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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, You are our fortress and shield. Your laws guide us, and Your teachings protect us. Your way is perfect, and Your word is truth. Bless all who follow Your guidance, giving them the power to serve others with wisdom, patience, and kindness.

As our lawmakers seek to serve, empower them to minister in Your Name to the suffering, the friendless, and the needy. Lord, give our legislators wisdom and strength for this day, that they may dispose of their responsibilities in ways that honor You. Help them in all their relationships to be constructive and edifying, speaking words that will bring life and peace.

We pray in Your matchless Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MULLIN). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

GUIDING AND ESTABLISHING NATIONAL INNOVATION FOR U.S. STABLECOINS ACT—Motion to Proceed—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1582, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 66, S. 1582, a bill to provide for the regulation of payment stablecoins, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

MAKE AMERICA HEALTHY AGAIN COMMISSION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to express concerns that I have heard from many stakeholders regarding the Make America Healthy Again Commission. For short, this is called the MAHA Commission. Their report will be coming out tomorrow.

The concerns that I have heard from food and agriculture stakeholders center around the difficulty that they have had getting meetings with the Department of Health and Human Services. HHS Secretary Kennedy is the Chair of the MAHA Commission.

Many people fear that the contents of this report will not be based on sound science, that it will be based on opinions and fears instead of scientific consensus.

When I met with Secretary Kennedy before his confirmation—and that is a traditional thing to do—we discussed things like pesticides, genetically modified crops and other important components that come together to ensure the United States has the largest and safest food supply on the globe, and how all those things center on making the life of the farmer producing food as easy as possible. Now, Secretary Kennedy agreed that these

tools farmers use are necessary for that food supply.

The MAHA report should be based upon sound science. I believe that Department of Agriculture Secretary Rollins and EPA Administrator Zeldin have had robust input on this report and that they would advocate for the 2 percent of Americans that feed the other 98 percent and the tools that are used to produce the food supply that feeds America.

We want to remember that we have the reputation of producing food so that the expendable income of—the average family in the United States spends roughly 10 or 11 percent of their discretionary money on food—the cheapest of any consumers in the world.

So I want everybody to know that I am watching this report closely that is coming out tomorrow, and I hope it reflects what Secretary Kennedy told me when I met with him in my office and he stands by his word.

I hope there is nothing in the MAHA report that jeopardizes our food supply or the livelihood of farmers or jeopardizes the food supply—to emphasize—for the 98 percent of Americans that buy and depend on the food that the 2 percent of Americans that are farmers produce.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

S.J. RES. 55

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, as you know, in its final days in office, the Biden administration gave California—the liberal State of California—permission to export its far-left electric vehicle mandate to the entire country. This week, this Senate will end California's mandate madness.

Now, I listened to some of the Democrats' arguments on the floor yesterday. There was a lot of huffing and puffing going on about the sanctity of the Government Accountability Office and about the filibuster, which, let me

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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remind you, every single Democrat has promised to eliminate. There were wild accusations that the sky was falling on the U.S. Senate.

What nobody who tuned in heard is what these California rules would actually do to our country. Why not, Mr. President? Isn't that why Democrats are really so panicked? Isn't that why Democrats and Joe Biden waited until after the election—after they lost the election in the House, the Senate, and the White House—to spring this whole thing on the American people? They were losers going out the door, and they said: We are coming after you, the American people, with our leftist dreams.

Isn't that why they spent months coordinating this release with their allies at the GAO—so they could avoid or at least try to avoid Senate scrutiny under the Congressional Review Act? Isn't that what they were really up to? Well, it is what they were up to.

So why are the Democrats so darn desperate to talk about anything and everything except what these punishing rules will actually do to America, American workers, and the American economy? Let me tell you why.

California EV mandates ban—ban, ban—the sale of gas-powered cars and trucks. No more in America—gas-powered trucks. Can you imagine that in Oklahoma or in my home State of Wyoming? They threaten—the Democrats want to threaten the freedom of every American to choose what they drive. That is what this is about.

EVs currently make up 7 percent—7 percent—of the U.S. market. Even in California, they account for only 20 percent of vehicle sales. And do you know what else? The sales are stalling. They are stalling out. People don't want these. Even with the big government subsidies, people don't want to buy these things. Yet California's radical mandates require that by next year—it is coming; we are already into May of this year. By next year, by January, all vehicle sales in the State of California—35 percent of them have to be electric. That is 6 months from now, 7 months from now. By 2035, it would be 100 percent of vehicle sales in California have to be electric, with big penalties if it doesn't meet that.

For the people that are making the cars that people don't want to buy, this is a whole new meaning in California of fantasyland. That is what we are dealing with here.

America can't meet these impossible standards—not next year, not in 10 years—and the American people don't want to meet those standards.

For carmakers, the consequences are severe. If you don't sell enough electric vehicles—California is saying to them and to the other States that sign on to this—even when Americans don't want to buy them, too bad. In California, these people will pay a fine of \$20,000 per vehicle—\$20,000 per vehicle because people don't want to buy what the government says they have to buy.

There are ways to avoid this fine, and one way is limiting the sales of gas-powered vehicles. Well, that is rationing. That is what we are seeing. The Democrats want to ration the sales of gas-powered vehicles to live in their fantasyland of everybody driving an electric vehicle.

The harms of this mandate extend way beyond just carmakers. The Democrat mandates would cost the economy about \$100 billion a year—\$100 billion. The impact would be about 330,000 jobs lost.

The Democrat mandate would punish hard-working families. Prices would be higher. They are trying to buy these regular, gas-powered vehicles, but there would be fewer for sale. They would bury small businesses under crushing compliance costs.

In my home State of Wyoming and in rural States like ours, farmers and ranchers would suffer, both from EV's limited reliability and, clearly, from the limited range. People drive long distances in Wyoming to school, to the grocery store, to work.

Every American citizen would lose options, whether you live in California or not.

So you have the California EV mandates. The Democrats don't want to talk about that part of it. They are expensive, they are expansive, and they are economically destructive. They would hurt our economy, hurt our workers, and hurt the pocketbooks and purses of Mr. and Mrs. America.

This isn't just a California problem. It is a nationwide assault on gas-powered cars in America. The California mandates cover over 40 percent of all new cars in the country. They span 11 States, including big-population States—New York, New Jersey, here in the District of Columbia. All of them signed onto California's radical attempt to set a new national standard. So it is not just a California standard. Everyone is impacted.

