

the Indian Reauthorization Act applies to the Lytton Rancheria of California.

The Indian Reorganization Act addresses a legacy of disenfranchisement for Native communities across the country. It was a landmark bill that helped Tribes reestablish their sovereignty and rebuild their communities after decades of immoral assimilation policies attempted to tear them apart.

The bill we just approved would simply provide clarity that the Lytton Rancheria of California is able to place land into trust through the Department of the Interior's standard land-to-trust process.

I again thank my partners, Senators SCHATZ and MURKOWSKI, for their support and thank you all for your support in passing both of these measures today.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mr. PADILLA. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

GEORGIA

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am here on the floor today with the incoming chair and current ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee to talk about the deteriorating political situation in the country of Georgia and to strongly urge the United States Government to take immediate action in response.

Senator RISCH and I have had a long history of working together on Georgia. We were there in 2012 when Georgian Dream took over in Georgia. We were part of the election observation team. We agreed those were free and fair elections.

Senator RISCH was very eloquent in talking to President Saakashvili at the time—or Prime Minister—about the need to hand over power because it was a free and fair election, and we needed to do that.

Well, in October, Georgia held parliamentary elections, and the vote took place against a backdrop of threats—in some cases, even violence. And there is evidence that the ruling party, Georgian Dream, specifically targeted activists, opposition figures, and ordinary voters. Consequently, those elections, unlike the elections in 2012 that we observed, have not been deemed free and fair. And the majority of the Georgian people, understandably so, do not support the election results.

In the aftermath, the Georgian Dream government decided to yank Georgia off of its Euro-Atlantic path.

It announced the country would cease negotiating with the European Union over its succession to the bloc. Of course, it is a move that pleased Vladimir Putin and the Kremlin and reinforced to many his influence over the politics and policy of Georgia.

This step directly contravened Georgia's own constitution, where the Georgian people enshrined their commitment to joining both the EU and NATO. It has rightfully caused outrage across the country.

For 2 weeks, we have seen widespread protests that brought thousands of people into the streets. The protests are being led by young people—young people who have grown up in an independent Georgia, in a country that was looking toward a better, more democratic future.

In an attempt to control those peaceful protesters, the government has responded with brutal force. And over the last 2 weeks, we have seen Georgian Dream target opposition politicians, media and protest organizers, not only using force in an attempt to disperse crowds, but rounding up individuals at their homes, beating them, and detaining them.

That is not what a democracy does.

The President of Georgia President Zourabichvili has stood in solidarity with the protesters. She urged the government to stop its campaign of violence against its own people. But now in a very concerning turn, Georgian Dream intends to appoint a new President this weekend by holding a vote in Parliament where only its members are participating.

A new President and Commander in Chief—one who stands with Georgian Dream and supports the Kremlin—could dramatically escalate an already volatile situation. As we think about why this is important to the United States, since 1992, the U.S.-Georgia partnership has been based on shared democratic values. We partnered with the Georgian people, successive Georgian Governments to build democratic institutions, a professional civilian-controlled military, and a vibrant civil society capable of cementing the country's trans-Atlantic future.

Georgia is an EU candidate country. It has been, until recently, a close, reliable partner for NATO and the United States. Georgia joined the United States-led coalition in the Iraq war in 2003 and Georgian soldiers deployed to Afghanistan in 2004.

This is a country and a people who have stood by the United States, and it is time now for us to stand by them.

That is why it is so distressing to see what is happening in the country and why we need to see action from our government to condemn what is going on there. The leadership of Georgian Dream is a political party that was founded in 2012 by a billionaire who made his money in Russia and who has drawn increasingly from the Kremlin's playbook in the recent months. They have adopted laws and policies aimed

at constraining civil society's ability to operate, including a foreign agents law that is meant to vilify civic activists as dangerous outside agents.

