

have done with their lives? If they lived, what would all of these other beautiful girls and boys, their teachers have done with their lives had they been here today?

It is just unthinkable how many lives are cut off, how much genius is extinguished, how much change could have benefited all of us because we live in a world in which 100, mainly young men and women in their teens and 20s, lose their life every day.

But I am here to tell you that that is not the extent of the story, because it is not just those who die who have their potential extinguished.

I live in the South End of Hartford. The Presiding Officer lives in a neighborhood with high rates of violence, and he knows as well as I do the biology that impacts kids who wake up every single day fearing for their lives.

I have a group of middle schoolers who I sort of call my “neighborhood kitchen cabinet,” and I go and meet with them every month or so to get their feedback on what needs to be better about our neighborhood that we live in. And they regularly tell me that, for them, school is the safe place. It is their walk to and from schools, it is the weekends where they don’t feel safe.

And when you have millions of children in this country who experience that exposure to violence on a daily basis—in Birmingham, AL, 58 percent of people live within a quarter mile of a recent fatal shooting. In New Haven—same number—58 percent of people live within a quarter mile of a recent fatal shooting.

When that is your daily reality, whether you survive the year or not, your brain is impacted as a child in a way that robs you of the basic skills for life’s success: resiliency, grit.

It is not a coincidence that all the low-performing schools in this country are in the violent neighborhoods. It is hard to learn—impossible—for those kids who see gun violence on a daily basis.

And so I wish I knew what Shane would be as an adult. I wish I knew what all of these kids ended up to be—where they were going to college, what their dreams were becoming. But make no mistake. The potential that we are losing in this country because of the choices we make here not to make combating gun violence a priority, it is extinguishing the potential not of 100 people a day—those who lose their lives—but literally tens of thousands. And it is just a choice we make.

Shane’s first small business was a water-selling business. He asked his dad one summer if he could just set up a little stand and sell bottled water to people in the neighborhood. And so his dad fronted him the money and bought him one of those big Costco packs of bottled water. And Shane set out his little stand to sell the water in a neighborhood where, whether he knew it or not, he was already exposed to levels of trauma due to the loss of life that was

happening almost every weekend that summer in Hartford, CT. And he put a sign in front of his table. He named his business Shane Oliver Sells. And he wrote the acronym: SOS.

When you send out an SOS call, right, it is your last chance. Right? You are on that boat. You have tried everything—everything. You tried bailing it out. You tried restarting the engine. You tried plugging the hole. You are done. The only thing left is to signal that SOS call so that somebody in charge will come and rescue you.

I don’t know if Shane knew or didn’t know what his acronym meant. But Shane Oliver sat out there every day in a neighborhood plagued with gun violence with a sign that said “SOS.” And it is representative of the millions of kids all across this country who every single day are sending out an SOS signal to the adults who are supposed to protect them. They are supposed to show up here every day and make it a priority that something like this never, ever happens again—where the kids who live in my neighborhood never, ever fear for their lives walking from their home to school.

That SOS call is being sent out from thousands of neighborhoods all across this country here. That call is being delivered to us. It has been 12 years since we lost these beautiful children and the adults who protected them. And it is about time that we respond to that plea for help.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FETTERMAN). The senator from Hawaii.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
LEGISLATION

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, we are going to try to make some laws in the next week in the area of jurisdiction where I am chair—the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. We have already had the most constructive and productive period for Native people in congressional history. We have invested more in water, in transportation, in broadband, in energy, in culture, and in economic development. We have passed an extraordinary number of bipartisan bills. But we are not done. We have about a week left, and we have a number of bipartisan bills that have to get across the finish line.

So I am going to summarize four bills and try to pass them out of the Senate, and then we will do more work next week on a bipartisan basis to finish out this Congress strong, to make sure we do everything we can for Native people from Hawaii, to Florida, and everywhere in between.

S. 2783, the Miccosukee Reserved Area Amendment Act, will amend existing law to add culturally important land to the Miccosukee Tribe’s reservation, and it would also authorize up to \$14 million to protect the land from flooding caused by Federal projects to restore the Everglades National Park ecosystem. This is a commonsense bill

that passed the Indian Affairs Committee unanimously.