The California Senators—the Members of this body—they actually brag about this overreach of this mandate on EVs. The junior Senator from California says he is “very proud” that his State's liberal agenda can control the country.

How many Members of this Senate—certainly on this side of the aisle—want to share the pride of California's liberal agenda controlling the country? The American public on election day rejected the liberal agenda of California—whether it comes to electric vehicles, whether it comes to open borders, whether it comes to sanctuary cities and sanctuary States, or their efforts to defund police. People have rejected, all across the country, the liberal agenda controlling our country.

So Democrats have this delusional dream. They want to eliminate gas-powered vehicles. The rest of us, we live in the real world. And that is what we are doing here today, because in the real world, gas-powered vehicles keep our farms running, keep our ranches

growing, keep our businesses thriving, and keep our economy moving.

The Congressional Review Act provides the Senate a swift and permanent solution. With a simple majority here in the Senate, Congress can kill these rules and ban similar ones forever—not just the Senate, the House as well.

And the fight goes beyond party lines because it is not just about Republicans and Democrats. It is about common sense. It is about control. The House of Representatives voted on this. They wanted to end these punishing mandates.

How did the vote go? Well, every Republican voted to kill the mandate. Thirty-five House Democrats voted to kill this mandate, including Democrats from the State of California who realized just how impractical and expensive and impossible it would be to comply with what the Biden administration tried to force-feed the American people after they lost the election, lost the Presidency, lost the House, and lost the Senate.

A New York Democrat who voted with the Republicans and with these 35 other Democrats said: “Out of touch with reality” is what these California mandates are—“out of touch with reality.”

Even the junior Senator from Michigan, a Democrat, campaigned and won an election in 2024 against EV mandates. Well, we will see how she votes today on the floor of the Senate, after she campaigned last year in Michigan against the EV mandate.

Will she be against them today when we vote on this? Time will tell. She actually told voters: “Drive what you want.” We will see today if she really believes that, or if she says: Drive what you want, but you can only buy what I am demanding that you buy—an electric vehicle.

We will see it in the vote today.

Senate Democrats now want to force-feed electric vehicles to everyone in America. So Democrats are claiming the Congressional Review Act doesn't apply. They don't want to talk about the policy. They want to say: Well, the Congressional Review Act shouldn't apply.

These last-minute objections by Democrats are very flawed. What they are citing is a nonbinding observation—an observation—by the Government Accountability Office—an observation that said, for the first time in history, an Agency-submitted rule wasn't a rule. That is what they are saying. The argument collapses under scrutiny.

The Environmental Protection Agency submitted these rules as rules to Congress this year, after being released by the Biden administration in his final days in office. That is a fact. No one disputes it. The Democrats don't dispute it. They know what happened. They know they are trying to sneak one through. They know it.

Under the Congressional Review Act, that makes these rules subject to review—period, end of story. They are subject to review.

The GAO has no veto power over this body, the U.S. Senate—not a veto from the Congressional Review Act, not a veto under the Senate rules, not a veto under Senate precedent. They have no standing.

More troubling, the GAO's actions suggest bias because leftwing bureaucrats in the GAO rushed a response in only 13 days to prop up the mandates. How do we know that? Because we know they colluded with Senate Democrats to do so.

When Republicans challenged the GAO's observations, Senate Democrats turned to scare tactics now about the filibuster. It is ironic since every single Senate Democrat has either voted for or campaigned for eliminating the filibuster.

This Senate vote on the California EV mandates is not about Senate rules. It is about the Democrats' delusional dream to eliminate gas-powered vehicles forever. That is what they want. What their complaints are is a smoke-screen to save a pillar of their Green New Deal.

You know, years ago, Congress created a fast-track procedure. It was actually in 1996. That is when the Congress passed the Congressional Review Act.

This week, the Senate must decide: Do we uphold our rights under the Congressional Review Act, or do we give the GAO a veto over Congressional Review Act now and forever?

Our decision is going to shape the future of the Congressional Review Act. Americans have spoken. They have rejected EV mandates in November at the ballot box. The House has acted in a bipartisan way, with 35 Democrats joining all the Republicans. And it is now up to the Senate to stop these EV mandates from taking hold on our Nation.

I want to thank my colleagues who led the effort: Chairman SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO of West Virginia, Senator DEB FISCHER of Nebraska, and Senator MARKWAYNE MULLIN of Oklahoma.

Together, we are going to reject this far-left cheerleading for more regulations, and we are going to protect consumers. We are going to protect affordability, and we are going to protect the authority of this institution.

It is time to end this California mandate madness.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

BUDGET RECONCILIATION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, Republicans are continuing our work on a

reconciliation bill that delivers for the American people. And if I had to summarize this bill in one phrase, I would say it is about building a stronger America.

A stronger America is a safer America.

Last week, I discussed the importance of strengthening our border security, something we are addressing in our reconciliation bill. Today, I would like to discuss another aspect of that bill: strengthening our military to meet today's and tomorrow's threats.

The world has grown increasingly unstable in recent years. America's interests, our allies, and, worst of all, American servicemembers have come under attack. Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran and its terrorist proxies have all grown more brazen.

Meanwhile, the previous administration regularly telegraphed weakness on the world stage and put investing in our military on the back burner.

There is never a time when we can afford to let our military readiness slide. But above all, at this time of increased instability, it is vital that we ensure that our military has the resources it needs to deter our enemies and defend our country.

ADM Samuel Paparo, the commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, last year called deterrence "our highest duty."

He said:

Deterrence is effective when it is credible: The adversary believes the defending side will act on its threats when it is capable. A robust military with the ability to project power globally and inflict significant damage on the aggressor is essential.

Let me just repeat that:

A robust military with the ability to project power globally and inflict significant damage on the aggressor is essential.

That is the kind of military we need to secure with this bill.

Our aim is to reverse the trend of underinvestment in our military, to rebuild our military capabilities, and to ensure that our adversaries will think long and hard before attacking us—in other words, peace through strength.

One area where that is especially critical is in our strategic competition with China. Leaders of the intelligence community testified this year that China represents the most comprehensive, robust military threat to U.S. national security. Its designs on Taiwan are obvious, and its brazen actions, from cybertheft and espionage to its aggressive territorial claims and its harassment of American pilots are alarming.

