

schools. Now it is in the water and in the air in places across the region. Numerous, multiple—at this point, countless—members of the State of Missouri, residents of St. Louis and St. Charles, have gotten sick, have died. We have some of the highest rates of cancer in the Nation in St. Louis, the highest rates of breast cancer. Why is that? Because there is so much nuclear radiation in the area that is still not cleaned up because the government never cleaned it up.

That is why the Senate acted in March by that big bipartisan margin to force a cleanup and to compensate those Americans who have gotten sick, those who have lost family members because of the government's inability to clean up their own mess, because of the government's nuclear program that they never properly paid for in terms of compensation to the Americans who made it possible.

Now that bill is in the House awaiting action, and even as we sit here today, it continues to be attacked by those who just think that if you want to be compensated for the damage the U.S. Government caused to you, you are somehow greedy and unthankful and ungrateful and undeserving of any help or recognition or thanks from this country.

Nothing could be further from the truth, but I read today in the Wall Street Journal yet another attack on these good Americans—an attack that appears to have the support of Members of Congress, which I find absolutely unbelievable.

I don't know how anybody, why anybody would want to attack the victims of nuclear radiation. And they are not just victims; they are heroes. They are the people who made possible our victories in the Second World War and the Cold War. But to read the Wall Street Journal's op-ed page today, you would think that if you are a uranium worker, a mine worker, that you ought to just be quiet and go off into the corner and die. That is what they say. If you are a uranium worker, then you don't deserve any compensation for the fact that while you were down in the mines making possible your government's victory in war, you were also being exposed to nuclear radiation that made you sick. To listen to this op-ed tell the story, you should just be thankful that you got to live as long as you did, and if your family has to suffer the consequences of your illness, of your cancer, if you have lost loved ones because of their exposure to nuclear radiation, well, too bad, according to the Wall Street Journal. Too bad. Just shut up and take it.

I can't believe anybody would treat nuclear radiation victims this way, but to read this story, you would think that nobody who lived in a uranium processing site, like in Missouri, who worked in a uranium mine, who had lived downwind of nuclear tests, like in New Mexico and Arizona and Utah, that nobody who has been exposed to

radiation by their own government should get anything. That is the essential premise of what the Journal writes today.

What I find potentially most disturbing is their references to Senators and Members of Congress who appear to agree to that. I mean, I just invite the Members of Congress here, if you agree with that, if you don't want to compensate nuclear radiation victims from your own State, by all means, come here to this floor. Come and tell us. Tell the world. If you don't support what the Senate did, if you want to try to kill it in the House, tell us. Put your name to it. Don't hide behind the Wall Street Journal; come and put your name to it.

This is a time to stand up and be counted because, I will tell you what, the victims of this radiation, our heroes—they have waited for decades. They have borne the cost for decades. They deserve some justice. They are coming to Capitol Hill, oh yeah. They are going to be here. They will be here next week. They are coming, and they want to see some progress. They are coming, and they want to see results. And I would invite anybody who is opposed to them, who is opposed to their compensation, who is opposed to justice for them, to come and explain it to their face. Come to this floor. Come to this floor.

Now, I know there are some in my own party who would like to say that 47 percent of the American public are just freeloaders and don't deserve anything, and we ought to treat these people like them. I disagree with all of them. It is ludicrous. It is ridiculous. And I don't know why any member of a State that has nuclear radiation victims would want to try to block the effort to compensate them. I don't understand it at all. I don't get it.

And I will tell you what, we will not stop fighting, we will not stop working until every nuclear radiation victim who has given their life and health for the support of this Nation is thanked and compensated. We are almost there. This body has done it. This body has done it. I believe there is real progress in the House. I hope we can act soon. But it is time now for Members of Congress to stand up and be counted, and it is time to stand together for justice for our heroes who have made possible this country's success, who have made possible this country's victories, and who have shown us what true devotion to country looks like.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 550.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Michael Sfraga, of Alaska, to be Ambassador at Large for Arctic Affairs.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 550, Michael Sfraga, of Alaska, to be Ambassador at Large for Arctic Affairs.

Charles E. Schumer, Benjamin L. Cardin, Raphael G. Warnock, Ben Ray Lujan, Patty Murray, Jack Reed, Richard J. Durbin, Tammy Baldwin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Angus S. King, Jr., Michael F. Bennet, Mark Kelly, Jeanne Shaheen, Tim Kaine, Chris Van Hollen, Debbie Stabenow, Brian Schatz.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

CORPORAL MICHAEL D. ANDERSON JR. POST OFFICE BUILDING—Motion to Proceed

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 457, H.R. 1555.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed on Calendar No. 457, H.R. 1555, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2300 Sylvan Avenue in Modesto, California, as the "Corporal Michael D. Anderson Jr. Post Office Building".

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 457, H.R.

1555, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2300 Sylvan Avenue in Modesto, California, as the "Corporal Michael D. Anderson Jr. Post Office Building".

Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Raphael G. Warnock, Ben Ray Lujan, Benjamin L. Cardin, Jack Reed, Richard J. Durbin, Tammy Baldwin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Angus S. King, Jr., Michael F. Bennet, Mark Kelly, Jeanne Shaheen, Tim Kaine, Chris Van Hollen, Debbie Stabenow.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions filed today, September 19, be waived.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. I return the floor to the Senator from Maryland for his outstanding, excellent, perspicacious remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

#### PROJECT 2025

Mr. CARDIN. First, let me thank my leader for those kind remarks.

