

but now struggles to afford her mortgage? Would this legislation give those Americans relief? No, it gives them a greater burden. The truckdriver and that mom, they are on the hook for those who decided to go to college to get a degree to make more money. They would be on the hook for that, as well as their own cost of living.

Now, I am sure my Democratic colleagues will argue that some of those students are trapped with overwhelming debt, and this legislation will help them get out of it. But this bill does nothing to address the broken higher education system that created the overwhelming debt in the first place. It doesn't address the rising costs at colleges and universities. And let's point out that, in the last 30 years, tuition and fees at private non-profit colleges have risen by 75 percent. At public 4-year institutions, they have increased by 102 percent.

Meanwhile, according to a non-partisan analysis, 23 percent of bachelor's degree programs and 43 percent of master's degree programs had a negative return on investment. What does that mean? It means you spend a lot of money to get your degree, but you don't actually increase your ability to earn more money because of that degree and, along the way, you get into student loan debt.

We need real solutions to fix this broken system, and Republicans provide these solutions. As chair of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, I am leading my committee's portion of the One Big Beautiful Bill, legislation that will make transformative changes to the higher education system.

First, it reforms student loan repayment plans that cost American taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars. This includes fixing our income-driven repayment program that is targeted to help struggling Americans.

Second, it increases the affordability of higher education by eliminating inflationary loan programs that evidence shows drive higher tuition prices and cost taxpayers billions of dollars.

Third, it restores accountability so that universities are not receiving Federal loan dollars for programs that leave students worse off than if they had never entered that program.

And, lastly, this legislation increases access to career or technical education through establishing Workforce Pell. A young person from Louisiana who wants to be a master welder doesn't need to attend a 4-year university, but they can now use their Pell grant to attend a technical school, giving them the skills for a successful career. That is a wise investment of Federal student loan dollars.

Unlike S. 1220, the legislation before us today, Senate Republicans are putting forth real solutions to address the root causes of the student loan crisis.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to get the One Big Beautiful Bill across the finish line so we can fix

the broken higher education system and ensure that every American can succeed.

Mr. President, the Democrats' legislation is unfair to the hundreds of millions of taxpaying Americans who will be forced to bear the burden of paying off someone else's student debt. It would make our higher education problems worse, not better. And for those reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I enjoy working with my colleague from Louisiana, and he has made several points worth noting.

He has noted that this strategy of enabling people to pay back their loan according to their income doesn't solve the large issue of why our colleges cost so much, and he has noted that it doesn't do anything about predatory college programs that charge a lot and deliver little.

Now, I was here when Tom Harkin led the effort to shut down the for-profit programs that often weren't even accredited but were signing up veterans like crazy and ripping them off, leaving them with massive debt. And we couldn't get any help from across the aisle to take that on.

So he is right; it won't solve everything. But the idea is that you pay according to your income, and as your income goes up, you pay back more. And the default rate is cut in half. So the Federal Government actually takes in more money than it would otherwise, and students believe that they do have an opportunity, despite the high cost of college—because that is just not going to be fixed overnight.

You know, in Germany, tuition is zero. Germany has said every child should have the opportunity to thrive. But here in America, we make it so the rich have that opportunity, and ordinary families in my blue-collar community are going: We don't think our children can afford to go to college.

That hurts all of us. It hurts every child whose dreams are crushed because of these high costs of college.

I am happy to work with my colleague from Louisiana on ideas on how we lower the cost of college. But we have got a lot of folks going to college right now. Let's help these students know that they can go through those doors as a freshman and, if they thrive, they are going to pay back their loans fast and, if they don't thrive so much in a higher income job or it is a public service job, they will pay it back more slowly. But they will never have to default.

I think it is a vision worth continuing to work on because our higher education system is not working as well as the systems in many other countries that are saying every child will have an opportunity.

I believe—like my father did, like my mother did—in America as a land of opportunity for every child, not just the children of the rich.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, every day, our Nation's ICE officers are putting their lives on the line to get criminal illegal aliens out of the communities, and I wanted to see firsthand what they were going through. So this past weekend, I joined a ride-along with ICE agents outside of Nashville.

Until you are actually on the ground, you do not appreciate the amount of work that goes into their operations. They are identifying the criminal illegal aliens. They are finding out where they are, and they are figuring out the safest way to surveil them and also to apprehend them.

And it is so much more than a full-time job. As I visited with the agents, what I found out is that nearly every one of them is working 75 and 80 hours a week, dealing with some of the worst criminals imaginable.

Now, when I joined the agents for the ride-along, they were targeting a criminal illegal alien who had been convicted of child sexual abuse. The agents could see a child on the individual's property, but they could not enter the home because they are not given a warrant. Instead, they have to wait until the criminal comes outside or is in a public space, and then they are able to apprehend him.