But we have allowed China to outpace us in building new military capabilities. China produces two submarines per year for every 1.4 submarines built in the United States. China can build naval surface warships three times faster than we can. And in the defining technologies of tomorrow's wars—space, AI, hypersonics, and cyber—China is gaining quickly or already has an edge.

Republicans' reconciliation bill is about reestablishing the U.S. advantage in all those areas. We are going to invest in shipbuilding to expand and enhance our fleet. We will restock our munitions stockpiles and expand weapons production. We will modernize our nuclear deterrence and build a Golden Dome for missile defense here at home.

Our bill will expedite the delivery of innovative weapons to servicemembers on the frontlines. It will enhance the readiness of our military units and modernize infrastructure at depots and shipyards. And it will make improvements to servicemembers' quality of life.

To be clear, the investment we are making here in this bill, while critically important, is no substitute for robust annual defense funding levels. But it will help us catch up after years of the Biden administration's deprioritizing defense investments.

We can't afford to let our military readiness slide any further. We need to reverse the current trend and put our national security on a better trajectory for the future, and that is what our reconciliation bill will do.

A stronger America is a safer America, and that, Mr. President, is what Republicans intend to deliver.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

S.J. RES. 55

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, so 100 days into Donald Trump's Presidency, America is plagued with deep problems. Donald Trump's trade war is sending prices up and up. Republicans are on the brink of taking away people's Medicaid. Trust in American leadership is in decline on the world stage. But what are Senate Republicans focusing on today? Today, Republicans are going nuclear to appease the fossil fuel industry and, at the same time, erode away the institution they profess to care about.

First, the facts: This week, Senate Republicans want to use a measure known as the Congressional Review Act—CRA for short—to repeal three vehicle emission waivers from California. These waivers have been used for decades and are vital for helping keep our air cleaner, our kids healthier, and to lessen our reliance on Big Oil.

Republicans have tried to get rid of California's emission waivers for a very long time. The fossil fuel industry—which knows it is in decline, which knows that clean energy is not only the cleaner wave of the future but the less costly wave of the future—but the fossil fuel industry hates them, hates

that industry. So Donald Trump's EPA tried to rescind the last iteration of one of these waivers during his first administration, but that effort fell short in the courts. The courts rejected it. Now Republicans want to try again. This time by using the CRA to repeal these emissions waiver at a simple majority threshold.

But what was made crystal clear today on the Senate floor through parliamentary inquiries I made to the Parliamentarian that the Senate Parliamentarian has advised both sides, Democrats and Republicans, that legislation to overturn these waivers does not—does not—qualify for expedited consideration under the Congressional Review Act. That means any legislation to repeal these waivers should be subject to a 60-vote threshold in the Senate.

The Senate Parliamentarian, as we know, plays a vital role in keeping this institution whole. It is thankless work. Parliamentarians' advice and judgment on rules and procedures of this institution is indispensable to both parties. So Republicans face a choice: Do they adhere to Senate precedent, as they have long claimed to do, and find another way to pass their repeal or are they going to plow ahead, overrule the Parliamentarian, do the bidding of Big Oil, and further eat away at the Senate in the process?

Well, today we have our answer: Senate Republicans are going nuclear. Let's be very clear, to override the Parliamentarian and to use the CRA in the ways the Republicans propose is going nuclear—no ifs, ands, or buts.

And don't take my word for it. Let me read a quote from Leader THUNE from just a few months ago when he was asked if he would advise his party against moving to override the Parliamentarian, Leader THUNE said this:

Yeah, and that's totally akin to killing the filibuster. We can't go there. People need to understand that.

Again, Leader THUNE himself said: Overruling the Parliamentarian is akin to killing the filibuster, and that is just what the Republicans are proposing to do today.

Just yesterday, Leader THUNE admitted that this step could "create precedent for the future" and what an awful precedent.

And in his first address as Republican leader, Leader THUNE stood right here in the Chamber—I sat and listened—and promised that "one of my priorities as leader will be to ensure that the Senate stays the Senate."

Well, what happened to all of that? What happened to all the preaching we hear from the other side about norms and rules and precedent? Apparently, when the rules suit them, Republicans will preach about protecting precedent. But now that the rules are inconvenient, when they stand in the way of their ideological goals, Republicans say: Away with them.

Shameful. Shameful.

Republicans don't need to take the Senate down this road. They have

other alternatives at their disposal. If they want to repeal these waivers, bring legislation to the floor. Have a debate. There is nothing that prohibits that. That is what should be done in the kind of regular order our Senate Republicans professed they were going to restore when they got here, when they got the majority here in January.

Make no mistake, this is not a narrow assertion of congressional authority, as Leader THUNE claimed it was. Today, Republicans set a new precedent that cannot likely be reversed. Moving forward, Congressional Review Acts will be weaponized like never before. Today it is all about California emission waivers; tomorrow, the CRA could now be used to erase any policy from an Agency that the Trump administration doesn't like at a simple majority threshold. They could go after permits for oil and gas drilling; some on the other side wouldn't like that. They could eliminate healthcare innovation waivers that States use to get care to people through Medicaid and the ACA.

They could even use the CRAs to make it even harder to form a union. They could go after Agency actions that protect access to reproductive care, like making it harder to access the medication mifepristone. They could go after rules that protect access to reproductive care.

All of this and more could now be done at a simple majority threshold with an expanded CRA. And all that would need to happen is for Donald Trump to choose an Agency action or policy he doesn't like, stamp it with a label "CRA," send it over to the Congress, and Republicans will bow in obeisance and repeal it at a simple majority threshold.

This, in other words, is a backdoor strategy from Republicans to make Project 2025 a reality. And mark my words, many of our Republican colleagues are going to not like having to vote on CRAs that Trump wants, and we will be able to get votes on them because of what the Republicans are attempting to do today.

It is the legislative branch ceding authority over to the executive if we go forward with this, and Republicans should tread carefully. What goes around comes around.

If Republicans are willing to overrule the Parliamentarian and highjack the CRA in a way that it has never been used before, they will not like it the next time they are in the minority. That is for sure.

So this is a sad, shameful, disappointing day for the U.S. Senate. Republicans will come to regret the ill-considered step they take today, mark my words. And our country, the health of our children, the health of our communities—the whole country—will be worse off because of what Republicans have done.

BUDGET RECONCILIATION

Mr. President, now, on reconciliation, it is no secret how awful the Re-

publican tax bill is. For weeks, we have said their bill shows that billionaires win; American families lose. Last night, the nonpartisan CBO proved that to be quite accurate.