Mr. President, as the Senator from the State of Maryland, I am so proud to represent so many Marylanders who are Federal workers dedicated to helping their fellow citizens with the essential work that they provide. So I come to the floor today to speak about the threat Project 2025 poses to our Federal workforce and to our Nation.

This is a plan that, if enacted, would take America back to some of the darkest chapters in our history, from a nationwide abortion ban, to eliminating civil rights for millions of Americans, to gutting the checks and balances enshrined in our Constitution by the Founding Fathers and putting unlimited power in the President's hands. This kind of extremism is deeply disturbing.

As the Senator from Maryland and chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I want to focus on one particular reason I think these ideas are so dangerous, and that is the way Project 2025 targets nonpartisan public servants in the Federal Government.

In the State of Maryland alone, there are over 150,000 Federal employees serving our country and their fellow Americans. They are dedicated, and they believe in public service, and they have always played important roles: repatriating stranded Americans who were stuck overseas when COVID-19 hit; leading negotiations to get the release of wrongfully detained Americans in Russia and Venezuela; coordinating the resettlement of Afghan refugees who supported our mission for over two decades; global drug prevention efforts; hurricane response training; emergency food assistance; counterterrorism. In every region of the globe and in every State of our Nation, public servants, our civil servants, put principle over politics in order to serve their fellow citizens.

So that is why we need to be clear-eyed about what Project 2025 will mean

not only to our Federal workforce, but to our national security.

Project 2025 is a blueprint for a government that is so radical and disturbing even Donald Trump himself doesn't want to take credit for it. He said, "I have no idea who is behind it"—well, despite the fact that six of his former Cabinet Secretaries helped write it.

Let me quote from the president of the Heritage Foundation, the think tank organizing the project. This is what he said about the federal workforce:

People will lose their jobs.

Talk about an understatement.

Project 2025 envisions Federal employees who will be politically loyal to an individual and a cult of personality rather than loyal to the Constitution and the letter of the law.

Our Federal workforce are career diplomats, career servants, career people trying to serve their fellow citizens. We do not want to politicize our civil workforce.

As the chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I must tell you, this is the kind of thing authoritarian governments do.

Project 2025 will weaken our country and put it in a place the United States has not seen before.

Now these ideas aren't exactly new. There is a long track record of smearing Federal employees as being part of the deep state. Back in 2020, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee produced a staff report detailing the concerning efforts the last administration had on the State Department, on its morale, and on trying to affect its professionalism.

A culture of fear and mistrust, vacant positions, nominees with extreme views and concerning records—unfortunately, that seems to be a glimpse of what could lie ahead with Project 2025.

The President and American Federation of Government Employees said:

Project 2025 will take away freedoms and rights from every American, will hurt the middle class and working families, and is a threat to our democracy.

They want to gut Federal workers' pay and benefits; they want to eliminate millions of Federal jobs; they want to make it easier to discriminate against people of color, women, and LGBTQ people. From the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to Veterans' Administration to the Environmental Protection Agency, they want to make big changes. They want to dismantle support for public education. They want to eliminate the entirety of the Department of Homeland Security.

These are extreme ideas. I believe these ideas are incredibly dangerous, and we must do everything we can to support our public servants. That is why I applaud the Biden-Harris administration and the Office of Personnel Management for issuing a rule in opposition to the previous administration's Schedule F classification.

I have also cosponsored legislation with Senator Kaine to codify the same effort.

As a longtime member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee—now its chair—I have been working to strengthen its workforce at the State Department, USAID, and other international affairs Agencies.

From making sure our personnel have the ability to compete globally to increasing recruitment and retention—that should be our focus. Let's make our civil service more competitive with the best, most innovative people leading our national security, diplomacy, and Federal Agencies—not dismantling them.

At the time of its implementation more than a century ago, our merit-based civil service was an anti-corruption initiative. President Teddy Roosevelt, who is known as the father of modern civil service, wrote that its "importance lies in the fact that it is the most powerful implement with which to work for the moral regeneration of our public life. No other force so strongly tends to increase the political weight of decent citizens."

That was the motivation behind the civil service, and it is more important today than ever.

So I agree our Federal work employees are a tremendous force of good for our community. We don't acknowledge them enough on this floor. We don't do enough to help them and to support them and give them the resources they need. We certainly don't want to make it more difficult for people to serve our country.

That is why we must say no to targeting of American public servants for doing their jobs. No to loyalty tests. No to bypassing congressional oversight. No to taking our country backwards to a time before there were civil rights and reproductive rights, and no to weakening our democratic institutions.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

#### RECOGNIZING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF PURDUE UNIVERSITY ENGINEERING

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate 150 years of Purdue engineering. Purdue engineering produces more than 5 percent of our engineering students in the country. Engineering alumni from Purdue have distinguished themselves for 150 years around the world and even on the moon. The first and most recent men to walk on the moon—Neil Armstrong and Gene Cernan—were both Purdue engineering alumni.

Purdue engineers have been behind many other great leaps for mankind. Some of the greatest wonders of engineering here in the United States are byproducts of Purdue engineers, such as the Golden Gate Bridge. Purdue engineering touches every aspect of our