

the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Montana.

Mr. SHEEHY. Reserving the right to object, my colleague Senator DUCKWORTH is a brave veteran of our Nation's War on Terror, and Senator BLUMENTHAL as well served, as did many of us. And I don't think there is any disagreement that we want the absolute best for our veterans—combat or otherwise—and we will always do everything we can in this body to make sure that our veterans not only have the care they need when they get home, but they can pursue great careers for the next phase of life.

But truth also matters, and the truth is there was no outrage from our Democrat colleagues when the Biden administration summarily fired tens of thousands of veterans—Active-Duty servicemembers and reservists—from Federal contracting jobs and from Active-Duty military service without any due process, during the COVID pandemic, when they decided that these people, who had very legitimate reservations about their personal health, did not have a place in our government or military, and they were blowing out the side of the service.

No due process, not even a thank-you letter—they were kicked out of the service—highly trained patriots who fought for this country, who were willing to fight for this country again. That is betrayal. They were betrayed, and nothing was ever said from our Democratic colleagues about that.

The truth is, the VA—the VA, as an organization—is meant to serve our veterans. The purpose of the VA is to take care of veterans, not to grow its own bureaucracy. In the last 5 years since 2019, the VA employment has gone from 379,000 to 486,000 employees, over 5 years—a 28 percent increase—while the VA's budget grew by 77.7 percent during the same period.

During that time, the amount of veterans in our country decreased by 9.2 percent. So as our veteran population decreased, our employment overhead at the VA increased tremendously, and that reflected the similar growth across the rest of our Federal Government.

So what was going on for 5 years, especially during the COVID years, was artificial job creation by the government on a mass scale. And now, to recover our Nation from fiscal tragedy—from a \$37 trillion debt and growing—we have to make hard choices, and those choices have to come down to what is working. And what veterans need most of all is a healthy government.

They fought to protect this country. They have put their lives on the line and sometimes gave away limbs and family members so that this country

could be strong. We owe it to them to make sure we make good decisions and that this country continues to be strong. And that means we have to get this government back in order, and that means returning our Agencies back to pre-pandemic size. And most veterans will support those tough decisions full-throatedly.

The truth is, President Trump is very pro-veteran. His policies, right now, are putting our servicemembers first. He is showing strength on the world stage instead of weakness, which has brought untold tragedy not just on our military but also on our allies around the world.

Growing the government with no end in sight, growing Agencies with no metric for success is not pro-veteran. That is not pro-American. It is just more government.

And the truth is, whether it is the VA or any other Federal Agency, we are proud to have veterans working in this government across the board. They have preferred hiring rights, as they should, and we are going to protect their important jobs and, most importantly, protect their care when they get out. But the VA has to be a healthy, functioning organization for that to occur, as do other Agencies.

Veteran employment is a core value that we have in our Federal workforce. President Trump knows that. This body knows that, and we will protect it. But we also owe those veterans a strong, efficient government. That is what we are going to deliver to them. That is what we are going to do today. Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Illinois.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. I just want to set the record straight that the VA's population of employees did grow because of the PACT Act, a bill that was voted on and passed in a bipartisan way to save the lives of those veterans who would otherwise be dying if they did not have access to VA healthcare for the illnesses that are caused by their exposure to toxic substances.

So let's be clear about why we hired more people within the Department of Veterans Affairs: It was because they were given the permission by this Congress, by this body, in a bipartisan way, passing the PACT Act legislation, which funded care for veterans who were exposed to burn pits in Iraq and Afghanistan and toxic substances from their military service.

My resolution is about all veterans who serve this Nation. Some of the veterans who have been laid off are park rangers in our National Park Service who are now out of a job—people who were promoted because they did such a good job.

One person I was trying to get their job back was actually working with the Veterans Crisis Hotline. They were doing such a good job answering the phones that they were promoted to trainer. As soon as they were promoted

to be a trainer to help other people to answer those hotlines, which could help stop veterans death by suicide, they became probationary employees, and they were fired.