The CBO's nonpartisan analysis shows that this bill would decrease household resources by 4 percent for the bottom 10 percent of Americans while increasing household resources by 2 percent for the top 10 percent of the country. To be clear, this bill would hurt the most vulnerable Americans, and the most benefits would only reach the top wealthiest—trickle-down economics, if there ever was one.

This bill hurts American families. They are the losers of this bill. American families will lose healthcare. They will lose food benefits. They will lose jobs. They will lose money. Bottom line: American families lose; billionaires win.

SALT

Mr. President, and finally on the SALT deal, yesterday Donald Trump came to the Capitol to deliver a message to New York House Republicans:

Back down on SALT or else.

That is what he reportedly said, his words.

Less than 24 hours later, we are learning that New York Republicans have all bowed to the king and caved in obeisance to Trump. New York Republicans are showing, once again, that their loyalty does not lie with the volunteer firefighter in Bay Shore or with the teacher in Riverhead or even with the small business owner in Suffern. No. Their blind loyalty lies with Donald Trump.

The so-called SALT deal is a humiliating failure for New York Republicans. New York Republicans settled for barely half of what they wanted on SALT and barely a fraction of what Trump ripped away from them in the first term, and they are doing it because they are scared of the President and no relief for the marriage penalty. So if there is a firefighter and a teacher married to one another, nope. Being married hurts them in the SALT deal the Republicans made.

New York Republicans settled for SALT caps forever and a double tax on middle-class New Yorkers: our cops and firefighters, our teachers, our small businesses, our construction workers in the Hudson Valley, on Long Island, and across the State. I mean, even if New York Republicans did nothing, New York would be better off at the end of this year when the SALT cap would have expired.

This SALT deal leaves in place a penalty for married couples. A couple who are paying both taxes face the same limit as a single individual, even if they are paying double the taxes. This is one of the biggest issues facing middle-class families, and New York Republicans are leaving it in place. It is barely 20 percent of the New York Republicans' own SALT bill that they wrote.

One Republican Congressman—MIKE LAWLER—said last year:

Eliminating the marriage penalty within SALT isn't just important—it's absolutely essential.

Well, clearly it must not have been that essential.

New York Republicans have said for months that they had one job they were sent to Washington for: to get rid of the SALT cap. With this SALT deal, so-called SALT deal, they have failed everyone back home.

New York Republicans' capitulation to Trump on SALT is a slap in the face to Long Island, the Hudson Valley, New York City, and the hard-working, middle-class families across New York and across the United States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

UKRAINE

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I will be making a quick presentation here and then Senator ERNST will follow, and I just want to compliment her for all the effort she has made to stand by Ukraine and make sure that this war ends in a way that is honorable and just. And we can stop the killing but do it in a way that we don't have future wars because we made a mistake here.

So there are so many things going on in the world right now that are very dangerous. You have Iran close to a nuclear breakout. You have the war in Russia and Ukraine. It is killing 5,000 people a day. Only God knows how many people are actually being killed or wounded, hard to track, but it is just massive. It is a major land war in Europe, and we thought those days were behind us.

We have threats from China. We have got all kinds of things going on in the world. So my advice is, when you have a hard decision to make, make sure you look at it through a moral clarity lens. Make it simple. Russia is the problem, not Ukraine. Ukraine didn't invade Russia; Russia invaded Ukraine.

We need moral clarity on all these issues. Iran is not trying to have civilian nuclear power; they are trying to build a bomb. We need to take them at their word as to what they intended to do over time. They intended to destroy the State of Israel, purify Islam, and come after us. That is what they say. They write on their missiles "Death to Israel," and they call us the "Great Satan." They have 600 pounds of highly enriched uranium—60 percent. That is enough for six or seven or maybe more bombs. They went from 60-percent to 90-percent enrichment in less than a month.

They have one civilian nuclear reactor. How much uranium has been used to run that reactor enriched by Iran itself? Not one gram. Think of all the fuel needed to run the civilian reactor from Russia. So they are trying to stockpile weapons-grade uranium to make a bomb; and they lie, cheat, and steal, and we catch them all the time.

So some moral clarity here. Iran with a nuclear weapon is not only un-

acceptable, it is the biggest threat to the planet, as I see it. The Arab nations want a nuclear weapon of their own.

And Israel—one Holocaust is sufficient. This is the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II. It happened a few days ago. During that war, there was an effort to annihilate the Jews. Founding the State of Israel in 1948 was a significant world event. And there is a saying in Israel, "Never again." They actually mean it.

(Mr. SHEEHY assumed the Chair.)

How about moral clarity from the United States here? We are with Israel. If Israel has to use military force to destroy or degrade the nuclear capability of Iran, we should be with them. I am glad we are trying to find a peaceful solution to the uranium problem. If you can get Iran to dismantle their nuclear program, then that gets us to where I want to go. But they have to dismantle.

Right now, there are discussions between Russia, Ukraine, and the United States and Europe about how to end this war. Putin, in my view, is playing us all. President Trump called for a 30-day cease-fire. Ukraine said yes; Russia said no. President Trump urged Zelenskyy and Putin to go to Istanbul—I was over there—and meet to have direct talks. Zelenskyy went; Putin didn't.

So there was a call a couple of days ago between President Trump and Putin. The Russians now are supposed to submit a terms sheet about what it takes to get a cease-fire. That is supposed to happen in a few days. They are talking about going to the Vatican and having direct negotiations. I am for all of that, but I don't know about how. I think most people feel like I do. We have given Russia plenty of opportunity to find an honorable and just end to this war. They are not interested, and they are not going to change until we up the ante.

So we need moral clarity here. Putin is dragging this out. He believes he is winning on the battlefield. I don't believe he is. He is defying every effort that has been earnest by President Trump to find a solution to this war. President Trump says he wants to stop the slaughtering and the killing. He is right to do so. But this is a time of decision-making. This has gone on too long with too many games being played.

I will tell you in just a minute what the Senate can do. But what we need when it comes to Russia-Ukraine is moral clarity. When President Trump focuses on an issue and takes a firm stand, it always works. He is standing up to China and the world who has been ripping us off on trade. He has a policy now that whatever you charge us on tariffs, we are going to charge you. It is called reciprocal trade. He has imposed tariffs on China.

Everybody in this body goes home and talks about how China rips us off. Trump is actually doing something

about it. China steals our intellectual property, they manipulate the currency to get them a trade advantage, and that needs to come to an end.

