

These soldiers spent Thanksgiving not with family and neighbors but in the neighborhood of America's enemies.

Our enemies today are much more dangerous, aggressive, menacing, and powerful than they were just 4 years ago. For the past 4 years, Americans have seen the current administration surrender, squander, and sell out our Nation's strategic advantages.

This administration stopped enforcing sanctions on Iranian oil sales that allowed Iran to sell discounted oil to China. Iran got richer and more menacing as a result of all the money they got, and China got more powerful by being able to buy cheap energy.

Well, the Wyoming soldiers that I had a chance to visit, they are strong, they are tough, and they are brave. The thing that is so interesting, though, is I believe they are being failed by a Congress that hasn't done its job. It is incumbent upon Congress to make sure that all of these soldiers, each and every one of them, is fully equipped to protect our freedoms.

The Senate should have passed the bipartisan National Defense Authorization Act months ago. It increases troop pay, modernizes our military. It also refocuses our forces on specific military hard power, instead of this politically correct woke policy that the military has been working under for the past several years.

Right now, high prices are crushing military families. Prices are 20 percent higher right now than they were 4 years ago. And, as a result, one in seven servicemembers today—today—relies on food stamps or food banks just to support their families. This, of course, has a direct impact on our problems in terms of trying to recruit more and more members into our military. The pay raise means that a stronger military and a stronger America will be there on the world stage.

Now, as for military modernization, we need to overcome 4 years of weakness. The current administration has failed to keep us safe. It allowed 10 million illegal immigrants to cross over our southern border. It allowed a Chinese spy balloon to fly across America. It led a deadly and disastrous retreat from Afghanistan. And it slashed away America's hard power.

Under the Democrats, America became a nation in retreat. Well, the National Defense Authorization Act reverses that. It equips our military. It equips them to meet the challenges of a dangerous world. So why hasn't the Senate—this body right here that is here today in session—why hasn't it yet passed the National Defense Authorization Act? Well, the problem isn't the product; it is the process.

In the final weeks of their majority, the Democrats in the Senate have prioritized voting to confirm radical judges rather than protecting our Nation's security. As one Democrat Senator said last month, Democrats are "hell-bent," he said, on getting liberal judges confirmed.

Why can't Democrats show that same level of passion for supporting our troops? Democrats' dithering and delaying—it is downright dangerous. It sends a terrible message that America's deterrence isn't credible.

And as a result of the November elections, that is about to change. The Senate is going to change. The American people voted for change. They voted to return to a nation that is safe and strong.

In less than 60 days, America will once again have a President and a Senate majority that prioritizes making America safe and strong again.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

#### ALASKAN ENERGY

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, my colleagues have been down on the Senate floor for the last hour talking about the world that the Biden-Harris administration left us in terms of national security, and it is a really important topic. It is a much more dangerous world, and it also impacts not just what is going on globally but at home as well, particularly in a State like mine where the Biden-Harris administration has literally been at war with Alaska because we have a lot of resources.

Now, you are thinking, Well, why would that happen? So when you are governing, as this administration demonstrated to the American people and Alaskans, you make choices. You make choices. President Biden's choices involved: Do you support hard-working Alaskans, particularly in the energy sector or do you support anti-American dictators, particularly when it relates to America's energy?

And the choices, unfortunately, in the last 4 years is, when this administration was thinking about, Hey, where do I get my energy—Americans need energy. Our allies need energy, particularly after the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. We told all our allies: Hey, get off Russian oil and gas. OK. Where should we get it? Well, we should get it from places like Alaska, hard-working Alaskans, not from dictators like in Venezuela or Iran.

But the choice that this President made almost every time was about selecting dictators over Americans, over Alaskans, when it comes to energy.

Now, this is particularly true as it relates to the policy the Biden-Harris administration undertook with regard to Iran. Think about what they inherited. The Trump administration's Iran policy was very effective. What was it? No. 1, maximum pressure on the Iranian energy sector.

When President Trump took office, under the Trump administration's sanctions, Iran's oil exports were reduced in 2020 to about 200,000 barrels a day from 2.7 million barrels a day. This was crushing them. Their foreign reserves, Iranian foreign reserves, went to about \$4 billion in foreign reserves by the end of the Trump administra-

tion. That is not a lot at all. This was working.

The Trump administration's policies in the Middle East, particularly as it relates to Iran, also involved taking out the world's No. 1 terrorist, Soleimani.

By the way, a lot of people now commend President Trump for that. I remember the classified hearing we had here in the Senate right after that happened. So many of my Senate Democrat colleagues were criticizing Mike Pompeo and others for killing General Soleimani, which was a huge gift to countries around the world because he was the No. 1 terrorist in the world.

