

The June arrest of 8 Tajikistan nationals with suspected ties to ISIS who had illegally entered the country as well as the identification of more than 400 migrants who used an ISIS-affiliated smuggling network to enter the United States are just two examples of the kinds of threats we face.

Then there is the fact that chaos at the border creates opportunities for cross-border illegal activity, like the deadly trade in fentanyl, which affects communities around our country. My State of South Dakota is about as far away from the southern border as you can get, but law enforcement officials consistently tell me that the illegal drugs they are dealing with have entered the country across our southern border.

Four years of recordbreaking illegal immigration at our southern border under the Biden-Harris administration. Ten million encounters—and those are the migrants that we know of. It has been a dangerous 4 years, but the end is in sight. When President Trump and Republicans take control in January, stemming the flood of illegal immigration will be one of our first priorities. Under Republicans, national security here at home, at our borders and in our communities, will be just as important as taking care of our national security priorities abroad.

We are going to start right away with a once-in-a-generation investment in border security and immigration enforcement here in Congress. Among other things, that package will include substantial resources to increase the number of Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers and Border Patrol agents, increase detention space, and provide the barriers and technology we need to fully secure the border.

There is a lot of work to do and a big mess to clean up.

A recent article reported that there are around 1.4 million individuals who have been ordered to be deported but are still here in the United States, and most of them are not in immigration custody. And that is just one small corner of the problem.

As I said, we have a lot of work to do, but Republicans are committed, for the sake of our national security and for the sake of our rule of law. Four years of recordbreaking illegal immigration, but the end is in sight.

I yield the floor.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CHINA

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, Joseph Stalin was rumored to have once said:

We will hang the capitalists with the rope they sell us.

Unfortunately, the United States has been selling the Chinese Communist

Party a lot of rope in recent years. At this very moment, American entities are fueling China's aggression by funneling huge amounts of capital into capabilities that could eventually be used against the United States and our allies. From advanced semiconductors to quantum computing to artificial intelligence it is high time that the United States becomes serious about limiting the flow of U.S. dollars into the arsenal of our biggest strategic adversary.

By some estimates, U.S. investments in Chinese communities totaled more than \$2.3 trillion in market value in 2020. That is American investments in Chinese companies—\$2.3 trillion in market value at the end of 2020. That includes \$21 billion in semiconductors, \$54 billion in military companies, and a whopping \$221 billion in artificial intelligence. According to a report from the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, "The United States is the most important foreign source of investment to semiconductors, quantum computing, and AI in China."

Because of China's strategy of military-civil fusion, these investments are not simply benefiting China's economy; they are directly bolstering China's military. China is the greatest national security threat of our time. I think we all understand that, and it is incomprehensible to me that American investors are continuing to bankroll its rise, and we are essentially blind to what that scale and what the focus of those investments really are.

The Chinese Communist Party has become increasingly aggressive in its efforts to gain power and influence, embracing illicit tactics like intellectual property theft, forced technology transfer, and predatory lending. According to findings of the House Select Committee on Strategic Competition between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party, China subsidizes the sale of fentanyl and illicit narcotics abroad and has fueled addiction and death in the United States. The Drug Enforcement Administration reports that fentanyl is the leading cause of death among Americans between the ages of 18 and 45. We know where the precursors are coming from. We know where they go—to Mexico—and then they are combined and then produced to look like normal pharmaceutical drugs, much to the chagrin and misery and death of so many of our young people. And then, 2 years ago, the United States intercepted a surveillance balloon from China that crossed across our country.

Meanwhile the Chinese Communist Party continues to assert excessive and illegal maritime boundary claims in the South China Sea, at times using force against our treaty ally, the Philippines, when they have attempted to resupply their ship near the Second Thomas Shoal. President Xi has ordered the Chinese military to be ready and capable of taking Taiwan by force in 2027—just 2 years from now.

So it should go without saying that the United States should exercise cau-

tion before continuing to sell the Chinese Communist Party rope in the form of sensitive technology, like advanced semiconductors and artificial intelligence.

