

bench by confirming over 210 judges to lifetime appointments. These judges are the most diverse group of nominees the bench has ever seen. Nearly two-thirds are women, two-thirds are people of color. And we have confirmed more Hispanic, Asian, and Native women and more LGBTQ judges to the Federal bench than under any other President's full time in office.

These judges come with many backgrounds, not just partners in big law firms or prosecutors—as worthy as those professions may be. They come with civil rights backgrounds, public defender backgrounds, and more.

We also passed a landmark national security supplemental package to protect America's interests around the world, to stand up to Putin in Ukraine, to help Israel defend itself, and to provide humanitarian assistance for innocent civilians around the world.

The Senate provided this historic funding to help Ukraine defend their homeland with more ammo and javelins and stinger missiles and more equipment for training. And we made clear to the world that in the fight between freedom and autocracy, America will never forget where she stands—on the side of freedom.

Despite, again, a lot of standing in the way because of extraneous amendments proposed by some of our Republican colleagues, it took longer than it should have, but the most important fact is that it got done.

I am proud that the Senate stepped up at this historic moment and thank Leader McCONNELL for joining me in that regard.

Tomorrow, Leader McCONNELL and I will proudly welcome Ukrainian's President Zelenskyy to a meeting here at the U.S. Capitol to reaffirm our support and hear from him what his country may need in the future.

Separately, we also worked to keep our kids safe online by passing KOSA and COPPA with overwhelming bipartisan support. I thank my Republican colleagues for working with us on these landmark bills. They would be the first major updates to kids' safety on the internet in decades, and I am proud to have joined with parents and families of deceased loved ones to get it done. I urge Speaker JOHNSON in the House to get KOSA and COPPA done as soon as possible.

Finally, despite the hard right's intransigence, we prevented the government from defaulting last year. That would have been catastrophic. And then several times this year, as well as last, we prevented the government from shutting down, as I said, despite rightwing wishes that it happen.

And on the nonlegislative front, we have continued implementing our accomplishments of the last 2 years to help lower costs. This isn't legislation but rather working with executive Agencies to implement our policies, and that has continued to lower costs. Democrats in the Senate caucus spent a lot of time with Cabinet Secretaries

and others making sure that the bills have been implemented, and they are showing great results from one end of the country to the other.

Around the country, Senate Democrats have been hard at work turning our bills into action, implementing our agenda through new bridges in States like Pennsylvania and Ohio, high-speed rail in Nevada, and never-before-seen investments in chip manufacturing in New York, Arizona, Ohio, and elsewhere. These are creating jobs. These are lowering costs. These are helping America get prosperous.

Now, there are a lot of things we tried to get done this year but couldn't because of Republican intransigence, such as protecting a woman's right to choose and reproductive freedoms, securing our southern border, and expanding the child tax credit. So we will keep working when we return. It has been a difficult road in divided government, but progress is possible. We have made that clear again and again and again throughout this 118th Congress.

BUFFALO NITE

Mr. President, now, another thing: Buffalo Nite. Tonight is one of my favorite nights on Capitol Hill—Buffalo Nite, when Western New York comes to share wings, beef on weck, sponge candies, and, of course, especially after Monday night, nonstop talk about the Buffalo Bills. But this year is special. Tonight, we will honor Buffalo News's own Jerry Zremski with the Charging Buffalo Award.

I have known Jerry for decades. Rain or shine, tragedy or triumph, Jerry has been through it all with Western New York. Jerry's reporting and investigative journalism has touched the lives of tens of thousands in Western New York and millions across America. His work has shaped legislation, exposed wrongdoing, and given a voice to the voiceless.

It is no secret that I know a lot of reporters. So trust me when I say that Jerry Zremski has always been one of the best in the business. What a great guy. And he is such a decent, caring human being as well.

Western New York can be very proud to call Jerry one of their own, and I am very proud to have gotten to know Jerry over the many years. Jerry's indelible legacy is sewn into the very fabric of New York, and we are all eternally grateful for his great work.

I look forward to celebrating Buffalo Nite with Jerry and so many others from Western New York this evening.

