

moral guide. He often pointed to the words “In God We Trust” enshrined on our currency—which is also inscribed above the doorway into the Senate Chamber—as a reflection of the American story, a nation founded on faith and moral responsibility. For the Rebbe, America was not just a great country but a beacon of light with the historical potential to inspire renewed moral clarity among all of humanity.

Under his visionary leadership, Chabad-Lubavitch became the largest Jewish educational organization and the fastest growing Jewish movement in the world. Today, there are more than 5,000 Chabad-Lubavitch centers offering educational, religious, and humanitarian services in 103 countries and in all 50 States, including in my home State of South Dakota.

The Rebbe envisioned a world at peace. He exemplified how humanity—through moral education, acts of kindness, and charitable deeds—can bring about the prophetic era when “swords are turned into plowshares” and peace and prosperity flourish across the earth.

On the Rebbe’s birthday, it is fitting that we recommit ourselves to his legacy and teachings, striving to live with greater compassion, deeper purpose, and a shared sense of responsibility for the good of all.

RECOGNIZING NATRONA COUNTY CDC’S ART A LA CARTE GALA

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the Child Development Center of Natrona County as it celebrates the 25th anniversary of its largest fundraiser, the Kids’ Art a la Carte Gala.

On May 3, 2025, the Natrona County Child Development Center will host its annual fundraiser at the Ford Wyoming Center in Casper, WY. Proceeds from this special event go directly toward supporting the CDC’s services and programming. It is a wonderful opportunity for the community to share its support for the CDC’s important mission: providing premiere, family-focused, developmentally appropriate services for Wyoming’s kids.

The child development center opened its doors in 1967. Over the years, the CDC has helped to ensure that the social, developmental, and educational needs of the children in our communities are being met. Today, this organization, led by executive director Alisha Rone, serves close to 700 children each year. Its team of 120 individuals provide support, advice, and—when needed—intervention to parents and their children.

The CDC’s early intervention services are key to ensuring the lifelong success of our children. Offering free screenings and educational materials, the CDC provides children in Natrona County with a solid foundation. The center’s certified teachers and therapists help provide a plan tailored to every child and their needs. Its accred-

ited preschool prepares kids ages three through five for kindergarten.

For children who need extra assistance, there is the CDC+ program. In addition to providing speech, occupational, and physical therapies, the program offers audiology services and reading coaching.

The teachers, therapists, support staff, and leadership continue demonstrating selflessness and compassion. This year, the CDC received the Daniels Fund Medal of Excellence and a \$250,000 grant. The grant will fund its continued operations and expansion of its services at no cost to participating families.

Providing the excellent service the CDC is known for takes a team of talented people. This team includes the CDC’s senior leadership, board of directors, foundation board, and dedicated employees. The Child Development Center’s Senior Leadership team includes: Alisha Rone, executive director; Lori Kapeles, program director; Jan Hinz, special education director; Geoff Dean, finance director; Shannon Hillibush, human resources director; and Renate Pullen, compliance director.

Members of the CDC Board of Directors are: Bryce Row, president; Michelle Larsen, vice president; Patricia Cloud, treasurer; Anna Birch DeWitt; Tayla Trujillo; Ally Orr; Nikki Hawley; Scott Wells; Tony Hager; Bobby Pickle; Brad Diller; and Fleur Tremel.

Those serving on the CDC Foundation Board include: Mark Zaback, chairman; Jeff Bishop, treasurer; Robyn Landen; Shannon Orr; Peter Van Houten; Pete Fazio; Isaac Swanson; Dave Dundas; and Alisha Rone.

Mr. President, it is an honor celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Child Development Center of Natrona County’s annual Kids Art A La Carte Gala. The positive impact the CDC has made on the families and children of our community is genuinely remarkable. I offer my appreciation for all those who support the CDC. Your efforts ensure children in Wyoming have a strong foundation to prepare them for a lifetime of success.

REMEMBERING ROYCE POLLARD

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, Mayor Royce Pollard, a dedicated public servant and champion for Vancouver, WA, passed away on February 24, 2025.

