph shall take effect on January 21, 2033.

(6) 2035.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The President shall appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate—

(i) 2 additional district judges for the central district of California;

(ii) 1 additional district judge for the northern district of California;

(iii) 1 additional district judge for the southern district of California;

(iv) 1 additional district judge for the middle district of Florida;

(v) 1 additional district judge for the southern district of Florida;

(vi) 1 additional district judge for the district of New Jersey;

(vii) 1 additional district judge for the eastern district of New York;

(viii) 2 additional district judges for the western district of Texas.

(B) TABLES.—The table contained in section 133(a) of title 28, United States Code, as amended by paragraph (5) of this subsection, is amended—

(i) by striking the items relating to California and inserting the following:

“California:
Northern 20
Eastern 10
Central 36
Southern 15”;

(ii) by striking the items relating to Florida and inserting the following:

“Florida:
Northern 5
Middle 20
Southern 20”;

(iii) by striking the item relating to New Jersey and inserting the following:

“New Jersey 20”;

(iv) by striking the items relating to New York and inserting the following:

“New York:
Northern 5
Southern 30
Eastern 17
Western 5”;

and

(v) by striking the items relating to Texas and inserting the following:

“Texas:
Northern 13
Southern 23
Eastern 9
Western 19”.

(C) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This paragraph shall take effect on January 21, 2035.

(b) TEMPORARY JUDGESHIPS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate—

(A) 2 additional district judges for the eastern district of Oklahoma; and

(B) 1 additional district judge for the northern district of Oklahoma.

(2) VACANCIES NOT FILLED.—The first vacancy in the office of district judge in each of the offices of district judge authorized by this subsection, occurring 5 years or more after the confirmation date of the judge named to fill the temporary district judgeship created in the applicable district by this subsection, shall not be filled.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This subsection shall take effect on January 21, 2025.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section and the amendments made by this section—

(A) for each of fiscal years 2025 and 2026, \$12,965,330;

(B) for each of fiscal years 2027 and 2028, \$23,152,375;

(C) for each of fiscal years 2029 and 2030, \$32,413,325;

(D) for each of fiscal years 2031 and 2032, \$42,600,370;

(E) for each of fiscal years 2033 and 2034, \$51,861,320; and

(F) for fiscal year 2035 and each fiscal year thereafter, \$61,122,270.

(2) INFLATION ADJUSTMENT.—For each fiscal year described in paragraph (1), the amount authorized to be appropriated for such fiscal year shall be increased by the percentage by which—

(A) the Consumer Price Index for the previous fiscal year, exceeds

(B) the Consumer Price Index for the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year described in subparagraph (A).

(3) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term “Consumer Price Index” means the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (all items, United States city average), published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor.

SEC. 4. ORGANIZATION OF UTAH DISTRICT COURTS.

Section 125(2) of title 28, United States Code, is amended by striking “and St. George” and inserting “St. George, Moab, and Monticello”.

SEC. 5. ORGANIZATION OF TEXAS DISTRICT COURTS.

Section 124(b)(2) of title 28, United States Code, is amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (3), by inserting “and College Station” before the period at the end.

SEC. 6. ORGANIZATION OF CALIFORNIA DISTRICT COURTS.

Section 84(d) of title 28, United States Code, is amended by inserting “and El Centro” after “at San Diego”.

SEC. 7. GAO REPORTS.

(a) JUDICIAL CASELOADS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and make publicly available reports—

(1) evaluating—

(A) the accuracy and objectiveness of case-related workload measures and methodologies used by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts for district courts of the United States and courts of appeals of the United States;

(B) the impact of non-case-related activities of judges of the district courts of the United States and courts of appeals of the United States on judicial caseloads; and

(C) the effectiveness and efficiency of the policies of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts regarding senior judges; and

(2) providing any recommendations of the Comptroller General with respect to the matters described in paragraph (1).

(b) DETENTION SPACE.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives a report on an assessment of—

(1) a determination of the needs of Federal agencies for detention space;

(2) efforts by Federal agencies to acquire detention space; and

(3) any challenges in determining and acquiring detention space.

