

While I speak, I hope you will take a look at what you see on your screen.

This bill has been proposed by my friend from Oklahoma. It creates new standards of care for doctors providing reproductive healthcare, and these standards are not based on medicine, fact, or science. The goal of this bill is to target and intimidate reproductive healthcare providers and make it harder for women to access comprehensive, compassionate healthcare.

Let me be clear. Despite former President Trump's wild claims, it is not legal in this country, in any State, to kill a child after it is born. Doctors already have an obligation under the law to provide appropriate medical care to any child that is born alive.

How do I know this? I voted for it. It is explicitly codified in a law which President Bush signed entitled "Born-Alive Infants Protection Act of 2002"—2002. It has been on the books over 20 years.

And when doctors harm babies in violation of State and Federal laws, they are held accountable. For example, in the year 2013, Dr. Kermit Gosnell, a Pennsylvania doctor, was convicted on three counts of first-degree murder for murdering babies after botched abortions. I want you to read, if you brought this up on your phone, the story of this man. What he did was an outrage. It was disgusting. He was held accountable for it and is serving life in prison as a result, without any possibility of parole.

So to argue that we are talking about an area of law that is not addressed by current law is just plain wrong. Our Nation already has laws in place to protect newborns. To suggest otherwise is simply false. Alleging that doctors are wantonly killing infants after birth is as ludicrous as accusing immigrants in Ohio of eating cats and dogs.

Here we are. This is today's Republican Presidential campaign. Rather than create meaningful protections for women and infants, what this bill would actually do is put politicians into private healthcare decisions.

Abortions occurring late in pregnancy are incredibly rare—incredibly rare. Why don't we hear the same level of concern for women being denied reproductive care and bleeding out in the parking lot of a hospital because of decisions by State legislatures? Let's be honest. That is a real problem and a real challenge.

In these heartbreaking situations, it is not for Congress to dictate the course of medical treatment. Those wrenching decisions must be left to medical professionals and the individuals in their care. It is the only compassionate outcome.

Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Alabama.

Mrs. BRITT. Madam President, I appreciate my distinguished colleague from Illinois and would like to say,

with regard to the remarks from my colleague from Oklahoma, actively killing and saving are actually two different things. So for the people watching this, they should take a look at that. And I think what we are seeing is how far left this has gone. This is truly beyond comprehension.

I also just want to say that we spent time yesterday on an IVF bill that nobody actually tried to use to get to 60 votes. IVF is legal and accessible in all 50 States. And, in fact, the great State of Alabama, when forced into a decision, talking about this, immediately acted. Our State legislature and our Governor made sure that women had access to IVF in every corner of our State.

So I would wish that we would spend time on real things, like the appropriations bills that we have marked up, amongst others.

But if you are looking at where we are today, I think what we have seen is that KAMALA HARRIS has said that she is for a border wall; she has said she is for fracking; she has said she is for cracking down on illegal border crossings—all during her short campaign tenure. But the truth is that all of those things were just blocked.

It is clear that her flip-flops aren't real, and there is much more to dig into and discuss as this campaign moves forward.

I yield the floor.

NOMINATION OF MICHELLE WILLIAMS COURT

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, today the Senate will vote to confirm Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Michelle Court to the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California.

Judge Court's extensive career as a litigator for nearly two decades combined with her experience as a California State court judge have prepared her to serve on the Federal bench.

After graduating from Pomona College and Loyola Law School, Judge Court worked as an Associate at Gilbert, Kelly, Crowley & Jennett. She then worked as an attorney at the ACLU of Southern California before continuing her career in private practice as an Associate at Litt & Marquez and Milberg, Weiss, Bershad Hynes & Lerach.

Prior to taking the bench, Judge Court served in several roles at Bet Tzedek Legal Services: as a deputy director of litigation, as the director of litigation, and as the vice president and general counsel. At this organization, she provided legal services to low-income, elderly, and disabled clients and supervised more than 30 staff attorneys and advocates.

Since 2012, Judge Court has served as a judge on the civil division of the Superior Court of California in Los Angeles, where she has presided over approximately 200 civil trials and ruled on 12,000 motions and requests.

Judge Court has the strong support of her home State Senators, Ms. BUTLER and Mr. PADILLA. In addition, she

was rated unanimously "well qualified" by the American Bar Association.

Judge Court's deep ties to the California legal community, combined with her courtroom experience both on and off the bench, will ensure that she serves on the Central District of California with distinction.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting her nomination.

VOTE ON COURT NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Court nomination?

Mrs. SHAHEEN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA), and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted "nay."

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

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 245 Ex.]