I have been working with my colleagues here to address legislation that would provide some transparency for this outbound investment from the United States to the PRC. Last year, the Senate made good progress on this issue by including a provision to address outbound investment transparency in the Senate-passed National Defense Authorization Act. The Senate voted 91 to 6 to include my amendment in the NDAA last year, showing an overwhelming bipartisan consensus on the need to address this issue. We all know how hard it is to find consensus around here. A 60-vote threshold can be hard to come by on many important issues, but upward of 90 votes should send a clear message that this issue is one that we deem of utmost importance on a bipartisan basis. We all are acutely aware of our competition with China and our need to counter some of China's aggression, and including prohibitions on certain outbound investments is a critical step to that end.

I must say we have had some great partners in the House. I want to thank, in particular, JOHN MOOLENAAR, chair of the Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party; Congressman MICHAEL MCCAUL, chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the House; and Speaker of the House of Representatives MIKE JOHNSON, who have all contributed to our efforts to advance this issue, but this isn't where the story ends.

The Senate has—or had—another opportunity to include these provisions in the Defense Authorization Act this year, but House minority leader HAKEEM JEFFRIES chose to block these provisions. One person is standing in the way. It is simply unconscionable that anyone who claims to care about the China threat would be opposed to outbound investment transparency, and it is unacceptable to play political games with such an essential national security provision.

I understand, over the last day, Leader JEFFRIES has listened to the voice of reason and come back to the negotiating table. And I am hopeful that these conversations will continue to be productive and yield a positive outcome. The national security of our country depends on it, and we must not squander this opportunity to confront the Chinese Communist Party. Time is running out.

We all know that we are living in the most dangerous time since World War II. Our adversaries are not shy about the fact that they are working together. Earlier this year, China and Russia pledged to deepen their trust and cooperation, while they have continued to conduct joint military exercises. North Korea has sent 10,000 troops to Russia, and some intelligence estimates suggest they may be willing

to provide up to 100,000 soldiers in the coming months, from North Korea to Russia, to fight in Ukraine.

Meanwhile, Iran and its proxies have been attacking U.S. shipments in the Red Sea and have launched a terrorist attack against our greatest strategic ally in the Middle East, which is Israel. It is no secret—it is well-known—that China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea are working in concert to undermine American interests and to threaten the stability of the global world order. So we should not add our name to the list by helping them with the gift of unrestrained, nontransparent American investment.

I would urge all of our colleagues to not let politics stand in the way of our national security. We cannot stand by and continue selling the communists in China the rope they will use to hang the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes prior to the scheduled roll-call vote.

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

RADIATION EXPOSURE COMPENSATION ACT

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, we are come to the end now of 2024, to the end of another legislative session—indeed, to the end of another Congress. And before this Congress congratulates itself on finishing its legislative work next week, I must come again here to this floor and remind my colleagues that hundreds of thousands of good Americans are still waiting for this Congress to act, waiting for justice to be done in their cases.

I am talking about the hundreds of thousands of Americans who have been poisoned by nuclear radiation by their own government. I am talking about the people of St. Louis, MO, an original uranium processing site dating back to the Manhattan Project 50, 60 years ago now.

The people of St. Louis did their duty proudly, patriotically; but the government didn't do right by them. What did the government do when the Manhattan Project was shut down? The government took that nuclear waste, that radioactive material, and dumped it into a public landfill. They allowed it to seep into our groundwater. They allowed it to be distributed across the region so that now, in the greater St. Louis area and the greater St. Charles area, thousands upon thousands of Missourians have been exposed to nuclear waste and radiation for decades.

And even as I stand here today, the radiation continues. The groundwater is still in doubt. Coldwater Creek is still contaminated. Just a few weeks ago, the Army Corps of Engineers discovered additional nuclear radioactive material under residents' homes in suburban St. Louis. Weldon Spring is still not fully remediated. And no one—I emphasize "no one"—in the State of

Missouri has received a dime in compensation from the Federal Government for the decades of radioactive exposure that this government forced upon them.