SEC. 8. PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ARTICLE III JUDGESHIP RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUDICIAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED STATES REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrative Office of the United States Courts, in consultation with the Judicial Conference of the United States, shall make publicly available on their website, free of charge, the biennial report entitled “Article III Judgeship Recommendations of the Judicial Conference of the United States”.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report described in subsection (a) should be released not less frequently than biennially and contain the summaries and all related appendixes sup-

porting the judgeship recommendations of the Judicial Conference of the United States, including—

(1) the process used by the Judicial Conference in developing the recommendations;

(2) any caseload and methodology changes;

(3) judgeship surveys with recommendations; and

(4) specific information about each court for which the Judicial Conference recommends additional judgeships.

(c) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—The Administrative Office of the United States Courts shall submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives copies of the report described in subsection (a).

SA 3265. Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. KELLY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . SEMICONDUCTOR PROGRAM.

Title XCIX of division H of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (15 U.S.C. 4651 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 9902 (15 U.S.C. 4652)—

(A) by redesignating subsections (h) and (i) as subsections (i) and (j), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subsection (g) the following:

“(h) AUTHORITY RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the provision by the Secretary of Federal financial assistance for a project described in this section that satisfies the requirements under subsection (a)(2)(C)(i) of this section shall not be considered to be a major Federal action under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) (referred to in this subsection as “NEPA”) or an undertaking for the purposes of division A of subtitle III of title 54, United States Code, if—

“(A) the activity described in the application for that project has commenced not later than December 31, 2024;

“(B) the Federal financial assistance provided is in the form of a loan or loan guarantee; or

“(C) the Federal financial assistance provided, excluding any loan or loan guarantee, comprises not more than 10 percent of the total estimated cost of the project.

“(2) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed as altering whether an activity described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) of paragraph (1) is considered to be a major Federal action under NEPA, or an undertaking under division A of subtitle III of title 54, United States Code, for a reason other than that the activity is eligible for Federal financial assistance provided under this section.”; and

(2) in section 9909 (15 U.S.C. 4659), by adding at the end the following:

“(c) LEAD FEDERAL AGENCY AND COOPERATING AGENCIES.—

“(1) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term ‘lead agency’ has the meaning given the term in section 111 of NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4336e).

“(2) OPTION TO SERVE AS LEAD AGENCY.—With respect to a covered activity that is a

major Federal action under NEPA, and with respect to which the Department of Commerce is authorized or required by law to issue an authorization or take action for or relating to that covered activity, the Department of Commerce shall have the first right to serve as the lead agency with respect to that covered activity under NEPA.

“(d) CATEGORICAL EXCLUSIONS.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSIONS.—Each of the following categorical exclusions is established for the National Institute of Standards and Technology with respect to a covered activity and, beginning on the date of enactment of this subsection, is available for use by the Secretary with respect to a covered activity:

“(A) Categorical exclusion 17.04.d (relating to the acquisition of machinery and equipment) in the document entitled ‘EDA Program to Implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and Other Federal Environmental Mandates As Required’ (Directive No. 17.02-2; effective date October 14, 1992).

“(B) Categorical exclusion A9 in Appendix A to subpart D of part 1021 of title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

“(C) Categorical exclusions B1.24, B1.31, B2.5, and B5.1 in Appendix B to subpart D of part 1021 of title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

“(D) The categorical exclusions described in paragraphs (4) and (13) of section 50.19(b) of title 24, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

“(E) Categorical exclusion (c)(1) in Appendix B to part 651 of title 32, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

“(F) Categorical exclusions A2.3.8 and A2.3.14 in Appendix B to part 989 of title 32, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

“(2) ADDITIONAL CATEGORICAL EXCLUSIONS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, each of the following shall be treated as a category of action categorically excluded from the requirements relating to environmental assessments and environmental impact statements under section 1501.4 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation:

“(A) The provision by the Secretary of any Federal financial assistance for a project described in section 9902, if the facility that is the subject of the project is on or adjacent to a site—

“(i) that is owned or leased by the covered entity to which Federal financial assistance is provided for that project; and

“(ii) on which, as of the date on which the Secretary provides that Federal financial assistance, substantially similar construction, expansion, or modernization is being or has been carried out, such that the facility would not more than double existing developed acreage or on-site supporting infrastructure.