That is the kind of thing we are talking about—people being laid off from their jobs, veterans who worked hard for this country and worked hard in the Department of Veterans Affairs and other Federal Agencies like the National Park Service, like the EPA, like the DOT. And that is whom Donald Trump and Elon Musk are firing.

If you want to save money, I am all for it. I am there with you. I actually passed legislation that saved this country billions of dollars in fraud and waste that occurred in the Department of Defense.

I also think that Elon Musk's decision to deport people to India using a C-17 aircraft at the cost of \$2 million of taxpayer money, when normally that flight would cost \$38,000 if you were to actually charter an aircraft, was an egregious waste of taxpayer dollars.

Let's talk about who is wasting money here. Elon Musk is wasting money, and it is Donald Trump wasting money. At the same time, President Trump has become the President who fired the most veterans in our Nation's modern history, over 6,000 fired and counting. Let's set the record straight. Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). The Senator from Nevada.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1364

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I rise to talk about President Trump's tariffs and how they are ruining confidence in our economy. They are raising prices on all of our families, and they are hitting our allies for no reason.

We all know that tariffs can be a useful tool to protect critical American manufacturing and combat our enemies. Targeted tariffs on adversaries like communist China or Iran can actually work to our advantage. And it is natural for us to have trade deficits with countries that have smaller economies because they just can't afford to pay for quality American goods. We are always going to buy more cheap goods from less wealthy countries than they are going to be able to buy from us. Even my Republican colleagues have acknowledged this.

This is why President Trump's blanket tariffs just make no sense. They have no legitimate economic basis. And the formula that he used to impose these blanket tariffs is nonsensical. We know this because President Trump has imposed tariffs on islands uninhabited by humans and on one of the United States' own military bases.

Probably the most egregious error in President Trump's tariff plan was punishing our allies, Israel and Ukraine. Both these countries are currently under attack. They need the United States to be standing with them, not hitting them with nonsensical tariffs that could cause them even more harm.

Meanwhile, our adversary and the initiator of the war in Ukraine—Russia—is getting no tariffs. Our adversary North Korea is getting no tariffs. And while our ally Israel got slapped initially with a 17-percent tariff, even though we maintain a free-trade agreement with them, their adversary Iran got tariffed at a mere 10 percent.

I will admit, as I am sitting here right now, I just saw that Donald Trump changed his mind again and is telling countries around the world they now have to have a 10-percent tariff. He just made a major trade decision action via a tweet as I was sitting here to provide a stand with Israel and Ukraine.

Let me just say, those actions by this administration are just bad for our economy. It is outrageous, and it is bad for U.S. credibility. It is just clear there was very little thought put into President Trump's major, potentially catastrophic, gamble with the global economy. He did this without any advice and consent from Congress, and that was a mistake. It was a mistake that our allies in need of aid are paying the price for.

We have an opportunity to rectify a small part of this error right now and exempt Israel and Ukraine from these oppressive tariffs that could do significant damage to their already hurting economies.

Really, this shouldn't be a partisan issue. It is a national security issue. Let's come together and protect our allies who rely on our help from these harmful tariffs. I hope my Republican colleagues can join me.

Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 1364; that the bill be considered read three times and passed, and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. MORENO. Reserving the right to object, think about some numbers. I was 5 years old when I came to this country from South America, 18 when I became a citizen. Since that time, there have been 10 Presidents of the United States of America and only one that actually had the guts and the courage to stand up for working Americans.

We lost 90,000 factories in this country. If you take the logic of my colleague, let's shut down all of our factories and send manufacturing to the lowest wage countries on Earth that employ slave wages, that have massive government subsidies, and gut out what is left of the American manufacturing ecosystem.

Of course, that is completely illogical. But that is almost what we have done over the last four to five decades.

You drive through Ohio, Dayton was the computing capital of the world; you go to Toledo, it was the glass cap-

ital of the world; Youngstown, the steel capital of America; Akron, the rubber capital of the world.