S. 2908, the Indian Buffalo Management Act, introduced by Senators HEINRICH and MULLIN, would improve the capacity of Tribes and Tribal organizations to manage buffalo and buffalo habitat and clarify the applicability of State and Federal law. It would establish a \$14 million annual grant program for 7 years within the Department of the Interior to help Tribal nations play a pivotal role in this recovery effort, especially on their own lands.

S. 4365, Veterinary Services to Improve Public Health in Rural Communities Act is the Vice Chair LISA MURKOWSKI’s bill, and it would allow public health officers from the U.S. Public Health Service to offer some veterinary services at IHS facilities to control domestic animal populations and to prevent the spread of rabies and other diseases to humans.

Finally, the Tribal Forest Protection Act Amendments Act, also introduced by Vice Chair MURKOWSKI, and it will help to mitigate wildfire threats on Federal lands and Tribal or Alaska Native or corporation forest lands. It removes an existing requirement for mitigation work to take place on Federal lands next to Tribal lands. It also expands eligibility to include Federal lands with special geographic, historical, or cultural significance to a Tribe, and it authorizes up to \$15 million annually through the fiscal year 2030.

We have a couple of other bills that we are not quite done negotiating about, in particular, a bill introduced by Senator-elect GALLEGOS—Representative GALLEGOS—and Senator LUJÁN to protect children who are victims of abuse and to help Tribes, to help families to recover. We have to do some final clarifications with our counterparts on the Republican side, and I am hopeful that we will land that one as well.

We also have a couple of bills from Senator CORTEZ MASTO having to do with law enforcement.

And, finally, a bill that is arguably the most important out of all of these in terms of its national impact, and that is to establish a commission to reckon with the shameful legacy of boarding schools, in which children were basically incarcerated, removed from their Tribal communities, and forced to speak a language they didn’t speak. Sometimes, forcibly, their hair was cut. Many times they were punished for speaking in their native language or singing their native songs. This is a legacy of abuse at the hands of the Federal Government that we have to reckon with, and this would simply establish a commission to start to delve into this history and come through it to a place of healing, but we are not there yet on those bills.

So here comes the lawmaking part.

MICCOSUKEE RESERVED AREA
AMENDMENTS ACT

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 560, S. 2783.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2783) to amend the Miccosukee Reserved Area Act to authorize the expansion of the Miccosukee Reserved Area and to carry out activities to protect structures within the Osceola Camp from flooding, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time.

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

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. SCHATZ. I know of no further debate on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (S. 2783) was passed as follows:

S. 2783

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Miccosukee Reserved Area Amendments Act”.

SEC. 2. MICCOSUKEE RESERVED AREA ADDITION.

Section 4(4) of the Miccosukee Reserved Area Act (16 U.S.C. 410 note; Public Law 105-313) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(C) ADDITIONAL AREA.—In addition to the land described in subparagraph (B), the term ‘Miccosukee Reserved Area’ or ‘MRA’ includes the portion of the Park that is known as ‘Osceola Camp’ and is depicted on the map entitled ‘Everglades National Park, Proposed Expansion—Miccosukee Reserved Area, Osceola Camp’, numbered 160/188443, and dated July 2023, copies of which shall—

“(i) be kept available for public inspection in the offices of the National Park Service; and

“(ii) be filed with appropriate officers of Miami-Dade County and the Tribe.”.

SEC. 3. PROTECTION OF THE OSCEOLA CAMP FROM FLOODING.

Section 8 of the Miccosukee Reserved Area Act (16 U.S.C. 410 note; Public Law 105-313) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(j) PROTECTION OF OSCEOLA CAMP FROM FLOODING.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary, in consultation with the Tribe, shall take appropriate actions to protect structures within the area described in section 4(4)(C) from flooding.

“(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary such sums as are necessary to carry out paragraph (1) for fiscal year 2024 and each fiscal year thereafter, but not more than a total \$14,000,000.”.