When President Trump focuses on fixing a problem—righting a wrong—he gets good results because the world now is calling Washington wanting deals. I think you are going to see a lot of good trade deals to right the wrong of trade abuse because President Trump stood up and insisted we get a better outcome.

The border. When he got in office, one of his top priorities was to fix a broken border. Look at what has happened. The lowest daily number of border encounters fell to less than 200, the lowest in history. He turned it all off because he was firm and resolved with Mexico and others. His border policies have worked. He has shut down a broken border, literally, in months because he had the desire and the will to do it, and people responded. And we are getting a great result at the border because of his determination and his will to do so. We went from 7,200 in March down to 200—that drop is amazing—because of his policies.

China, I just talked about. He is taking China on, and I am hoping we can reach a deal with China that will level out the trade playing field. China is talking to us; we are talking to China. The world is responding to President Trump's tariffs. We are going to get a bunch of good trade deals. And I very much appreciate that.

What did he say about Iran?

You know, it's not complicated formula. Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon. That's all there is.

That is moral clarity. You can understand that, no matter where you are at on the planet:

You know, it's not complicated formula. Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon. That's all there is.

We are in talks with Iran. Whether or not they achieve a result, I don't know. I don't mind trying. I do know this: Time is not on our side. President Trump said we are going to end the nuclear program one way or the other. When he said it, I think the Iranians believed it; and when he says it, I believe it. And the best chance to stop the Iran nuclear program is with President Trump's leadership.

Moral clarity, again, regarding Russia and Ukraine. Russia is the aggressor. Russia must end this bloodbath now. He has talked about ending the bloodbath. I am saying, from my point of view, Russia is the aggressor. Ukraine, like every other Nation, is not perfect. But they have fought like tigers.

In 1994, 1998—I can't remember—they gave up 1,700 nuclear weapons, the Budapest Memorandum. In return, Russia, the United States, Great Britain promised territorial integrity. They gave up 1,700 nuclear weapons with a promise from these countries they would be safe territorially.

Russia has violated that promise numerous times. They are constantly

harassing their neighbors. This is the second invasion of Ukraine by Russia. They have a view Ukraine belongs to them. No, it doesn't. It belongs to the people of Ukraine, a sovereign nation. If you have a dispute with a country, there are ways to arbitrate land disputes.

Putin is trying to rewrite the map of Europe by force of arms. If he gets away with it, if he is seen to having been rewarded for, you will get more of this. There goes Taiwan. Russia is the aggressor. Russia must end this bloodbath. That is my view of this situation.

Let's look at history and see what happens when you have moral clarity and see what happens when you lose it. September 27, 1938. Here is what Chamberlain said:

How horrible, fantastic, incredible it is that we should be digging trenches and trying on gas-masks here because of a quarrel in a faraway country between people of whom we know nothing.

That was his view of what Hitler was doing. Why do we care? We don't know these people. We don't speak their language. That is not exactly moral clarity in the face of Nazi oppression:

However much we may sympathize with a small nation confronted by a big and powerful neighbour, we cannot, in all circumstances, undertake to involve the whole British Empire in war simply on her account.

We know what that small country was. It led to the slaughter of 50 million people. It enticed Hitler to keep going, and Hitler told you what he was going to do. He wrote a book. Chamberlain, obviously, didn't read the book, and he didn't have the moral clarity to confront the Nazi regime. And a lot of people died.

September 30, 1938:

I believe it is peace for our time.

A paper signed by Adolf Hitler that he waved to the world. Less than a year later, the world is on fire. This is what happens when you don't realize what is going on. You misread evil. You think Hitler is something he is not. This is an example of not having moral clarity. It leads to a worldwide war.

Russia, the Soviet Union—this is an example of moral literacy, President John F. Kennedy:

Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty . . . When all are free, then we can look forward to that day when this city will be joined as one and this country and this great continent of Europe in a peaceful and hopeful globe.

He was talking about Berlin—moral clarity to the Soviet Union. He stood up for freedom, stood against the Soviet Empire.

And along comes my favorite, Ronald Reagan:

Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!

How clear could you be? On the other side of this wall is an evil empire that moral clarity, over time, brought the Soviet Union down to its knees.

Russia today, Putin's Russia, is an evil country oppressing his own people, harassing his neighbor, wanting to take things that are not theirs, wanting to recreate the Soviet Union, the Russian Empire. And they are using every terrible tactic in the military book—bombing civilians, killing people by tens of thousands.

So when it comes to Putin, we need to have moral clarity, as Reagan and Kennedy had with the Soviet Union. It is not enough to give speeches. These were great speeches. But what we did against the Soviet Union is we built up our military. Ronald Reagan went to "Star Wars" and they couldn't keep up. We not only opposed the Soviet Union rhetoric, we opposed it in capability.

What do we do now with Putin? How do we end this war? I am not out to humiliate Russia or Putin, but I am out to end this war soon—not later but soon—in a way not to start another war.

When we left Afghanistan dishonorably and disgracefully, it set in motion a belief that the United States will not stand by its allies and we are apparently weak. I believe that. And the Presiding Officer of the Senate understands what happens when politicians get it wrong. People like him, in his old job, pay a heavy price. They go all over the world fighting these guys because when we pulled out of Afghanistan, every jihadist was on steroids. Putin licked his chops and went into Ukraine and Iran, kept enriching, and sort of the rest is history. That was a horrible decision, and we are paying the price for it today.

To my colleagues, Republican and Democrat, if we don't get Ukraine-Russia right, it will be worse than Afghanistan. If it is seen, when this is all over, that Putin was rewarded for his aggression—I am not trying to humiliate Russia, but I am trying to make sure they are not rewarded in a way that China will be enticed to take Taiwan or Iran will believe we are all talk in the West when it comes to their nuclear capability, isolating Israel even further.

Speeches are important. Moral clarity is the right lens from which to look through regarding aggression and evil. But we have to do more than talk.

I appreciate President Trump's earnest effort to bring the parties together, to find a solution we can all live with, to keep an independent, sovereign Ukraine and end this war sooner rather than later. It is clear to me after all these months, the earnest efforts by President Trump are not being equally met. I think Zelenskyy is ready to make concessions to end this war. Putin seems to be more talking and less acting.

What can we do to up the ante? What can we do in the U.S. Senate to change the equation? What can we do to persuade Russia to get to the peace table?