Finally, and most importantly: "Go Bills!" Maybe we will win the Super Bowl this year.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE ECONOMY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, when the history of the Biden-Harris administration is written, I suspect it will be defined by the historic inflation crisis that has characterized almost all 4 years of this Presidency. And it started almost right away. Eager to begin implementing their big spending visions, Democrats seized on COVID as an excuse for a massive, partisan \$1.9 trillion spending spree, the so-called American Rescue Plan Act.

Democrats were warned by Democratic economists that their bill ran the risk of setting off "inflationary pressures of a kind we have not seen in a generation." But they proceeded anyway. Vice President HARRIS cast the deciding, tie-breaking vote in the Senate to ensure that this massive government boondoggle would become law.

And within weeks of its passage, inflation began climbing—and kept climbing and climbed more and more. By 2022, inflation had reached its highest level in 40 years—40 years—and Americans felt the consequences. As the price of everything from gas to groceries shot up, Americans dipped into their savings to make ends meet or put essential items on their credit cards. They took on second jobs. They visited food banks. They put off home repairs or family vacations. They skipped necessary medical care.

And even as the rate of inflation has finally—and I say "finally"—slowed, Americans continue to suffer as prices remain elevated. Today, Americans are paying 21 percent more for groceries than they were when President Biden and Vice President HARRIS took office. They are paying 37 percent more for energy, 45 percent more for gasoline, 22 percent more for shelter—and the list goes on.

Today, a typical family needs to spend an additional \$13,202 per year to maintain the same standard of living it enjoyed when President Biden and Vice President HARRIS took office—\$13,202 per year. Just think about that for a minute. How many lower and middle-income families do you know that can easily absorb an extra \$13,000 a year? How many families out there have had to lower their standard of living as a result of the Biden-Harris administration's policies? How many missed vacations or missed braces or missed extracurricular activities or missed car repairs or home projects does that \$13,000 represent?

And in addition to the staggering price hikes of the past few years, Americans have had to contend with additional economic pain as a result of the rate hikes the Federal Reserve was forced to impose to deal with the Biden-Harris inflation crisis. Those rate hikes drove up credit card interest rates. They drove up rates for car loans. They drove up mortgage rates. And so Americans who, for example, have had to charge things to their credit cards to deal with high food or energy prices are now facing increased challenges in paying off that debt.

A September Wall Street Journal article noted:

Around 9.1% of credit-card balances turned delinquent over the past year, the highest rate in over a decade, according to an August report from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

Other Americans are finding the American dream of owning your own home to be increasingly out of their reach as they face elevated mortgage rates on top of staggering housing prices.

President Biden has talked a lot about building an economy from the bottom up and the middle out, but it is lower and middle-income Americans who have suffered the most in the Biden-Harris economy. And if Vice President HARRIS becomes President and Democrats take control of Congress, the next few years aren't likely to look too good for lower and middle-income Americans either.

It has already become clear that Vice President HARRIS intends to continue with the tax-and-spend agenda that she and President Biden have worked to impose. And if she is elected, Americans should brace for more economic pain.

The need is great. Costs are still high. Gas prices are high. Owning a home is a struggle. Every time I look at my bank account, it's always going down.

That is what one American had to say about the economic situation earlier this year, and it has been the story for too many Americans in the Biden-Harris economy. We can only hope that they don't have to deal with another 4 years of it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

LULU'S LAW

Mrs. BRITT. Mr. President, Lulu Gribbin, a 15-year-old from Mountain Brook, AL—that is who I am here to talk about today.

She is a high school student who loves basketball, volleyball, and golf. She is one of four siblings. She is actually a twin. Lulu loves to spend time at the lake with her brothers and sisters. Her favorite color is purple.

On June 7, her life changed forever. That was the day she was on the beach enjoying the best of summer with her family and friends. She was looking for sand dollars in the ocean with a friend, and that is when a shark attacked.

What happened next is nothing short of a miracle. It was a miracle because on that day, by the grace of God, there were doctors, nurses, EMTs, and other Good Samaritans who were there on that same beach who immediately jumped into action to help Lulu. These

incredible men and women undoubtedly saved her life. But Lulu's resiliency and strength certainly was a dominating factor, not just in her survival but in her incredible recovery.