Today, these cities are working to get past what they have gone through. But as I went on the campaign trail against a Democrat that always claimed to be on the side of the working men but then saw what their policies enacted, we beat him soundly.

I urge my Democratic colleagues to go back to your original North Star. The point of the Democratic Party for decades, as far as I knew, was that you were for the working men and women of this country. But that is not the Democratic Party today. They are the party of electric vehicle mandates, against tariffs, against fringe social issues.

If we want to talk about the specific resolution, look, there is no greater ally ever in the history of the United States of America with Israel than President Donald J. Trump. Every single Republican last week voted against BERNIE SANDERS' resolution to block arms sales to Israel. Fifteen Democrats voted to kneecap them while in the middle of a war. When we talk about Israel, they have already negotiated a situation with President Trump.

So let's talk about Ukraine. This is a country that both sides of the aisle—shockingly to me, quite honestly—have given hundreds of billions of dollars to this country of Ukraine when we have enormous needs in our country. What do we get in return? They impose a tax of 20 percent or more on our goods that we send there. Let me repeat that. We sent them hundreds of billions of dollars in aid, and then when we send them our products, they add a tax on our imports.

Look, President Trump is doing a masterful job of negotiating with countries and with companies to finally do what should have been done a long time ago, which is to rebuild this country from the inside out.

So for the reasons that President Trump laid out last week that we are going to rebuild this country with American hands, with American hearts, and with American pride, it is with that sentiment that I, therefore, object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. I appreciate my colleague being here to object. I don't think he actually read the resolution. The real focus was on how we address tariffs against Israel and Ukraine.

I appreciate his partisan argument, but I think he also neglected to represent that there are Democrats that opposed BERNIE SANDERS' bill, and I was one of them. I think it is important we work in a bipartisan way to move this country forward.

I am also a Democrat that supports bringing manufacturing back to my State. You are welcome to come to Nevada anytime and see what we have done around the work that is essential.

I think what I am looking for in this time is common sense, working across the aisle where we see it to show the American public that, yes, we can still function and work together on moving forward. I think it is important we stand with Israel at all levels, including ensuring that they are not tariffed, there is no tariff against them.

It is very, very simple here. And I think targeted tariffs make sense. I don't quite understand the continued partisan conversation here. But at the end of the day, I am hopeful that many of my colleagues still want to work in a bipartisan way on issues that reflect not only who we are as a country but will still be working to address protection for our allies and, at the same time, protecting our economy. I am disappointed in the objection today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BANKS). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. MORENO. I actually read the resolution. Again, I will repeat it. There is no greater friend of Israel's in the White House, ever in the history of the United States of America, than Donald J. Trump.

He negotiated with these countries. We need to give him the latitude in terms of negotiating with these countries. In terms of bipartisan, go back through the record in the last 90 days and see almost the complete block voting on everything, including we have two votes coming up and another two votes at the end of the day. Let's see if there is one Democrat that doesn't vote in total unison with their party.

Look at the Republican side. We are much more freethinkers and we have differences of opinion and that comes out when we vote. When we talk about bipartisanship, I hope the Democrats get to a point where they are willing to work with us on common sense.

I had a bill that I presented to the floor about 3 weeks ago. Here is what it said: If you come into this country illegally, you can't claim asylum. And if you do, you invalidate your right for asylum for life, and you must only claim asylum at a designated port of entry. This is a 90-10 issue. Democrats blocked that.

I want to work in a bipartisan manner. I think the American public demands that we do. But when every Democrat votes in total and complete lockstep with their leadership every single time to block any progress, we are going to be unable to do that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you. I have to stand up here and call my colleague out. He is trying to paint all the Democrats together. If he would look at my record in standing independent from some of my party's votes and the fact that I think it is important and know it is important that we work in a bipartisan way and have done just that in committee in my votes in a bipartisan way with my colleagues, I would

hope that he would be open to working with me in the future on some bipartisan legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I ask the previously scheduled vote begin immediately.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Peter Hoekstra, of Michigan, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Canada.