We can impose bone-crushing sanctions on Putin's Russia. And he has

earned that. I hate it for the Russian people, but it is now time to increase the cost of this war on Putin.

The sanctions packet that we have put together has 80 cosponsors. Do you know how hard it is to get 80 Senators to agree on anything? Eighty of us—and the number is climbing—are ready to impose sanctions on Russia if he does not come to the table and earnestly seek peace—Putin.

And these sanctions are geared toward China. There are tariffs in these sanctions on any nation that buys Russian oil and gas from the shadow fleet. Putin's war machine is propped up by China and India buying Russian oil at a massive discount to keep the war machine and Putin running.

So what have we decided to do here? Focus on those causing the problem, not just Putin; focus on his customers.

Most of Europe has weaned themselves off of Russian oil and gas. That is a major advancement. But it is now time to let the Chinese know: If you want to be a normal country, act normal. If you want to have a better relationship with the United States and Europe, help us. Don't fuel the flames of a bloodbath. Don't buy cheap oil from a despot because you can with impunity. Those days of buying cheap oil from Putin with impunity are coming to a close.

We are going to act. And how we act and when we act will be a political exercise among the body, talking to the White House, and talking to our allies.

To China: I would like a better relationship. We have a lot of opportunity to grow our economies together. But if you keep supporting Putin and fueling his war machine, you will never have a normal relationship with the U.S. Senate.

To our friends in India: Watch what you are doing.

To my colleagues: Seldom do we have a chance to speak with one voice at such an important time. The entire world is watching the U.S. Senate.

I just got back from T rkiye with Secretary Rubio, who invited me to go. He allowed me to speak to every Foreign Minister of our NATO allies, talking about the Senate bill, telling them that the Senate is an independent body and that we are moving down the road to holding Putin accountable.

The world is watching the Senate in a way I haven't seen since I have been here. We have a chance, my colleagues, to help end this war. We have a chance to push Putin to the table. And if we fail as a world, not only does this war continue, but we are going to start new wars.

I have never been more proud of this body than I am right now. We have come together in a bipartisan fashion. There are a group of House Members who will take the Senate bill and sign a discharge petition. What does that mean? It is coming to the floor of the House no matter what.

So we stand ready. I am going to talk to the majority leader, talk to all of

my colleagues who have a say in how this bill moves forward, and I am going to urge them to get ready to act.

We have sat on the sidelines too long. We have watched too many people get slaughtered by Putin. We have put sanctions on, but they haven't worked the way they should.

What we are doing in the Senate is a game-changer. It will affect China, which provides the most fuel to Putin's war machine in a dramatic fashion.

To China: I don't want to do that. I will, if I have to. I want you to help us in this war. I am not looking to punish or destroy your economy or hurt our economy. I am looking to get a result here.

But I will end where I started: If we have to, we will.

President Kennedy said: "We shall pay any price and bear any burden." He was right.

President Reagan said: "Tear down this wall"; end this evil empire.

Sometimes, freedom comes at a heavy price. The Ukrainians are paying that price, and I am so proud of them. They are fighting like tigers, and they are dying by the thousands. And they are not going to quit no matter what we do—nor should they.

This is a moment of reckoning. This is a moment that matters. All of us got to the Senate, and it is not an easy path to take to get elected to this body. But now you are here, and you have a chance, my colleagues, to make a real difference, to make this world safer and more peaceful.

Let's not shirk the responsibility history has put upon us. This is a historical moment. Let's rise to the occasion like those before us. Let's have moral clarity when it comes to Putin. Let's do more than talk. Let's act.

I will yield to Senator ERNST, who has been a champion for getting a good outcome for Ukraine and the world.

I very much appreciate all you have done in this cause.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague and great friend, as we work on this together.

I really appreciate your leadership. Thank you for allowing me to join you on the floor today as we show our support for your bill, Sanctioning Russia Act of 2025. Thank you, Senator GRAM.

Folks, last week, President Trump showed the world that American leadership is back. He brought home the last living American hostage, delivering Edan Alexander from Iran-backed Hamas and reuniting him to his family after nearly 600 days. He stood with our partners in the Middle East to strengthen the historic Abraham Accords. And he delivered a strong message to Vladimir Putin: End the war.

Today, I stand in support of a sovereign Ukraine and echo the President's call to Putin to stop this bloodbath that never should have happened.

This is an issue that not only affects a close partner under siege but also the

strength of the United States of America and the security of the free world.

Let's be clear here, folks: China is watching; so are Iran and North Korea. And, of course, Vladimir Putin is watching too. They call it the "new axis of evil" for a reason.

I personally witnessed and experienced the growth of the U.S.-Ukrainian relationship when I visited Ukraine, in its waning days of Soviet control, as part of an agricultural student exchange program. This was in 1989.

I had the privilege of living with a Ukrainian family on a very small collective farm. As we got together, there were a number of us Iowa students on that exchange. Again, it was an agricultural exchange. We came together, each of us with our families, in a group setting, one of the very first nights that we were on that collective. Again, with the premise of an agricultural exchange—we were farming tomatoes, working with the cattle and the hogs—a very small, small collective. We came together, and the Ukrainians wanted to ask us questions. So all of us American students, all of us from Iowa, we sat down with our Ukrainian families. We expected to talk about agriculture—Iowan agriculture versus Ukrainian agriculture. Much to my surprise, the first question that came from our Ukrainian counterparts was not about how we raise corn or soybeans in Iowa. It was not about the types of machinery that we use on our farm. But the first question the Ukrainians asked us was, What is it like to be free? What is it like to be an American? Because in 1989, those Ukrainians were living under Soviet socialist rule. They could not travel without having the permission of their government.

My family did not have a telephone, and if they wanted to use the collective manager's telephone, they would have somebody listening in on the conversation. They would have to know the purpose of the telephone call, whom they were calling, why they needed to make a telephone call.

This was 1989, and I learned a lot from that exchange. I saw a Ukrainian people who were desperate to break free of socialist economic structures and authoritarian restrictions on freedom of movement, the ability to have your own employment, and on freedom of speech.

Two years later, Ukraine declared its independence from the Soviet Union and broke free.

Later—many years later—in 2003, the United States is involved in the war in Iraq. I was a soldier in 2003 during Iraqi Freedom. I was a transportation company commander, permanently stationed in Kuwait.

