

Menendez	Rosen	Tester
Merkley	Sanders	Van Hollen
Murphy	Schatz	Warner
Murray	Schumer	Warnock
Ossoff	Shaheen	Warren
Padilla	Sinema	Welch
Peters	Smith	Whitehouse
Reed	Stabenow	Wyden

NAYS—46

Barrasso	Graham	Paul
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Hagerty	Romney
Braun	Hawley	Rounds
Britt	Hoeven	Rubio
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Collins	Lankford	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lee	Thune
Cotton	Lummis	Tuberville
Cramer	Marshall	Vance
Cruz	McConnell	Wicker
Daines	Moran	Young
Ernst	Mullin	
Fischer	Murkowski	

NOT VOTING—3

Crapo	Ricketts	Tillis
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The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WELCH). The yeas are 51, the nays are 46.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Hampton Y. Dellinger, of North Carolina, to be Special Counsel, Office of Special Counsel, for the term of five years.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, “We have the means and just enough time this week to avoid a shutdown and to make serious headway on our 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.” Those are not my words. The Republican leader said that yesterday, and he is absolutely right. And I just heard that the Speaker said he doesn’t want a shutdown, after meeting with the President. That is good.

But let’s be clear. A shutdown that hits air traffic controllers and food inspectors and so much more would be incredibly damaging, and it would make getting all of our funding bills done that much more chaotic and challenging.

There is no reason for a shutdown—not if both sides and both Chambers cooperate in a bipartisan way. So I am working around the clock to wrap up several spending bills by Friday. If we need to pass a very short-term CR along with whatever bills we can finish this week, Democrats are ready to make it happen so we can prevent a completely unnecessary shutdown and continue making progress on our bills.

I have been here before too many times, and I can tell you that a shutdown is costly, and it is harmful to our economy. It hurts real people—Federal employees, not to mention families,

seniors, anyone who depends on basic services working smoothly—and it makes absolutely no sense. It doesn’t save us money; it costs us more.

It is no secret that the biggest obstacle right now has been Republican poison pills that were never truly on the table. They were always going to be nonstarters. But we have made really good progress on the first few bills, and we can get them done if extreme demands are pushed aside. We cannot let a few far-right extremists derail the basic functioning of government. There is no reason to listen to them, and there is no way we are going to let them impose extreme policies that go against the basic values of the American people.

I hope bipartisanship will prevail. Let’s show the public that Congress still understands a few very simple things: Shutdowns are bad. Working together is good. Let’s move past the poison pills and on to the hard work of legislating.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I just returned from the Middle East. We have 140 members of our Wyoming Air National Guard, and they are currently serving our Nation, and they are stationed in Djibouti. Wyoming is very proud of these brave men and women who are fighting for our freedom. Visiting them was a reminder of what makes America strong. It is also a reminder of the challenges we continue to face.

There is a confluence of crises all around the world, from El Paso, TX, to Jerusalem, Israel. These terrible crises did not emerge overnight. They are the direct result of the weakness of the current President of the United States.

President Biden has been weak in the defenses of our Nation. It is obvious to me. It is obvious to people around the country. It is obvious to people all around the world. Since he took office, he and the Democrats have taken a wrecking ball to so many different sources of our Nation’s strength. They hollowed out America’s military power in favor of wokeness. It has impacted and undermined recruitment. They sold out American economic strength. In favor of what? Well, Big Government at home and massive government spending. They traded away America’s energy dominance. Why? Well, in favor of Green New Deal fantasies.

It does seem that Democrats apologize for American excellence at every turn. They have worked to make us more dependent upon our enemies.

President Biden’s latest energy disaster—he would call it a move; I would call it a disaster—weakens our Nation even further. The administration announced in January that it would freeze permits for liquefied natural gas exports. I view this decision as astonishingly foolish.

Affordable, reliable energy is the foundation of a strong, affordable econ-

omy. America’s energy revolution created many good-paying jobs all across the country and certainly in my home State of Wyoming. It made us as a nation energy independent—some would go so far as to say energy dominant—and it helped us build the world’s largest LNG export industry. It also gave our European allies a secure energy source. This is at the time of Russia’s incursion into Ukraine. This is one of the best examples of how American economic strength makes the world safer.