VOTE ON HOEKSTRA NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Hoekstra nomination?

Ms. SMITH. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 60, nays 37, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 202 Ex.]

YEAS—60

Banks	Hagerty	Moreno
Blackburn	Hassan	Murkowski
Boozman	Hawley	Paul
Britt	Hoeven	Peters
Budd	Husted	Ricketts
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Risch
Cassidy	Johnson	Rounds
Collins	Justice	Schmitt
Cornyn	Kaine	Scott (FL)
Cotton	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cramer	King	Shaheen
Crapo	Klobuchar	Sheehy
Cruz	Lankford	Slotkin
Curtis	Lee	Sullivan
Daines	Lummis	Thune
Ernst	Marshall	Tillis
Fetterman	McConnell	Tuberville
Fischer	McCormick	Warner
Graham	Moody	Wicker
Grassley	Moran	Young

NAYS—37

Alsobrooks	Heinrich	Rosen
Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Schatz
Bennet	Hirono	Schiff
Blumenthal	Kelly	Schumer
Blunt Rochester	Kim	Smith
Booker	Lujan	Van Hollen
Cantwell	Markey	Warnock
Coons	Merkley	Warren
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Welch
Duckworth	Murray	Whitehouse
Durbin	Ossoff	Wyden
Galleo	Padilla	
Gillibrand	Reed	

NOT VOTING—3

Barrasso	Mullin	Sanders
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to re-

consider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Ronald Johnson, of Florida, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the United Mexican States.

VOTE ON JOHNSON NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Johnson nomination?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 203 Ex.]

YEAS—49

Banks	Graham	Moreno
Blackburn	Grassley	Murkowski
Boozman	Hagerty	Paul
Britt	Hoeven	Ricketts
Budd	Husted	Risch
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Cassidy	Johnson	Schmitt
Collins	Justice	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sheehy
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Tillis
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Curtis	McConnell	Wicker
Daines	McCormick	Young
Ernst	Moody	
Fischer	Moran	

NAYS—46

Alsobrooks	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Baldwin	Hirono	Schatz
Bennet	Kaine	Schiff
Blumenthal	Kelly	Schumer
Blunt Rochester	Kim	Shaheen
Booker	King	Slotkin
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Smith
Coons	Lujan	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Markey	Warner
Duckworth	Merkley	Warnock
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Fetterman	Murray	Welch
Galleo	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Padilla	Wyden
Hassan	Peters	
Heinrich	Reed	

NOT VOTING—5

Barrasso	Mullin	Scott (FL)
Hawley	Sanders	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CURTIS). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be notified of the Senate's action.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of Kevin Cabrera, of Florida, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Panama.

VOTE ON CABRERA NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Cabrera nomination?

Mr. WICKER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN), and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 204 Ex.]

YEAS—51

Banks	Fischer	Moran
Barrasso	Graham	Moreno
Blackburn	Grassley	Murkowski
Boozman	Hagerty	Paul
Britt	Hoeven	Ricketts
Budd	Husted	Risch
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Cassidy	Johnson	Schmitt
Collins	Justice	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Shaheen
Cramer	Lee	Sheehy
Crapo	Lummis	Sullivan
Cruz	Marshall	Thune
Curtis	McConnell	Tillis
Daines	McCormick	Wicker
Ernst	Moody	Young

NAYS—45

Alsobrooks	Heinrich	Peters
Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Reed
Bennet	Hirono	Rosen
Blumenthal	Kaine	Schatz
Blunt Rochester	Kelly	Schiff
Booker	Kim	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Slotkin
Coons	Klobuchar	Smith
Cortez Masto	Lujan	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Markey	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Warnock
Fetterman	Murphy	Warren
Galleo	Murray	Welch
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Hassan	Padilla	Wyden

NOT VOTING—4

Hawley	Sanders
Mullin	Tuberville

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHMITT). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the