My transporters ran convoys from the ports in Kuwait up to Iraq, delivering goods for our warfighters. So I got a little subcamp in Kuwait, outside of Camp Arifjan. Half of that subcamp, called Camden Yards, was occupied by American forces. My soldiers and I lived on that subcamp. The other half

of the camp was occupied by other forces. Those other forces were Ukrainian soldiers.

Ukraine is not part of NATO. They were not required to support the United States of America in Iraq. But Ukraine, of its own volition, sent their soldiers—and not just as support elements. They were there as combat forces.

Again, I was a transporter. We ran convoys in Iraq. The other half of that camp that I lived on, they were Ukrainian engineer forces. They did road clearing.

I think back: How many American lives did those engineers save from their road-clearing efforts, clearing bombs so they wouldn't be detonated by my drivers—Ukrainian forces, combat forces?

Today, Ukraine is fighting its own war. And I will remind everyone, the United States does not have forces involved in the Russia-Ukraine war—none, zero, none.

Today, Ukraine fights not only for its own survival but for the very principles the United States was founded on. When America leads, the world is safer. When we disengage and when we retreat, like we saw for the last 4 years under the Biden administration, chaos fills the void.

Russia's aggression has already cost too many innocent lives, about 5,000 lives every single week. Those are too many innocent lives, folks, which is why I support President Trump's efforts to get a peace deal done now. Vladimir Putin cannot keep tapping the United States of America along.

I vow to keep working with my colleagues to equip the President with all the tools necessary to hold Russia accountable, including sanctioning Russia and its supporters if they continue to drag out these peace talks and carry on with the needless bloodshed so this war that never should have started can come to an end.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to complete my remarks before the vote starts.

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

BUDGET RECONCILIATION

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I come to the floor to talk about the action that we are seeing in the House of Representatives today that will lead to action here in the Senate and asking our colleagues to reverse course on this reconciliation bill that I think is going to have unbelievable economic consequences to our economy.

Trillions in red ink that are alarming credit agencies and bond markets, spiking billions in energy project costs, and driving up prices and burdening States with billions of dollars of new healthcare that they can't afford.

Instead, they should be focusing on protecting healthcare coverage, lowering costs for American families, and

giving working families the breathing room they need to prosper.

Even now, 5 years later out of COVID, we can still see the effects of the pandemic. That time changed the way we live and took a toll on our economy. The U.S. economy lost 23 million jobs at the start of the pandemic, leading to a recession in early 2020, and thanks in no small part to well-designed, bipartisan fiscal policies by both Congress and the Biden administration, the recession that started was the shortest in history, lasting only 2 months.

Coming out of it though, the combined effects and impacts on our supply chains and durable goods caused inflation to spike to 9 percent by June of 2022. Again, well-designed fiscal policies by the Fed helped get that inflation back down in just 1 year to 3 percent by June of '23 and continue to lower and hover just above 2 percent.

We need, though, to continue to make progress on inflation and costs—costs that impact everything from clothes, cars, food, computers, you name it, and costs may be getting even more expensive because of the impacts of the tariffs, and they are making their way onto our shelves.

The last thing American families need is to be saddled with even more financial restraint, particularly as it relates to Medicaid and the policies in the reconciliation bill. More than 72 million Americans are enrolled in Medicaid, making it the single largest insurer in the United States.

It is critical that it remain a critical part of our healthcare system. Depending on the State, the Federal Government covers somewhere between 50 and 70 percent of the cost of insuring people with Medicaid. While Medicaid is administered jointly by the Federal Government and, in most States, about two-thirds of the funding for the State Medicaid program is Federal support. So make no mistake about it, cutting Medicaid at the Federal level is going to have a dramatic economic impact on States. It is the largest source of Federal funding for States.

It is the largest component expenditure across all States—more than K-12, more than higher education, more than transportation—and somehow, in an economy with great inflation, you think the idea is to make it more expensive for Americans to get health insurance and cover their costs and impact the economy?

The bill that is now being cobbled together is a serious attack on Medicaid. As an assault, they will continue to have ripple impacts on the economy. It undermines the Medicaid program, shifting the burdens to the State, and it makes the entire healthcare system more expensive for everyone.

Medicaid provides financial support to the healthcare sector, stimulates local economies—spending that does have a multiplier effect. Every dollar spent generates more than \$1 worth of economic activity. Medicaid drives em-

ployment in the healthcare sector, it generates State and local revenue, and it saves money for the enrollees to spend on more items—not healthcare.

But reductions in the Medicaid funding, especially as large as \$715 billion, will take a toll on States, on jobs, on revenue, and it will increase the financial burden on individuals and families.

So it is important to remember that direct recipients of Medicaid are not just individuals with coverage. They are a payment system. They are the benefits of a healthcare system, hospitals, doctors' offices, pharmacies, nursing homes. And so when you cut that funding, you are cutting those businesses and those opportunities. The impact on the State economy would be greater than the loss of Federal Medicaid funding because of the ripple effects of the costs across the State.

The Commonwealth Fund estimated that, collectively, States' gross domestic product could be cut \$95 billion smaller than the total economic output lost, and that could be even deeper.

So imagine every State now having \$2 billion more costs because of Medicaid. The additional loss in individual income would mean that State and local revenues would decline by \$7 billion. This would make it harder for States and localities to balance the burden of Medicaid.

And our constituents would also see more far reaching impacts as they struggle to provide healthcare. Today, 49 States, plus the District of Columbia, are all part of the system and counting on these providers and the funds. But this bill even eliminates the ability for States to adjust the revenue in any way that would be helpful for them to deal with this crisis. So this is an extreme approach to cutting American citizens off of the healthcare.

But think a bit about it for a second on the work requirement—also almost like a surveillance of U.S. citizens, trying to make them prove that they are eligible. Let's be honest; the provisions are not designed to cut down on waste. Rather, their primary objective is to prevent people from signing up for Medicaid coverage. In Arkansas, the casework requirement led to disenrollment of 18,000 people in just 4 months. And in New Hampshire, the complexity and administrative burden of the work requirement caused 17,000 beneficiaries to receive coverage termination in just 1 month.

Today, Georgia is the only State that has a work requirement for Medicaid. And instead of expanding Medicaid through the Affordable Care Act, it allows individuals and households that have income up to 100 percent of the Federal work poverty to get coverage if they work for 80 hours a month. The results are not good. A report found that Georgia's model cost taxpayers—taxpayers, not these individuals—cost the taxpayers \$87 million and enrolled only 6,000 people, about 75 percent fewer than had been projected. So I ask

again, what policy is this that saves money?