Before his time in local government, Mayor Pollard led a distinguished career in the U.S. Army that included two tours during the Vietnam war. During his nearly 27 years in the military, he attained the rank of lieutenant colonel and numerous awards and decorations, including the Bronze Star for Valor, Purple Heart, Expert Infantryman’s Badge, and Combat Infantryman’s Badge during his time in Vietnam. His final post was at the Vancouver Barracks, where he retired as commander in 1988. His dedication to

public service was immediately on display as he joined the Vancouver City Council the following year, beginning a 21-year career serving the citizens of the city of Vancouver.

Mayor Pollard served on the city council for 7 years and then as mayor for 14 years. During his tenure, Mayor Pollard revitalized Vancouver’s downtown core, transforming it into a vibrant center of community and commerce. The revived Esther Short Park and the beautiful waterfront development stand as enduring symbols of his bold leadership and love of community. He also oversaw the annexation of the Vancouver Mall, the creation of the Hilton Hotel and Convention Center project, and the historic Cascade Park annexation.

Mayor Pollard was a proud champion of “America’s Vancouver,” a move to make the city distinct from Portland, OR, just across the river. He was so committed to the cause that when he smashed two Portland-themed mugs sold in Vancouver at a coffee shop, newspapers around the Pacific Northwest ran the story. In Washington, DC, he was known to talk to people unfamiliar with his city and tout its many attributes. Even after his tenure as mayor, he continued to help the community grow and thrive by serving on 22 different city boards.

He was a strong and vocal advocate for civic duty, serving one another, and honoring those who serve their communities. His contributions have left a lasting impact on the city, cementing its place as a vibrant and forward-thinking community.

My heart goes out to the mayor’s family, friends, and all who had the honor of knowing and working alongside him. I was proud to work with him on behalf of his community, and he will be missed. His life’s work will be felt by generations to come.

In honor of Royce’s life and legacy, I respectfully submit this statement to the RECORD.

TRIBUTE TO DOW CONSTANTINE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and commend the distinguished public service of King County executive Dow Constantine, who concludes 16 years of exemplary leadership at the helm of King County government.

Since first taking office in 2009, Executive Constantine has dedicated himself to the advancement of King County and the well-being of its more than 2 million residents. Over the course of four terms, he has consistently demonstrated a profound commitment to public service, principled leadership, and effective governance.

Under his tenure, King County emerged as a national leader in environmental sustainability, public health innovation, and equity-focused policymaking. Executive Constantine spearheaded ambitious initiatives to combat climate change, expand regional transit, preserve open space, and reform the

criminal legal system. His leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic was particularly noteworthy—marked by decisive, science-driven action that helped protect lives and support vulnerable populations during an unprecedented public health crisis.

Executive Constantine also led efforts to strengthen behavioral health services, invest in affordable housing, and promote inclusive economic growth. His ability to bring together stakeholders across sectors and jurisdictions has left a lasting impact not only on King County, but on the broader Puget Sound region. Throughout his 16 years in office, Executive Constantine upheld the highest standards of public service, always placing the needs of his constituents at the center of his work. His forward-thinking approach and unwavering dedication have left King County stronger, more resilient, and better prepared for the future. As he concludes his service as county executive, I extend my deepest gratitude to Dow Constantine for his many years of outstanding leadership and his tireless efforts on behalf of the people of Washington State. I wish him continued success as the new CEO of Sound Transit.

H.J. RES. 20

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, the following Senators join me in this statement: TIM SCOTT, BILL HAGERTY, MARSHA BLACKBURN, THOM TILLIS, TED BUDD, and JOHN BOOZMAN. The day after Christmas, when both Houses of Congress were in recess, the Biden administration released a final rule setting new energy efficiency standards for tankless water heaters. Like any last-minute rule from the previous administration, this effort was ill-advised and ill-timed. It should not, and cannot, stand.

However, the enactment of H.J. Res. 20, which provides for congressional disapproval of the rule titled Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Consumer Gas-Fired Instantaneous Water Heaters, will create a structural imbalance. This imbalance results from the Biden administration's issuance of an efficiency rule for commercial tank and tankless water heaters in October of 2023, as well as residential tank-filled water heaters in April 2024, neither of which could be overturned by the Congressional Review Act because it was unlikely to achieve a veto-proof majority in the Senate. Through rulemaking, the Department of Energy should write new rules to address this regulatory imbalance, whereby traditional tank water heaters and commercial gas-fired instantaneous and tank water heaters continue to be subject to regulatory standards.