YEAS—49

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

NAYS—44

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

NOT VOTING—7

Graham	Sinema	Wyden
Rounds	Tillis	
Sanders	Vance	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

The senior Senator from Michigan.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, on behalf of the majority leader, I ask that the Chair execute the order of July 23, 2024, with respect to the Taylor nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Margaret L. Taylor, of Maryland, to be Legal Adviser of the Department of State.

VOTE ON TAYLOR NOMINATION

Ms. STABENOW. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted "nay."

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 246 Ex.]

YEAS—50

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

NAYS—44

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

NOT VOTING—6

Graham	Sinema	Vance
Rounds	Tillis	Wyden

The nomination was confirmed.

(Ms. BUTLER assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The Senator from Vermont.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WELCH. Madam President, climate change, as we all know, has caused major disasters all across America, from Vermont's catastrophic flooding in July of 2023 and, again, exactly a year later, this past July, to the devastating wildfires in Hawaii, to hurricanes in Texas, floods in San Diego and southern Minnesota, tornadoes from Mississippi to New York. And just this week, Louisiana was hit by a hurricane, and North Carolina was hit by historic flash flooding. And North Carolina, earlier this week, saw 18—18—inches of rain in 12 hours, what the National Weather Service in Wilmington called a once-in-a-1,000-year event. That is not normal.

From 2023 to 2024, there were 48 climate disasters that incurred losses of billions of dollars and more. These events were devastating for the communities: many demolished homes and businesses, washed away roads, destroyed fields and barns, and loss of life.

And while we can count 48 from NOAA today, we know that this list will only grow as storm damage is assessed from Vermont and Louisiana and North Carolina.

Disasters literally from coast to coast hit the United States—35 severe storms; 4 floods, including Vermont's flooding; 3 tropical cyclones; 3 winter storms; 2 wildfire events; and 1 drought. This is just going on and on and on, and it is not even the full picture. We have had 125 from the same period.

I have shared the pain and anguish of Vermont's homeowners, farms, and businesses. For over 430 days, they have waited for Congress to act when it comes to supplemental relief for the Disaster Relief Fund. Vermonters need that help, as do folks in Hawaii, as do folks in North Carolina.

There is bipartisan support for this effort because it is obviously a bipartisan crisis. These weather events don't have any favorites. Whether you are in a red State or a blue State means nothing; it is the weather, and it will do what the weather decides to do.

This week, I joined with Senator BRIAN SCHATZ of Hawaii and our colleagues from Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, California, and Alaska in sending a letter to Senate leadership urging them to quickly pass disaster funding so our States can recover. We have a solid bipartisan group, and regrettably it is a growing group. The need is immense.

So we do need more financial support immediately through FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund. It is depleted, and it needs to be replenished.

One critically important program for long-term disaster recovery is through our Department of Transportation's disaster relief program. Senator SANDERS and I have seen the damage in Vermont. We have suffered brutal damage to our transit system. More than 6,000 tons of debris were removed by the State of Vermont, 409 miles of rail have been closed, 149 miles of rail trail closed, 64 bridges in Vermont closed, and 46 State roads were closed. As of last fall, Vermont incurred \$150 million in damages related to transportation alone. And then more flooding came.

Both Senator SANDERS and I have traveled across Vermont to talk with community leaders about the financial stress they face right now. We have also talked with my colleagues about the needs of our community leaders in their States and their needs as they rebuild and recover and plan for the next climate disaster. The reality is, the numbers don't paint the full picture. We do need that relief to get people moving ahead. But when your town and your street and your home and your lives, the lives of the people you represent, are so devastated, you really can't articulate a number. It doesn't capture it.

We need the Disaster Relief Fund replenished. We need transportation funding to reimburse our State governments for the costs they pay up front when a disaster hits. We need more money for the highway emergency fund. Our need is extreme. Our States and communities cannot do this alone, and that is no less true for every other colleague's State than it is for Vermont.

Today, I would also like to voice Vermonters' continued frustration—this is on a slightly different topic but related to the flooding—that 14 months after our post office was destroyed in Montpelier, the capital of the State of Vermont, we still don't have a fully functional post office.

After the July 23 floods, the Postal Service shifted its Montpelier Post Office operations to a series of temporary locations, and that included parked trucks miles away from where the old post office was. These were unsafe for the Postal Service workers, and they failed to ensure anything close to reliable service. There was no air-conditioning in the summer months or heat in the fall and no lighting. People literally were using like their iPhones to try to read what the labels were. That is unacceptable.

After a public outcry and demands from Senator SANDERS and me and our congressional colleague, Congresswoman Balint, the UPS moved postal operations to another temporary location. We thought that was progress when the Postal Service signed the new lease downtown in April, and they said it would be open by summer. It is September. The location is still not open,