The Republicans want to make Europe less dependent on Russia for energy sources and more connected to the United States. That is not what I see happening with this administration. Both by word and action, Democrats and this President make America and our allies more dependent on our adversaries.

Attacking American energy dominance is a pattern in this administration. It started on day one. Remember, it was day one that, after the President gave a speech right out here at the Capitol Building about how he wanted to bring the Nation together, he went down and took an ax to the Keystone XL Pipeline, and he opened the floodgates at the same time to the crises we are having at our southern border.

The President restricted offshore oil drilling, and he has placed a moratorium on new coal permits on Federal lands—all of these things undermining American energy security. Now comes this blow where he is cutting American natural gas exports. He is denying Americans good jobs, lower prices, and empowering Russia and Iran.

Joe Biden has failed fundamentally what should be the goal of any President, which is to make America stronger, safer, more secure.

President Biden also has a long list of foreign policy failures. Nobody can forget the deadly and disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan. Taliban terrorists seized \$7 billion in weapons. So many Americans were left behind. Thirteen brave soldiers lost their lives, including one from Wyoming, Rylee McCollum from Bondurant, WY. The fall of Kabul was a deadly disaster.

In January of 2022, the President made another damaging misstep. He suggested that a minor incursion by Russia into Ukraine would be met with minimal consequences. Weeks later, we saw Russian tanks head into Kyiv.

Then there is the chaos in the Middle East. In September 2023, the President’s National Security Advisor, Jake Sullivan, made a bold pronouncement. He said:

The Middle East region is quieter today than it has been in two decades.

Eight days later, Hamas attacked Israel. They killed more than 1,200 Israelis. They took hundreds more hostages, including American citizens. It was the deadliest day for the Jewish people since the Holocaust.

The conflicts in the Middle East are devastating, destructive, and destabilizing. They threaten America's interests and America's allies. Yet President Biden works hard to accommodate our enemies. He is a fair-weather friend to our great ally in the Middle East, Israel. We see that in his maximum-concessions policy towards Iran.

Early on, Biden pushed to rejoin Obama's Iran nuclear deal. He was negotiating to lift all sanctions imposed by President Trump.

The Biden administration's lack of sanction enforcement and use of sanction waivers simply funded the Iranian regime. Iran used this flood of cash to bankroll Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis, and other terrorists proxies. In turn, the terror proxies attacked America, attacked our allies, and the attacks have only increased since October 7. Iranian proxies have attacked American servicemembers in the Middle East at least 180 times in the past 4 months. Let me say this again—180 attacks on American servicemembers in the last 4 months. We have lost five American troops because of these attacks.

As the Commander in Chief, President Biden bears full responsibility for the continuity of crises that he has created.

It is no surprise that Americans overwhelmingly believe our country is heading in the wrong direction. America needs to change course. Republicans are the party of American strength. We believe in peace through strength, not dependence on our enemies. Americans deserve a President who is strong and a nation that is safe and a nation that is secure. That is our commitment.

So I will tell you, Mr. President, the day I came back from Djibouti, it was very distressing to see the report in the New York Times. They reported that America and this administration have failed to do what it said it would do in terms of Iran selling oil to China—failed. If it hadn't been for the New York Times reporting, the American people wouldn't know because the administration would never tell them that tanker after tanker has moved 59 million barrels of oil from Iran to China. Every one of those tankers ended up in China, and the cash, worth a minimum \$2.8 billion, ended up back in Iran. That is the money Iran has been using to fund these 180 attacks on American servicemembers in the last 4 months.

We know where the money is coming from. Yet Democrats look the other way. The Secretary of Treasury, hapless as she is, came to Congress and testified—inaccurately, possibly misleadingly—that the administration is doing everything they can. Well, they are not. This administration is looking the other way as a hapless and diminished President Biden continues to be outplayed by Iran, and this is evident to the world.