“(B) The provision by the Secretary of Defense of any Federal financial assistance relating to—

“(i) the creation, expansion, or modernization of one or more facilities described in the second sentence of section 9903(a)(1); or

“(ii) carrying out section 9903(b), as in effect on the date of enactment of this subsection.

“(C) Any activity undertaken by the Secretary relating to carrying out section 9906, as in effect on the date of enactment of this subsection.

“(e) INCORPORATION OF PRIOR PLANNING DECISIONS.—

“(1) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term ‘prior studies and decisions’ means baseline data, planning documents, studies, analyses, decisions, and documentation that

a Federal agency has completed for a project (or that have been completed under the laws and procedures of a State or Indian Tribe), including for determining the reasonable range of alternatives for that project.

“(2) RELIANCE ON PRIOR STUDIES AND DECISIONS.—In completing an environmental review under NEPA for a covered activity, the Secretary may consider and, as appropriate, rely on or adopt prior studies and decisions, if the Secretary determines that—

“(A) those prior studies and decisions meet the standards for an adequate statement, assessment, or determination under applicable procedures of the Department of Commerce implementing the requirements of NEPA;

“(B) in the case of prior studies and decisions completed under the laws and procedures of a State or Indian Tribe, those laws and procedures are of equal or greater rigor than those of each applicable Federal law, including NEPA, implementing procedures of the Department of Commerce; or

“(C) if applicable, the prior studies and decisions are informed by other analysis or documentation that would have been prepared if the prior studies and decisions were prepared by the Secretary under NEPA.

“(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) COVERED ACTIVITY.—The term ‘covered activity’ means any activity relating to the construction, expansion, or modernization of a facility, the investment in which is eligible for Federal financial assistance under section 9902 or 9906.

“(2) NEPA.—The term ‘NEPA’ means the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).”

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I have five requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, September 11, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, September 11, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on a nomination.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, September 11, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, September 11, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed business meeting and briefing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER AND POWER

The Subcommittee on Water and Power of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, September 11, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that my interns be granted floor privileges for their shadow days as follows: Mabel Knapick for September 18, 2024; Amelia Nason for September 25, 2024; Sophia Spry for November 14, 2024; Sophie Davenport for November 19, 2024; Donovan Young for November 21, 2024; Max Townsend for December 4, 2024; Karis Rohrer for December 10, 2024; Gissel Narvaez-Santiago for December 12, 2024, and Jordan Montovino for December 17, 2024.

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

UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2024

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration of S. 3764 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3764) to extend and authorize annual appropriations for the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom through fiscal year 2026.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask unanimous consent 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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 3764) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 3764

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “United States Commission on International Religious Freedom Reauthorization Act of 2024”.

SEC. 2. UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 207(a) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6435(a)) is amended by striking “2023 and 2024” and inserting “2025 and 2026”.

(b) EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION.—Section 209 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6436) is amended by striking “September 30, 2024” and inserting “September 30, 2026”.

ROYALTY RESILIENCY ACT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 7377, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 7377) to amend the Federal Oil and Gas Royalty Management Act of 1982 to improve the management of royalties from oil and gas leases, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask unanimous consent 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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 7377) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions: S. Res. 810, Patriot Week, and S. Res. 811, Apalachee High School.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

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

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Thursday, September 12; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that following the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Provinzino nomination postcloture; further, that notwithstanding rule XXII, all time be considered expired at 11:30 a.m., and upon disposition of the Provinzino nomination, the Senate resume consideration of the Ritz nomination; further, that the Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the Ritz nomination at 1:45 p.m.; finally, that if any nominations