

don't have the ammo to take out that Russian artillery because they lack that ammo. It is so frustrating to this soldier who is doing his job, risking his life.

Then we heard another instance that Ukrainian artillery is not as long range now—because we haven't given them what they need, and it is in the supplemental—as the Russian artillery. So the Russian artillery can fire and take out Ukrainian artillery, but then Ukrainian artillery can't fire back because they don't have the reach of the Russian artillery. We heard these stories over and over again.

We learned how the withdrawal of Avdiivka is, in large part, a consequence of insufficient weaponry. The top Ukrainian generals told us, if they would have had adequate armaments, Avdiivka would not have fallen. And now they are being pushed back on the front but only because—not because they lack courage, not because they lack strength, not because they lack good leadership but only because they don't have the weaponry they need.

We must help them, and any American who thinks, "Oh, this is far away. It doesn't matter," hasn't learned the lessons—learned the lessons of 1938 and 1960. It is not an exact analogy, of course. But back then, people said: Oh, this is far away. We don't have to pay attention. And in both instances, Americans paid for that lack of foresight, that lack of strength, that lack of vision with lives and of course billions and trillions of dollars spent—certainly billions in those days.

So there was no moment more heart-wrenching, no moment better crystalized the stakes and cost of the war than with the new head of the Ukrainian army, General Syrskyi. We paid a visit to the cemetery dedicated to the courageous Ukrainian dead. Four months earlier, he told us, it was just a parking lot in Lviv, but they needed a place to bury so many of the dead. And we walked up and down the grave sites and saw the pictures—of men, women, young, old—of the dead. On their tombstones, there is a picture of each one. Then, if you look across the way, Ukrainians were busy digging more graves for those they knew who would die in the next few weeks.

It was an amazing, moving moment of the stalwartness of the Ukrainian people, the bravery of the Ukrainian people.

So I believe that if every Congress Member saw what we saw, heard what we heard, learned what we learned, they would understand the urgency of passing the supplemental. With this urgent aid package, Congress has a chance to ensure Ukraine wins the war, to ensure Putin is not victorious, to ensure that Western democracy can thrive in the 21st century.

And let me say that if our allies see that America doesn't support its ally Ukraine, they will no longer be our allies. They will know that they cannot depend on America. And even worse, if

the autocrats and vicious dictators like Putin, like Xi, like the heads of North Korea and Iran see that the United States will turn away from a challenge like this, they will be emboldened.

So anyone who thinks that, "Oh, this is far away, this does not have consequences for the American people," they are wrong. If we turn away from Ukraine over the next decade and several decades, the American people and America will pay the price diplomatically, politically, economically, and militarily.

It is a moment. History is looking at us.

So we must do it. I urge Speaker JOHNSON to go visit and see what I saw. No person of any decent conscience and sight would vote no if they saw what we saw. I hope the Speaker does the right thing. I hope he puts the supplemental that we passed here in the Senate with 70 votes on the floor of the House. I am confident—absolutely confident that if Speaker JOHNSON were to put this supplemental on the floor, it would pass with strong bipartisan support like it did in the Senate.

I hope, I pray, for the sake of our values, for the sake of our country, for the sake of the brave people in Ukraine and those who have died in this war—I hope Speaker JOHNSON recognizes that history is watching us and watching him; that the world is watching; that if he does the wrong thing, I am confident he will regret it in the years to come, no matter what the political outcome. And I am hopeful that Speaker JOHNSON will not just in blind obeisance to Donald Trump do what just about everyone who studies this issue knows is the wrong thing and not give Ukraine the aid it needs.

ALABAMA IVF COURT DECISION

Madam President, on Alabama and the court decision, last week, the Alabama Supreme Court handed down a stunningly radical opinion jeopardizing access to in vitro fertilization—IVF—and other forms of fertility care.

The decision by the Alabama court is utterly revolting. The damage it will cause women, doctors, and families is both heartbreaking and enraging.

Let's not kid ourselves. This didn't happen in a vacuum. What happened in Alabama is a direct consequence—a direct consequence—of the hard-right MAGA Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. Thanks to MAGA extremism, today the United States is an embarrassment to the world when it comes to reproductive freedom.

Here in the 21st century, we live in a country where women have to travel hundreds of miles for basic healthcare, where doctors fear criminal prosecution for just doing their jobs, where some Republican State legislators want to police women's movements, and where families who want to get pregnant are worried that even in vitro fertilization will be taken away.

Now we have seen a lot of desperate backpedaling over the past few days

from Republicans trying to sound reasonable and supportive on procedures like IVF because it is dawning on them that their agenda is horribly unpopular with most Americans.

But let us be very, very clear. Republicans who have spent decades packing our courts with hard-right judges, who have called for national abortion bans, deserve zero benefit of the doubt now that the consequences of their agenda are sinking in. The shameful state of women's healthcare and women's healthcare freedoms is a product of the hard-right Republican agenda. Republicans own what happened in Alabama.