As Joe Biden bungles along, Russia, Iran, North Korea, and communist

China continue on the march. We need a strong President to keep us strong and safe and secure.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

CHILDREN AND TEEN'S ONLINE PRIVACY PROTECTION ACT

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the Children and Teens' Online Privacy Protection Act or, as it is known, COPPA 2.0, the Child Online Privacy Protection Act.

We stand at a truly consequential moment for protecting children online in our country. Our kids are suffering from an acute mental health crisis. The statistics are staggering: One in three high school girls in the United States seriously considered suicide in 2021—one in three teenage girls considered suicide. At least 1 in 10 high school girls attempted suicide in the United States in 2021—1 in 10 teenage girls in America attempted suicide in 2021. Amongst LGBTQ youth, the number is more like one in five LGBTQ youths attempted suicide in 2021.

We know that Big Tech's tracking, targeting, and traumatizing of our young people is contributing in a significant way to that crisis. As the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing just a few weeks ago demonstrated, Big Tech CEOs still don't understand the damage they have caused and remain unwilling to make the necessary changes to fix their platforms and protect children, to protect teenagers, because, without a doubt, self-regulation by the CEOs of the tech companies has failed and failed miserably. Otherwise, we would not be in this mental health crisis.

In the face of this defiance by the industry, policymakers at the Federal, State, and local levels have been introducing and passing new legislation to address the crisis. More notably, last week, the Florida Legislature felt compelled to pass a law to ban all kids under 16 from social media all together in the face of Big Tech inaction. Do you hear what I am saying? Florida is passing a law banning kids under 16 from being on at all.

I am glad that bipartisan lawmakers and regulators have mobilized across the country to address this problem, but we also must be careful because social media is not inherently bad. Many young people have found their voices online and organize there on issues such as the climate crisis and gun violence. Online platforms allow young people to connect with loved ones, share their own experiences, and learn from others in ways that are just unavailable to them offline. They need, in many instances, the online communities. If we shut down those spaces in our efforts to keep children and teenagers safe online, we may just trade one youth mental health crisis for another one.

For most of my career, I have worked to get this balance right—to protect kids from the dangers of new tech-

nologies without undermining the social, the political, and the economic benefits of those very same technologies. There is a Dickensian quality to these qualities. There are the best of technologies and the worst of technologies simultaneously. They can enable, they can ennoble, or they can degrade and debase.

We want the benefits but also have to protect our society—especially young people—against the degradation that has now overcome so many parts of the internet. We just have to find a balance with social media as we have done in many other areas of our country.

Fortunately, we are not writing on a blank slate. The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, the original COPPA, laid the groundwork for protecting kids online by empowering parents and allowing corporate incentives with our policy goals. And unlike more draconian laws from that era, COPPA remains the law of the land. In fact, the only Federal privacy protection for kids online is my law, which passed 26 years ago, which protects kids under the age of 13.

But we can now see that it has expanded beyond anything that people actually thought about in 1998. And in the 26 years since COPPA's passage, much has changed, but at the same time the core principles of that bill still hold the key for protecting young people today. That is why I am fighting so hard to pass COPPA 2.0 and update those privacy policies. And it is why it is worth revisiting the passage of COPPA in 1998 and its successes over the past two decades.

As many of my colleagues remember, the late nineties were an exciting and scary period for technology. This spectacular growth in home internet access ushered in a digital and communications revolution, making it easier than ever to find information, discover new communities, and interact with friends, families, and strangers online. In fact, I am the author of the key three bills that moved America from analog to digital, from narrowband to broadband. I am very proud of that. Not one home had broadband in America in February of 1996, so I am proud of those bills I authored at the time.

We want the benefit of the information superhighway. We want the revolution. But in that early internet period, the possibilities appeared endless: online classrooms, remote work, telehealth services. The internet threatened to upend every aspect of society, and we lawmakers, the public, individuals across the globe—we were now trying to catch up with these changes that the laws that I authored were now ushering in, real changes in commerce, education, and healthcare.

Even in those heady days, however, the dark side of the digital revolution was already apparent, the sinister side of cyber space. Heads rose almost immediately. New personal computers and access to the internet created vast