This structural imbalance, if not addressed, will result in an uneven competitive marketplace for water heater manufacturing and sales. While the enactment of the resolution may limit

the Department of Energy from issuing a substantially similar rule, there remains a need to rectify the regulatory misalignment. Accordingly, we strongly encourage the Department of Energy, with input from congressional leaders and affected industry partners, to use its rulemaking authority to ensure that regulatory standards for consumer and commercial gas-fired water heating equipment are aligned, thereby removing any market imbalance.

CONFIRMATION OF MARK MEADOR

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise to oppose the nomination of Mark Meador as a member of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). I respect Mr. Meador's qualifications and his prior experiences. In fact, I voted to advance his nomination out of the Commerce Committee because he has expressed support for strong antitrust enforcement that benefits consumers and small business, lowers prices, and spurs innovation, including continuing many cases currently ongoing at the Commission to free markets from the stranglehold of entrenched monopolies and stop anticompetitive mergers.

But I cannot support the confirmation of any additional members to the FTC until Commissioner Slaughter and Commissioner Bedoya are reinstated. President Trump's dismissal of Commissioners Slaughter and Bedoya is not only illegal; it hurts consumers and small businesses by undermining the independence of the Agency that Congress established to protect consumers from fraud, scams, and monopoly power. An independent FTC is critical for protecting consumers and has done so in a bipartisan manner for over 110 years.

Just last year, the FTC returned more than \$330 million to consumers who lost money from scams and deceptive business practices; it blocked a merger of two large grocery chains that would have raised food prices; it worked to cap the cost of inhalers to \$35 by challenging anticompetitive patent practices; it took on hidden fees in the ticketing and lodging markets; it unveiled rules to make it as easy to stop a subscription as it was to start it; and it has worked to rein in the monopoly power of Big Tech companies to ensure small businesses and innovators can thrive online.

The President's attempt to remove independent Commissioners violates Congress's long-held power to establish bipartisan, multimember, expert commissions and to shield those commissions from political pressure with commonsense limits on the President's removal powers. The structure of the FTC has been upheld by the Supreme Court for 90 years, holding that Congress's power "cannot well be doubted." While the Supreme Court recently struck down restrictions on the President's authority to remove Agencies led by a single individual, the Supreme Court declined to revisit prece-

dent about independent Agencies run by bipartisan, multimember commissions, like the FTC. Now-Justice Kavanaugh, while serving on the DC Circuit, wrote that multimember independent Agencies like the FTC are part of a "deeply rooted tradition" that "has been widely recognized by leading judges, congressional committees, and academics."

This is because bipartisan commissions allow Presidents to shape the direction of a commission while protecting the independent Agency from political meddling. For example, each President can influence the makeup of the FTC by nominating new members—as President Trump has done by nominating Mr. Meador—and appointing the Chair—as President Trump did by selecting Mr. FERGUSON—and even appointing a new Chair if the President is displeased with his initial selection.

Had the President not taken this illegal action, Republican Commissioners would have secured the majority on the Commission with the confirmation of Mr. Meador, with two Democratic Commissioners serving in the minority as required by law. While the minority Commissioners may not have had the power to stop the Republican majority from implementing its agenda, they would have served as a critical check on the Agency, as minority Republican Commissioners have in the past. They could have used their dissenting voices to hold the Agency accountable for any action that didn't serve to lower prices, protect consumers, or even the playing field for small, innovative businesses. If necessary, they could have pointed out corruption or backroom dealings. And they would have been able to change the Commission's course on specific actions by persuading a Republican Commissioner to join them. But if the President is allowed to unilaterally dismiss Commissioners, even Republican Commissioners would be powerless to stand up to the White House if ordered to take an illegal action at the expense of consumers because the President could fire them as well. Ultimately, removing the FTC's mandate to act independent of political pressure to protect consumers serves to harm those most in need. Only those who have political influence with the White House stand to gain.

We have already seen some of the ramifications of the chaos wrought by these illegal firings. In a case about insulin pricing, there were no remaining Commissioners to hear the case because the two Republicans were both recused. This led Chair FERGUSON to "unrecuse" himself, making him the sole decisionmaker in a matter in which he has a known conflict of interest. And last week, it was reported that multiple members of DOGE are now embedded in the Chair's office, raising the specter that the FTC may face cuts just as it is gearing up to take Meta—one of the world's richest companies—to trial this upcoming Monday for buying up competitors to dominate social