It makes healthcare more expensive for the rest of us. Nobody defers their healthcare costs. They are just going to show up at the emergency room. Just because we are cutting spending, it doesn't mean that the need magically disappears. States will have to find their way to make up for these shortfalls. A Kaiser analysis found that the House reconciliation bill—if it is enacted, the State of Washington would need to spend 30 percent more per Medicaid enrollee to make up the difference.

We don't have those resources. The same will be true of every State. For example, Louisiana would have to spend 50 percent more per Medicaid enrollee to make up the difference, translating into an 11 percent increase in the State taxes if they had to do that. Now is not the time to force our States to jump off of a cliff just because we won't live up to our Medicaid obligation.

I know the President used the f word, but what is real here on the Senate floor—I am not going to say it—but you are making a mess out of Medicaid, and we should stop them.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all time is expired.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

Mr. BOOZMAN. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 69, nays 31, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 263 Leg.]

YEAS—69

Alsobrooks	Gallego	Moreno
Banks	Gillibrand	Mullin
Barrasso	Graham	Murkowski
Blackburn	Grassley	Osoff
Blunt Rochester	Hagerty	Padilla
Booker	Hassan	Ricketts
Boozman	Heinrich	Risch
Britt	Hoeven	Rosen
Budd	Husted	Rounds
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Schiff
Cassidy	Johnson	Schmitt
Collins	Justice	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kelly	Scott (SC)
Cortez Masto	Kennedy	Sheehy
Cotton	Lankford	Slotkin
Cramer	Lee	Sullivan
Crapo	Luján	Thune
Cruz	Lummis	Tillis
Curtis	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	McConnell	Warner
Ernst	McCormick	Warnock
Fetterman	Moody	Wicker
Fischer	Moran	Young

NAYS—31

Baldwin	Hirono	Paul
Bennet	Kaine	Peters
Blumenthal	Kim	Reed
Cantwell	King	Sanders
Coons	Klobuchar	Schatz
Duckworth	Markey	Schumer
Durbin	Merkley	Shaheen
Hawley	Murphy	
Hickenlooper	Murray	

Smith Warren Whitehouse
Van Hollen Welch Wyden

The motion was agreed to.

The result was announced—yeas 53,
nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 264 Leg.]

YEAS—53

GUIDING AND ESTABLISHING NATIONAL INNOVATION FOR U.S. STABLECOINS ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RICKETTS). The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1582) to provide for the regulation of payment stablecoins, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

AMENDMENT NO. 2228

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 2228 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from North Dakota [Mr. THUNE], for Mr. RICKETTS, proposes an amendment numbered 2228.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide for expedited certification of existing regulatory regimes)

In section 4(c), add at the end the following:

(8) EXPEDITED CERTIFICATIONS OF EXISTING REGULATORY REGIMES.—The Stablecoin Certification Review Committee shall take all necessary steps to endeavor that, with respect to a State that, within 180 days of the date of enactment of this Act, has in effect a prudential regulatory regime (including regulations and guidance) for the supervision of digital assets or payment stablecoins, the certification process under this paragraph with respect to that regime occurs on an expedited timeline after the effective date of this Act.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION RELATING TO “FEDERAL MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY STANDARDS; FUEL SYSTEM INTEGRITY OF HYDROGEN VEHICLES; COMPRESSED HYDROGEN STORAGE SYSTEM INTEGRITY; INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE”

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 85, S.J. Res. 55.

VOTE ON MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. 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. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) is necessarily absent.

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

NAYS—46

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

NOT VOTING—1

Warner

The motion was agreed to.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION RELATING TO “FEDERAL MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY STANDARDS; FUEL SYSTEM INTEGRITY OF HYDROGEN VEHICLES; COMPRESSED HYDROGEN STORAGE SYSTEM INTEGRITY; INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the joint resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 55) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration relating to “Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; Fuel System Integrity of Hydrogen Vehicles; Compressed Hydrogen Storage System Integrity; Incorporation by Reference”.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, let me describe what I think is going on here on the Senate floor. Today is an unusual and interesting day.

What we understood the plan was, was that the majority was going to move to the Congressional Review Act regarding the California clean air rule in an effort to overrule the Clean Air Act rule for the fossil fuel industry,

which the majority so diligently serves.

The problem with that is that the Parliamentarian has ruled that the Congressional Review Act does not apply to the waiver that California gets, allowing it to do its own clean air standard. So they had a problem. The problem was that Democrats were going to make a point of order saying: Hey, you can't do that. We have argued this matter. We both went before the Parliamentarian. We made our case. We filed our pleadings. We got a decision. In our view, it was not even a close call of a decision. But that is in our view. And what you are really doing here is, for the fossil fuel industry, going nuclear, overruling the Senate Parliamentarian to accomplish a legislative task—to amend, basically, the Congressional Review Act—and then open the door for that to undo a 30-year tradition of California and other States like Rhode Island being able to operate under better clean air standards and the vehicle emissions standards than the Federal Government may be willing to accomplish.

So that is where we thought we were. Now, what is happening is that we have gone to a different CRA, this one having to do with hydrogen vehicles. The minority has 5 hours. There is a total of 10 hours, evenly divided. I suspect the majority is not going to use much of that time. But the minority has 5 hours to talk about what is going on.

We are now in the 5-hour debate period on the hydrogen vehicle CRA, as the majority moves toward making its play on the California clean air standard.

This is a slight bump in the road for them, but our understanding is that there is a new plan. The new plan is, at the conclusion of our 5 hours, to make a new point of order that allows them to do the California CRA effort and create a new way to get around the terms of the Congressional Review Act.

The predicament for them is that the Congressional Review Act, as a law—passed by the Senate, passed by the House, signed into law by the President—says: In the Senate, which is where we are, when a committee is discharged from further consideration of a joint resolution, which is where we are, all points of order against the joint resolution are waived.

They intend to create a Senate exception to that. We expect the Parliamentarian will say, when they offer this point of order, based on the statute, based on the law, well, that is not in order. Then they will go nuclear on this. They will bring everybody back to, by a simple majority vote of 51, overrule the Parliamentarian as to that new point of order.

The purpose is to create a point of order that allows a bypass of the Parliamentarian's decision—a very sound one, a clear one, in my view, based on precedent, law, history, tradition, all of it—that the CRA effort to undermine California's clean air standard does not work under Senate rules.