And the people of Missouri are not alone. The same story is repeated over and over in places like New Mexico and Arizona and in Idaho and in Colorado and in Wyoming and Montana—and I could go on—hundreds of thousands of Americans, exposed through no fault of their own, many of them veterans, I might add, many of them miners who went to work in uranium mines to provide the critical material that allowed us to support our nuclear program, that allowed us to win both the Second World War and the Cold War.

And what has the U.S. Government done for these good Americans—veterans, laymen, one and all? What has the government done for them? Nothing. It has exposed them to nuclear radiation and done nothing.

That is why this body finally acted this year, passing with a huge bipartisan majority legislation that would finally compensate and honor those Americans who served their country, who gave their health and in many cases, yes, gave their lives for this country's national security as part of our nuclear program.

Mr. President, while this body has acted, the House has not. And here we are now, at the end of this calendar year, at the end of this legislative session; and because the House has waited and because the House has stalled and because the House has failed to act, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Program has now fully expired—fully expired—so that no American, no veteran, no one across the country who has been exposed by the government to this radioactive waste—not a single person has been compensated for the cancers that they have contracted, compensated for the loved ones whom they have lost to radioactive-related diseases—nobody. It is completely dark. No one is getting anything.

And now we are told, Mr. President, that at this eleventh hour, after this body has passed legislation, not once but twice, to fairly compensate these good Americans, after this body has acted to ensure that these good Americans get the justice that they deserve, now, at this eleventh hour, after the House has allowed the program to expire, we are told that now House leadership is considering a backroom deal, a backroom deal to be shoved into an end-of-the-year package next week that would select just a few counties in one State, the State of Utah—just a few counties to compensate and exclude everybody else. I cannot emphasize to the Presiding Officer enough what an offense this would be.

For months now, victims have met with House leadership and negotiated with them a path forward. I have negotiated with House leadership. Many here have engaged in this effort to find a way to get the House to act and com-

pensate these good Americans who have been poisoned. And now, at this last minute, for House leadership to be preparing, as reports indicate they are, to shove down the throats of these victims across the country a backroom deal that excludes almost all of them—almost all of them—is not only unacceptable, but it is absolutely offensive. It is unjust. It is wrong.

President Reagan used to say that sometimes there really are simple answers, just not easy ones. Let's be direct about this. What House leadership is considering here, there is a simple way to describe it: It is wrong. It is just flat out wrong. There is no more nuance needed than that.

And who will suffer if House leadership puts up a backroom deal, rigged for only a few insiders, excluding most of the country? Who will suffer? I will tell you who will suffer. It will be people like the young children of Jana Elementary in my home State of Missouri, an elementary school that had to close over a year ago because of continuing radioactive contamination right there in the St. Louis area. This elementary school is right near the creek that is still contaminated. The entire school had to shut down. Who knows how many children had been exposed, by the way, before that happened. The entire school closed. It is still closed. It will remain closed, and every child will remain uncompensated and exposed until the House chooses to act.

Think about Leslie Begay, a member of the Navajo Nation. No one contributed more to the defense of this country than the proud members of the Navajo Nation. In the Second World War, in the Cold War, and still today, their rates of volunteer service for our military are higher than any other community in the entire country. And nobody suffered more from the fallout of the nuclear program than the Navajo Nation, including Leslie, who has had a double lung transplant.

If the House fails to act, if the House forces a backroom deal through this body, Leslie and thousands of others like him will be uncompensated, will be unhonored, will be unrecognized. It is wrong, Mr. President.

Consider Claire, a young girl from Missouri, diagnosed with a radiation-related illness when she was born, going through chemotherapy when she was just a child, age 2.

Consider Bernice Gutierrez, from the great State of New Mexico. Every member of Bernice's family for three generations now has had cancer and multiple radiation-related illnesses because they were downwind of the original Oppenheimer tests that carried that radioactive nuclear cloud over so much of our country.

Consider Zach Visintine from the State of Missouri: born with cancer, died at the age of 2. He never had a chance. Why? Well, because his mother grew up along Coldwater Creek in the St. Louis region of Missouri that is still, to this day, contaminated.