And, of course, the Trump administration launched the Abraham Accords. The Presiding Officer and I went to a number of the Abraham Accord countries together prior to the October 7 attacks, where the opportunities for peace had been growing prior to the October 7 attacks.

So that was the Trump administration's policies with regard to Iran and energy. What did they do when the Biden administration came in? They made choices, and the choices were to appease Iran. The choices were to lift sanctions on the Iranian oil and gas sector. When they lifted these sanctions over the last 4 years, this has dramatically enriched Iran. They almost have \$100 billion in oil revenues now—again, choosing dictators over Americans and Alaskans.

And, of course, Iran, what did they use this money for? To train and equip and supply the Houthis, Hezbollah, and Hamas.

So what happened domestically? I will tell you what happened domestically. In my State, the great State of Alaska, that has got minerals and oil and gas for our Nation, for our allies, for Alaskans in huge abundance, the Biden-Harris administration came in, and they said: We are going to shut down Alaska. We are going to lock up Alaska. We are going to prefer energy from our adversaries than from our own country, and that is what they did. Sixty-eight Executive orders and Executive actions in the last 4 years—68—exclusively focused on shutting down my State.

I don't think there has ever been a Federal Government that focused on one State to crush them more than the Biden administration did to the great State of Alaska.

So as I mentioned, this is all about choices. I wrote an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal a couple month ago saying the Biden-Harris administration sanctions Alaska more than it sanctions Iran. It sanctions hard-working Alaskans more than it sanctions the terrorists in Iran. That is fact. That is what has happened when you have an administration that goes on bended knee all over the world—Venezuela, Iran, Saudi Arabia—begging for oil when you are shutting it down in our own country, particularly in my State.

So this is what we got—4 years of this—sanctioning a State, sanctioning

my constituents when the President goes on bended knee to Venezuela, to Iran, and won't sanction them at all. Does that make sense? No. But that is the world that we watched and dealt with over the last 4 years. I am quite confident that the incoming Trump administration is not going to do that anymore.

Stand by, Iran. Maximum sanctions are coming back your way. Maximum pressure is coming back your way. And I am also very confident that the Trump administration, with a Republican Senate and a Republican House, is going to help the State of Alaska, which has more critical minerals and oil and gas than almost anyplace in the world, to once again produce for the benefit of Alaskans, for the benefit of Americans, and the benefit of our allies.

I yield the floor.

#### NOMINATION OF ANTHONY J. BRINDISI

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Anthony Brindisi to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of New York.

Born in New Hartford, NY, Judge Brindisi received his B.A. from Siena College and his J.D. from Albany Law School. After law school, he joined Brindisi, Murad & Brindisi Pearlman, LLP as an associate in Utica. He was a partner at the law firm from 2008 to 2014 and again from 2021 to 2022. He also served as of counsel from 2014 to 2018. As a practicing attorney, he handled primarily civil litigation matters and specialized in personal injury cases.

From 2011 to 2019, Judge Brindisi represented district 119, which includes the Utica and Rome region, in the New York State Assembly. He served as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from 2019 to 2021, representing New York's 22nd Congressional District.

Since 2022, Judge Brindisi has served as a judge on the New York State Court of Claims in Utica. In this role, he hears civil claims from an eight-county region across central and northern New York. Judge Brindisi has also served as an acting supreme court justice in Oneida County since the beginning of 2024. Over the course of his judicial career, he has presided over 37 cases that have gone to verdict or judgment.

Judge Brindisi has deep ties to the Northern District of New York. He enjoys the strong support of both of his home State Senators, Mr. SCHUMER and Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and the American Bar Association unanimously rated him as "qualified" to serve on the district court.

Judge Brindisi's background as a litigator, public servant, and State court judge ensures that he will be an asset to the district court. I am proud to support his nomination, and I ask my colleagues to join me.

#### VOTE ON BRINDISI NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I know of no further debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Brindisi 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 bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 49, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 310 Ex.]

##### YEAS—50

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

##### NAYS—49

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

##### NOT VOTING—1

Sinema

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). 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 Colorado.

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

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

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby

move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 843, Elizabeth C. Coombe, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of New York.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Tammy Duckworth, Ben Ray Lujan, Patty Murray, Alex Padilla, Peter Welch, Richard Blumenthal, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher A. Coons, Debbie Stabenow, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Elizabeth Warren, Margaret Wood Hassan, Jack Reed, Tim Kaine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Elizabeth C. Coombe, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of New York, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 46, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 311 Ex.]

##### YEAS—52

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

##### NAYS—46

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

##### NOT VOTING—2

Sinema Vance

(Ms. BALDWIN assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BUTLER). On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 46.

The motion was agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Elizabeth C.