Though the shark took her left hand and her right leg, it did nothing but strengthen her spirit. When Lulu woke up from surgery and got taken off the ventilator, do you know what her first words were?

I made it.

As a mom, I can't even begin to imagine how powerful that moment was for her parents, how incredible it was to hear her say those words:

I made it.

The road home was not easy for Lulu, with surgeries and rehabilitation, but 3 months after the shark attack, y'all, she is already back home. In fact, she is back in action, showing up other golfers on the driving range.

Lulu is an inspiration. She shows all of us that when you get knocked down, you don't wait to get pulled back up. You fight, and you fight with a resolve and a determination that will carry you through even the hardest of moments.

Her grace, her faith, her strength, her perseverance, all in the face of the unimaginable, make her a hero to all of us. It is sometimes hard to remember that she is just 15 years old. Her story is hard to tell, not just because I can't imagine having to see a child go through that but also to think that there is something that could have prevented her from having to go through this tremendous fight.

Ninety minutes before Lulu was attacked and only a few miles away, another woman was attacked by a shark. Elisabeth Foley, a mother of three from Virginia, tragically lost her left hand in a shark attack.

After I heard Lulu's story and about the prior attack, I immediately thought, what could have been done differently? It turns out Lulu's parents were thinking the exact same thing. There has to be a better way to get information into the hands of beachgoers, of parents, of families if a shark attack has happened in their vicinity. That is why I introduced Lulu's Law.

This is a bipartisan bill which Congressman GARY PALMER is leading in the House, and I am so proud that everyone in the Alabama delegation has signed on. It would give local authorities the confidence that they are authorized to issue a wireless emergency alert to warn beachgoers of potential shark attacks. This doesn't impose any kind of mandate on local officials; it simply empowers them to help beachgoers stay safe through the existing wireless emergency alert system.

Although this is a small change in statute, it would enable local leaders to put information into the hands of families faster, which, as we can see, could make a world of difference.

This is the kind of commonsense work I came to do in the U.S. Senate.

My priority has always been fighting for children and families from the great State of Alabama and across this Nation and protecting children and their families from harm. That is an important part of it.

With Lulu's Law, we can empower beachgoers with information that will ultimately keep them safe.

To Lulu's parents Joe and Anne Blair Gribbin, the strength that you have shown and the way you have galvanized not just Alabama but people across our entire country to rally behind your daughter is nothing short of amazing.

To Lulu, I want to thank you for your bravery and determination. You are truly an inspiration. I wish you could see this because we have Senate pages down here shaking their heads. We are so proud of you, and we look forward to turning this bill into law to protect kids and honor the extraordinary person that you are.

To my colleagues watching from the Cloakroom, the Chamber, or back in your office, now is the time to act. Let's get this done, and let's deliver a win for the American people, for Alabama, and for Lulu. Add your name to the cosponsor list, and help us get this done. This is clearly something all of us can rally behind. Let's do it for Lulu. Let's do it for her legacy. Let's keep others safe, and let's inspire others with Lulu's story.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I applaud my fellow Senator from Alabama on this very important legislation that we need to work not just for the State of Alabama but all over the country.

Thank you very much.

UKRAINE

Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the unwinnable war in Ukraine, which has already cost American taxpayers billions of dollars.

Anyone who dares question the uniparty's narrative on the war in Ukraine is obviously going to get criticized. That is OK. The media has been complicit in pushing this narrative. Think about it. When was the last time you saw live footage on the ground in Ukraine? It is rare because Ukraine is losing and it is losing badly. This comes after we just gave Ukraine \$60 billion more of taxpayer money earlier this year to prolong this war.

I see President Zelenskyy—a uniparty puppet—is here begging—begging—for more money on the campaign trail with KAMALA HARRIS. It feels like he is here every other month, demanding more and more taxpayer money. That is because he knows that the money spigot will cut off if KAMALA HARRIS doesn't win in November.

Look, this subject is too important to go unaddressed. Over the last several months, I have asked multiple high-ranking members of the Biden-Harris administration to articulate