Mr. SCHATZ. I ask that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

INDIAN BUFFALO MANAGEMENT
ACT

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 561, S. 2908.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2908) to assist Tribal governments in the management of buffalo and buffalo habitat and the reestablishment of buffalo on Indian land.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill which had been reported from the Committee on Indian Affairs with amendments as follows:

(The parts of the bill intended to be stricken are in boldface brackets, and the parts of the bill intended to be inserted are in italics.)

S. 2908

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Indian Buffalo Management Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) buffalo sustained a majority of Indian Tribes in North America for many centuries before buffalo were nearly exterminated by non-Indian hunters in the mid-1800s;

(2) the historical, cultural, and spiritual connection between buffalo and Indian Tribes has not diminished over time;

(3) Indian Tribes have long desired the reestablishment of buffalo throughout Indian country for cultural, spiritual, and subsistence purposes; and

(4) the successful restoration of buffalo would allow an Indian Tribe to benefit from—

(A) the reintroduction of buffalo into the diets of the members of the Indian Tribe;

(B) the rekindling of the spiritual and cultural relationship between buffalo and the Indian Tribe; and

(C) the use of buffalo for economic development, in the case of an Indian Tribe that chooses to use buffalo for economic development.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to fulfill the government-to-government relationship between Tribal governments and the United States in the management of buffalo and buffalo habitat;

(2) to promote and develop the capacity of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations to manage buffalo and buffalo habitat;

(3) to protect, conserve, and enhance buffalo, which are important to the subsistence, culture, and economic development of many Indian Tribes;

(4) to promote the development and use of buffalo and buffalo habitat for the maximum practicable benefit of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, through management of buffalo and buffalo habitats in accordance

with integrated resource management plans developed by Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations;

(5) to develop buffalo herds and increase production of buffalo in order to meet Tribal subsistence, health, cultural, and economic development needs; and

(6) to promote the inclusion of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations in Department of the Interior, local, regional, national, or international—

(A) decision-making processes; and

(B) forums.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) BUFFALO.—The term “buffalo” means an animal of the subspecies *Bison bison bison*.

(2) BUFFALO HABITAT.—The term “buffalo habitat” means Indian land that is managed for buffalo.

(3) DEPARTMENT.—The term “Department” means the Department of the Interior.

(4) INDIAN LAND.—The term “Indian land” has the meaning given the term in paragraph (2) of section 2601 of the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (25 U.S.C. 3501), except that, in that paragraph, the term “Indian reservation” shall be considered to have the meaning given the term “Indian reservation” in paragraph (3) of that section, without regard to the date specified in paragraph (3) of that section.

(5) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe” has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

(6) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(7) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term “Tribal organization” means a legally established organization of Indians that is chartered under section 17 of the Act of June 18, 1934 (commonly known as the “Indian Reorganization Act”) (25 U.S.C. 5124) with demonstrable experience in the restoration of buffalo and buffalo habitat on Indian land.]

(7) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term “Tribal organization” means any legally established organization of Indians that—

(A)(i) is chartered under section 17 of the Act of June 18, 1934, (commonly known as the “Indian Reorganization Act”); 25 U.S.C. 5124) and recognized by the governing body of one or more Indian Tribes; or

(ii) is a Tribal corporation federally chartered under section 3 of the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act (25 U.S.C. 5203); and

(B) has demonstrable experience in the restoration of buffalo and buffalo habitat on Indian land.

SEC. 4. BUFFALO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.

(a) PROGRAM ESTABLISHED.—The Secretary shall establish a permanent program within the Department for the purposes of—

(1) promoting and developing the capacity of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations to manage buffalo and buffalo habitat;

(2) promoting the ability of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations to protect, conserve, and enhance populations of buffalo that are owned by Indian Tribes or Tribal organizations;

(3) promoting the development and use of buffalo and buffalo habitat for the maximum practicable benefit of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations; and

(4) promoting the inclusion of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations in Department, international, national, regional, and local decision making and forums regarding buffalo and buffalo habitat.

(b) CONTRACTS AND GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into contracts and cooperative agreements with, and award grants to, Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations to enable the Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations—