

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, today, I rise in support of H.R. 8219, the Lahaina National Heritage Study Act. I also want to lend my support to the bill that is proposed by my esteemed colleague from Nebraska.

H.R. 8219 requires the Secretary of the Interior to study the potential of Lahaina to be designated as a National Heritage Area. The August 2023 wildfires brought to the forefront how special Lahaina is to Maui, to Hawaii, to our country, and, indeed, the world. The National Heritage Area designation could bring important Federal resources to help protect and manage the historic natural and cultural resources that are unique to Lahaina.

I thank Senator FISCHER for her partnership in supporting this measure, and I ask my colleagues to join me in passing this bill today so that the President can sign it into law, and the National Park Service can begin working with local partners on this effort.

I just want to mention that it is very clear that both Senator FISCHER and I have worked very closely with our communities in garnering support for these two bills, and no one is raising any substantive objections to these measures. So as we rush to finish the work of the Senate, I think it would be a very positive decision on our part to support these bills that nobody substantively objects to. So I hope that we can UC these bills.

I yield to the Senator from Nebraska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate en bloc consideration of H.R. 8413 and H.R. 8219, which were received from the House. I further ask that the bills be considered read the third time and passed and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, in reserving the right to object, I have no substantive concerns with these bills. However, we have dozens and dozens of other bills that have been reported out of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Senator BARRASSO and I have been very clear about our intentions to put together and pass a public lands bill, which consists of about 150 bills. All of these reported bills have gone through the same process in a weighted package. These two bills would be part of that. This week is our last chance to reach agreement on and to finalize that package.

I cannot, in good conscience, start deconstructing this package that so many of our colleagues have worked so hard on for so long and have waited for today while we are continuing to negotiate on it. We have just finished large meetings, and we will continue the meetings throughout tonight and tomorrow.

So, for now, I have to preserve the option to get a package agreed to, and I object to both Senators' unanimous consent requests.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, I would just like to note that I certainly recognize that the esteemed chair of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is working very hard to put together a bill that contains dozens of these kinds of bills that have been worked through the committee as well as by the proponents. However, the reality of time is that there are serious concerns as to whether or not we are going to be able to get the kind of agreement that the chairman seeks.

Therefore, here we are with the actual two bills. And, believe me, if all of the other people who have similar kinds of legislation come to this floor and ask for unanimous consent, I will be happy to give it. That is all we are asking at this point—that these two bills are ripe today. Whether or not the chair is able to succeed in putting together this massive legislation that he referred to, I think, is very problematic, and I think we should, at least, take positive action on the bills that the Senator from Nebraska and I have worked very hard on.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, this really is outrageous. My legislation cannot wait. As I have said, it passed the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on a voice vote. Last week, it passed the full House of Representatives unanimously.

The bill is different from the rest of the package that my colleagues are negotiating. Nebraskans are watching this bill—they are watching my bill—because Nebraskans will be kicked off their land starting in February—2 months from now—if it is not signed into law.

I have been working with the chair. I have been working with his team for over a year—over a year—on this legislation, incorporating feedback from them and continuously emphasizing the urgency with my legislation. None of my colleagues are objecting to policy in this bill. They know it is the right thing to do. In fact, my colleague objecting has already voted in favor of the bill in committee. Rather, objecting to this legislation is choosing to use these people, their homes, and these reservoirs and the small businesses as political leverage for unrelated matters.

I have heard from over 1,000 constituents who are in support of this legislation. They know that it will chart a better path forward for that local community and the Federal Government. They did not ask to be used as political leverage.

I hope my colleague will reconsider his objection. Otherwise, I will con-

tinue coming to this floor, day after day this week, asking for unanimous consent; although, I have been told by our cloakroom that there is no time available tomorrow for any action like this on the floor. It needs to happen now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO KATE KÄUFER

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I rise today to recognize Kate Käufer, who is retiring after serving on the Senate Appropriations Committee for 20 years and who has left her fingerprints on so much of the crucial legislation to keep our country safe and improve the lives of our servicemembers and their families.

Kate Käufer first started on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee in December 2004 when Senator Stevens was chair and served under Chairs Inouye, Cochran, Durbin, Shelby, and TESTER. Colleagues from each era can attest she has always been an invaluable member of the team—so valuable in fact, that, in March 2022, she was asked to take over as clerk of the subcommittee.

Through times of immense global change, instability, and uncertainty, when the investments we make in our military have had huge implications—not just for families today and not just for our own country, but for the world—Kate Käufer has worked tirelessly to help the Senate solve problems, address threats, and ensure Congress makes critical strategic investments in our servicemembers and our national security.

It is impossible to sum up two decades of Kate's leadership and smart analysis on the subcommittee. When Kate started in the Senate, individual appropriations bill were routinely debated and passed on the Senate floor. More recently, much of that work is done off the Senate floor, and she has remained steadfast in her loyalty to the deliberative processes of this body and tirelessly advocating for the well-being of our troops and the security of this country.

Over her 20 years of service, Kate handled almost every single appropriations account and military service. Those include several classified accomplishments for which there is no public record. But publicly, from firsthand experience, I can say that she was instrumental in providing for our men and

women in uniform and their families, protecting our national security workforce, and preserving the national security investments over the last several years.

We all owe Kate Käufer a debt of gratitude for working through many long nights and hard negotiations in service of our Nation. As Appropriations chair this Congress, I have leaned on Kate's expertise and counsel; and it is clear to all that her expertise, dedication, and ability to work across the aisle to make progress have made our country stronger. She will be deeply missed.

On behalf of all the past chairs—and all the Senators and staff—who have worked with Kate over the years and who know firsthand just how important her counsel has been, I would like to thank you, Kate, for your service. You will be missed, and we wish you all the best for what lies ahead. Thank you.

PEPFAR

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, early this month, we commemorated World AIDS Day, and so I come to the floor today to speak about the need for America to stay the course in the fight to end HIV/AIDS.

Two decades ago—when the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) was established under George W. Bush—an HIV/AIDS diagnosis was a death sentence in many parts of the world. Today, the possibility of ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic is no longer a dream; it is a realistic prospect. And it should not be a partisan issue.

Let's remember that it was President Trump who signed the PEPFAR Extension Act of 2018. We need to set aside the manufactured allegations motivated by hyper-partisanship that have prevented the PEPFAR reauthorization and look at the facts.

First of all, PEPFAR is not only the most successful global health program; it is arguably the most successful foreign aid program since the Marshall Plan. It has earned the United States an enormous amount of goodwill around the world and distinguishes us from our strategic competitors. We launched this billion-dollar program because it was the right thing to do, not because we expected a quid pro quo.

Our adversaries have never engaged a program of such enormity and what little they do comes with strings attached. I would argue PEPFAR is one of the most effective soft power tools we have. So it is no wonder that countries around the world are looking to the U.S. for leadership in ending the deadly epidemic for once and for all.

Look at the numbers. Over the past 20 years, PEPFAR has saved 25 million people. Thanks to PEPFAR, more than 5 million children have been born HIV-free. PEPFAR also helps kids who are orphans because one or both of their

parents died from AIDS. It includes family-centered programming, nutritional support, access to education.

At the beginning of 2024, PEPFAR launched a 2-year initiative titled "Safe Births, Healthy Babies." The goal is to eliminate mother-to-child transmission and improve maternal and neonatal healthcare in Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia. Within these three countries alone, PEPFAR is reaching over 200,000 pregnant women living with HIV, and potentially averting 7,000 new infant HIV infections.

These are the facts. And the incredible thing is, we may be on the verge of a further breakthrough.

A study published in the New England Journal of Medicine in July found that twice-yearly injections of lenacapavir—a drug used to treat HIV/AIDS—was 100 percent effective in preventing AIDS transmission in women—100 percent.

There is more work to be done to understand the long-term results. But we may be on the verge of ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic as we know it over the course of the coming Trump administration.

Now, even if we passed PEPFAR today, we still have work to do. According to the Global Fund, in 2023, 210,000 new infections were estimated among girls and young women.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, HIV/AIDS among girls and young women is three times higher than boys and young men. In 2023, 44 percent of all new infections were among girls and women of all ages. These disturbing trends are the result of discrimination and violence preventing access to lifesaving care for girls and young women. UNAIDS reports that an estimated 1.3 million people became infected with HIV in 2023 alone.

Let me talk about one of the biggest problems we are facing: We have lately been reauthorizing this program on a year-to-year basis. This is undermining our progress and threatening our future. A year-to-year reauthorization sends the message to partner governments that HIV/AIDS is no longer a priority. This will impact not just HIV/AIDS prevention but overall health structures that grew out of vital HIV/AIDS programs.

We need a 5-year reauthorization. A 5-year reauthorization makes all the difference if we want to end the HIV/AIDS threat by 2030. Five years allows organizations implementing PEPFAR to plan their activities with predictable timelines. It allows more efficient procurement of commodities and supplies. It helps retain medical staff and assure clients that they will be able to obtain continuous care. Without a 5-year reauthorization, there are no guarantees. Without a 5-year reauthorization, we will be putting millions at risk of new HIV/AIDS infections and death.

I know that for many Americans, the HIV/AIDS epidemic can seem far away.

But let me end with this warning: This summer, a UN report found that for the first time, more than half of new HIV infections occurred outside of Sub-Saharan Africa. Preventing this spread isn't just the right thing to do, it isn't just the moral thing to do, it is in America's national security interest to do this.

And so, to my colleagues here in Congress, I urge you to support a 5-year reauthorization of the PEPFAR program. Let's end the scourge of HIV/AIDS once and for all.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO WADE PALMER

• Mr. DAINES. Madam President, today I have the distinct honor of recognizing Montana Highway Patrol State Trooper Wade Palmer of Ravalli County as Montanan of the Month for his bravery and sacrifice made in the line of duty.

Trooper Palmer's dedication to his fellow Montanans is nothing short of remarkable. Born and raised in Missoula, Wade grew up in a large family with a passion for helping others. From a young age, he felt a call to law enforcement, driven by the desire to serve and protect his community. Over the course of his career with the Montana Highway Patrol, Wade displayed unwavering bravery and commitment, earning numerous accolades, including two Medals of Valor, the VFW Trooper of the Year award, and the Governor's Award for Excellence in Performance.

Sadly, on March 15, 2019, Wade was ambushed and critically injured in the line of duty. Ever since that horrific event, Wade remains focused on his family—his wife Lindsey and their daughters Mia and Cierra—as he continues on his journey to recovery. Despite the hardships he has faced and wounds he bears, both visible and invisible, Wade's resilience and determination inspire us all. The countless men and women who serve on the frontlines each day to serve and protect are the best among us, and they deserve our thanks. May we always remain committed to supporting and honoring our first responders.

It is my distinct honor to recognize Wade Palmer for his selfless service to the Treasure State. May God bestow blessings upon you and your family as you continue healing. You make Montana proud.●

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREENBRIAR CHILDREN'S CENTER

• Mr. OSSOFF. Madam President, I rise to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Greenbriar Children's Center in Savannah.

Founded in 1949, Greenbriar Children's Center was established by members of the Gamma Sigma Omega chapter of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., to start an orphanage for Black children in the Savannah area.