Let me repeat that. Republicans own what happened in Alabama.

Republicans own the disasters of *Roe v. Wade*. And Republicans will learn, when it comes to attacks on their personal freedom, the American people do not easily forget.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 472.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Julie Simone Sneed, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant 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. 472, Julie Simone Sneed, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Brian Schatz, Mazie Hirono, Tina Smith, Gary C. Peters, Amy Klobuchar, Raphael G. Warnock, Catherine Cortez Masto, Alex Padilla, Mark R. Warner, Tim Kaine, Sheldon Whitehouse, Martin Heinrich, Christopher A. Coons, Margaret Wood Hassan, Peter Welch.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 469.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Melissa Damian, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Florida.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant 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. 469, Melissa Damian, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Florida.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Brian Schatz, Mazie Hirono, Tina Smith, Gary C. Peters, Amy Klobuchar, Raphael G. Warnock, Catherine Cortez Masto, Alex Padilla, Mark R. Warner, Tim Kaine, Sheldon Whitehouse, Martin Heinrich, Christopher A. Coons, Margaret Wood Hassan, Peter Welch.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 514.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Marjorie A. Rollinson, of Virginia, to be Chief Counsel for the Internal Revenue Service and an Assistant General Counsel in the Department of the Treasury.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant 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. 514, Marjorie A. Rollinson, of Virginia, to be Chief Counsel for the Internal Revenue Service and an Assistant General Counsel in the Department of the Treasury.

Charles E. Schumer, Ron Wyden, Alex Padilla, John W. Hickenlooper, Christopher A. Coons, Tim Kaine, Catherine Cortez Masto, Christopher Murphy, Jack Reed, Margaret Wood Hassan, Thomas R. Carper, Michael F. Bennet, Maria Cantwell, Richard Blumenthal, Peter Welch, Sheldon Whitehouse, Chris Van Hollen.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions filed today, February 26, be waived.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, as Congress returns to Washington this week, the deadline to avoid a partial lapse in government funding is fast approaching.

Without action by Friday, the country would face needless disruptions to agriculture, transportation, military construction, and essential services at the VA.

So I will say at the outset what I have said every time Congress has faced this threat: Shutting down the government is harmful to the country. And it never produces positive outcomes—on policy or politics.

What is more, a shutdown this week is entirely avoidable. The Senate passed full-year appropriations for each of these important areas 4 months ago, and our House colleagues have produced full-year legislation of their own. We have the means and just enough time this week to avoid a shutdown and to make serious headway on annual appropriations. But as always, the task at hand will require that everyone rows in the same direction: toward clean appropriations and away from poison pills.

Needless to say, millions of Americans will be watching carefully to see

whether and how Congress fulfills its responsibilities this week.

American farmers and ranchers, like the Kentuckians visiting Washington this week, expect us to take the challenges they face in feeding our Nation seriously. Veterans who swore to protect and defend expect us to keep our promises to care for them when they return home. In the coming days, we will need to do just that.

BIDENOMICS

Now, Madam President, on another matter, since President Biden took office, consumer prices have risen 17.9 percent. On his watch, our economy has seen inflation grow at its fastest rate in four decades. As prices soared, wages failed to keep up. Paychecks have risen just 14.5 percent. In other words, the Biden economy has effectively imposed a pay cut across the board.

The effects of Washington Democrats' reckless spending have forced working families to do more with less. As the American people struggle to make ends meet, they are carrying record-high credit card debt—34 percent more than they were just 3 years ago.

Polls continue to report that the country isn't very bullish on the prospects of undoing the Biden administration's damage anytime soon. By one recent survey, fewer than 3 in 10 Americans rate today's economic conditions positively, and barely 1 in 4 expects things to improve over the coming year. So this President's economy is leaving workers feeling suffocated.

The effects of historic inflation are inescapable. Even after paying the rent or the mortgage and footing steep utility bills, families still have to put food on the table in the face of a food price surge that is making the wrong sort of history. Since January 2021, nationwide grocery costs have increased 21 percent. The cost of dining out has increased nearly the same. By the USDA's own figures, grocery budgets are now taking up a larger share of disposable incomes than at any point since 1991.

As one woman in suburban Chicago recently told reporters, her family's food costs alone were rising faster than their incomes. Surveys indicate that fully 94 percent of Americans share her concerns about the prices of food and other consumer goods.

This is the Biden economy. This is Bidenomics in action. Bizarrely, this is what the Biden administration has decided to spin as a roaring success. Both the White House and the President's reelection campaign continue to insist he is proud of his economic record. Imagine telling anyone who will listen that today's economy has you and your family in a bind, only for the President of the United States to declare a job well done.

Don't get me wrong—the Biden administration is quite keen to assign blame for our economic hardships. They are just looking everywhere but