So what are we doing as the United States? How are we supporting the Georgian people? Well, I am very frustrated because, in my view, we are not doing enough. We are failing to meet this moment and answer this call. We have failed to respond in a meaningful way that would help change the calculus of Georgian Dream's leadership. They are paying no price for their actions, as they defy the will of the people and take pages from Putin's authoritarian playbook.

There are well-documented human rights violations, but the Treasury Department has failed to sanction a single official for their actions. It is perplexing. I don't understand it, and I urge the administration to act immediately. Georgia's future is in jeopardy, and the Georgian people, who have repeatedly supported us, deserve our support. Treasury has all the authorities it needs under the Global Magnitsky Act and other sanction legislations to hold officials to account for the brutal human rights violations they are currently committing against Georgian citizens.

This is not a hard call. The next 2 weeks are critical for Georgia. The administration has bipartisan, bicameral support to act. I urge the U.S. administration to stand with the Georgian people and their fight for a democratic future.

I yield to my colleague from Idaho.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. First of all, let me say, I want to fully associate myself with the remarks of my colleague from New Hampshire. She said it about as well as it can be said, but I am going to underscore it and go back.

As she said, in 2012, she and I were the appointed representatives of the United States to look at and monitor the elections in Georgia, and, I have to tell you, it was an interesting process to do that. We looked and watched the election. From our point of view, it was a straight-up election. It was well done, well executed. And, at the end of the day, the incumbent, President Saakashvili lost; Mr. Ivanishvili's Dream party won.

We had the interesting experience, the next morning, going to see both camps, and one of the things that gave me great hope is it was very much like an American election. Both camps were still in campaign mode when we talked to them, but, as Senator SHAHEEN indicated, we had very candid discussions with both sides. Frankly, before we left the region—I think we went to Turkey after that. But before we left the region, they had made agreements that they were going to talk about a peaceful transition. That was a really, really good sign.

I have to tell you, we left there really quite optimistic that things were headed in the right direction—that here

they had an election that was a spirited election, but it came out the way the people of Georgia wanted it to come out and that things would go forward.

It wasn't too long after that that we started to have suspicions that it wasn't going as well as it should. And, indeed, that was the case, and it continued to deteriorate and continues to deteriorate today to where it is of an urgent nature.

Look, this country is a country that, after Ronald Reagan brought down the Soviet Union and all these countries got their freedom—most of them took it—this is one of those countries that has not been able to get complete footing and get the complete shake-off of Russia that it wants.

The ghosts of the Russian Empire still are there in that country, and they are showing up in what is happening today. The tactics that are being used by the government that is in place today are the tactics that they use in Russia. It is brutal. It involves tortures. It involves arrests. It involves all of the things that we see from the old Soviet Union.

This is not what the Georgian people want. You say: Well, how can you say that? The Georgian Constitution actually has enshrined in it that they will pursue—and they have been pursuing—membership in the European Union. When that happens, of course, things change dramatically in the country. They go much more to Western values than what they inherited from the old Soviet Union, and that is the direction that Georgia's people want to go.

And, again, not only is it in the Constitution, the polling there says that 80 percent of people want to continue to pursue both European Union membership and NATO membership.

So what has the current government done about the Georgian Dream? Well, they have done the things that the Senator from New Hampshire has laid out. They have done awful things that resulted in arrests and torture and the kinds of things that autocratic governments do in order to get their way.

The Georgian people have not stood by passively and let this happen. There have been lots of protests in the country over recent weeks. Indeed, some of them are quite violent because the Georgian Dream party is cracking down on these people who are just simply trying to pursue their dreams for Georgia, both as expressed in the Constitution and expressed by the will of the people. We had an opportunity to talk to the President of Georgia just recently and came away again disappointed with the way things are happening.

But, look, there is hope here. We passed a bill that gives the Biden administration the ability to go in and levy sanctions on the people that should be sanctioned.

And it is not a secret. We know who they are. They know who they are. The State Department knows who they are.

The Biden administration knows who they are. So let's get at it.

And just as my colleague from New Hampshire, I am deeply, deeply disappointed that we haven't done that. Look, putting sanctions on is not a strain on this country. It is easy to do. But it can be and will be a real strain on the people who were sanctioned.

We really need to do that, and like my friend from New Hampshire, I don't understand why it is not being done. Is it incompetence? Is it laziness? Is it that they don't know better? We have all talked to them, but it just doesn't get done.

So, again, I want to join in with my friend from New Hampshire and urge the administration to step in and do what should be done, follow the law that we have put in place, and take the opportunities for sanctions that we have put in place.

I want to continue to be hopeful for the Georgian people. They don't want what is going on there. They don't want to drift back to the Soviet Union or to Russia. They want to look westward, by their Constitution, by their own will. They want to be part of the European Union and part of NATO.

Let's give them every help that we can possibly do, and it won't cost us anything.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS—H.R. 8413 AND H.R. 8219

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise again today to request passage of the Swanson and Hugh Butler Reservoirs Land Conveyances Act.

Over the past 50 years, the residents of the Swanson and Red Willow Reservoirs communities have built friendships, started supportive businesses, and enjoyed the recreation that Southwest Nebraska has to offer.

Now, starting on February 1, in less than 2 months, these people will be forcibly removed from the reservoirs unless this bill passes. This is per a contract signed between local parties and the Bureau of Reclamation.

I worked with the Nebraska delegation, the residents, the small businesses, the Bureau, as well as both Democrats and Republicans on the ENR Committee to draft a bill that would solve this issue.

Senator HIRONO and I are following regular order, but we have to use unanimous consent. Our bills passed the House. Our bills have passed out of the Senate ENR Committee.

This is what we all say in here, what we all tell our constituents, that this has to happen: We need to follow regular order. We travel our States talking about regular order all the time. We say one side or the other is not following it. This is the way to do bills.

This needs to happen. We need one subject bills, another demand of our constituents, instead of piling 150 bills that aren't in a package yet, trying to get them into a package.

But I understand we will have an objection. Senator HIRONO and I paired a Democrat bill with a Republican bill so that we can move forward and other Members can then move forward on noncontroversial bills for our people at home and for our people who support this.

So as if in legislative session and notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate en bloc consideration of H.R. 8413 and 8219, which were received from the House. I further ask that the bills be considered read a third time and passed and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. PADILLA. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I rise to object to H.R. 8413, the Swanson and Hugh Butler Reservoirs Land Conveyances Act. I want to be clear. I want to assure my colleague from Nebraska that I don't object on the substance of the bill itself.

As she alluded to just a moment ago, there is a larger effort underway to pull together a package of public lands and water bills like this one. We have over a hundred pending land and water bills, in fact, that are awaiting final consideration. And, yes, there is only about a week or so left before the holiday recess. But there are a lot of bills awaiting final consideration, and so we need to make sure that they can pass altogether as a final package, both out of fairness and out of efficiency—the way the process works here.

I understand that this particular bill is a priority for Senator FISCHER and the Nebraska delegation and their constituents. I respect that. I appreciate that. I, too, have land and water bills before the Senate that are universally supported by constituents and constituencies in my State that I am working hard to get enacted before the end of the Congress.

And, in fact, as a member of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I can report to all of you that, just last month, we held one final business meeting in committee, and we reported out nearly 80 bills, most of them with unanimous, bipartisan support. So the holdup here, the objections here, et cetera, continue to not so much be on substance but the process being what it is. There is so much good work that we are trying to finalize for so many States in the final days of this Congress.

So I think, to help get us there, I want to continue to urge Chair MANCHIN, urge Ranking Member BARASSO and their House counterparts, Chairman WESTERMAN and Ranking Member GRIJALVA, to continue working and negotiating in good faith to assemble a public lands and water package that will be of tremendous service