That is why it is so important that local law enforcement work with our ICE agents.

In Democrat cities with sanctuary policies, however, our Federal law enforcement is facing an uphill battle. Recently, amid violent anti-ICE riots in Los Angeles, a mob surrounded ICE agents who had taken an illegal alien into custody. Amid the commotion, a group of men jumped out of a van and grabbed the suspect, helping him flee from the agents. According to recent reports, LAPD refused to send out an alert to track down the vehicle. They didn't want to run afoul of LA's sanctuary city policies.

What we also know is these ICE agents nationwide have seen a 500-percent increase in attacks against them.

Now, all of this should not be happening in our Nation's cities, which is why Congress should do everything that we can to support the ICE agents and work to make America safe again.

My CLEAR Act would ensure that State and local law enforcement officials have the explicit authority to assist the Federal Government in our immigration enforcement efforts, codifying the 287(g) program that is absolutely so critical to local law enforcement.

I also introduced legislation that would make it illegal to dox Federal immigration officials who are working to protect our communities.

Last month, Nashville's Democratic mayor did exactly that, handing information about Federal law enforcement agents on a silver platter to criminal gangs. Meanwhile, House Democratic

Leader JEFFRIES said ICE agents should be unmasked “no matter what it takes, no matter how long it takes.”

This appalling effort from Democrats comes at a time when, as I said, these agents are facing a 500-percent increase in assaults—500 percent.

Just last week, a criminal illegal alien in Minnesota used his car to drag an ICE officer 50 yards while that criminal was trying to evade arrest.

President Trump and Republicans understand that law enforcement deserves our unwavering support. That is why we are going to do what it takes to help them.

OPERATION MIDNIGHT HAMMER

Mr. President, this weekend, the U.S. military did something absolutely incredible. With Operation Midnight Hammer, the United States of America wiped out Iran's nuclear program.

For years, the Islamic Republic has unleashed chaos across the Middle East with terrorism, murder, and violence. All the while, they worked to develop nuclear weapons while they were chanting “Death to Israel” and “Death to America.”

Now, under President Trump's decisive leadership, that threat is eliminated, thanks to the bravery, valor, and unmatched capability of the U.S. military. It is hard not to be in awe when you read the details of the operation.

Departing from Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri, our servicemembers flew seven B-2 Spirit bombers for 18 hours to Iran's nuclear sites, dropped more than 400,000 pounds in bunker buster bombs, and returned home with zero casualties. At the same time, a U.S. submarine under U.S. Central Command launched more than two dozen Tomahawk cruise missiles at the regime's nuclear infrastructure. Supporting the operation were more than 125 aircraft, including dozens of aerial refueling tankers.

Make no mistake, we have the only military on the planet that could get this job done, and it is because our brave servicemembers are the greatest fighting force in the history of the world.

Every single American should be grateful for the men and women who carried out Operation Midnight Hammer. Because of their efforts, a ceasefire has already been reached between Israel and a much weaker Iran. This is what peace through strength looks like, and only the U.S. military, under President Trump's leadership, could accomplish this feat.

I yield the floor.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

RECOGNIZING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY VEBLEN, SOUTH DAKOTA

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize Veblen, SD. The town of Veblen will be celebrating its quasiquicentennial July 18–20, 2025. Veblen will host quasiquicentennial events, which include a parade, vendor show, street dance, class reunions, fireworks, and much more.

Veblen is located in Marshall County, nestled in the beautiful rolling hills of the Coteau des Prairies in northeastern South Dakota. The Veblen area has long been known as a community surrounded by the natural beauty of the breathtaking Glacial Lakes Region. Home to more than 300 people and multiple businesses, Veblen is known for its rich historical heritage and robust rural spirit. Since its beginning 125 years ago, the community of Veblen continues to serve as a strong example of South Dakota values and traditions.

I offer my congratulations to the citizens of Veblen on its quasiquicentennial and wish them continued prosperity in the years to come.

STOP CSAM ACT OF 2025

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, child sexual abuse materials are a toxic plague on the internet. Congress should act as soon as possible to give law enforcement officials the resources they need to find and prosecute criminals responsible for exploiting children and spreading vile abuse materials online. In addition, Congress should act as soon as possible to provide robust resources that help prevent children from becoming victims in the first place.

However, instead of focusing on stopping online predators, S. 1829, the STOP CSAM Act, weakens the single strongest technology protecting children and families online: strong encryption. The bill explicitly allows courts to punish companies that offer strong encryption. It will make it easier to punish sites that use encryption to secure private conversations and personal devices. It will also encourage scanning of content on users' phones or computers, before information is sent over the internet, which has the same consequences as breaking encryption.

Weakening encryption is probably the best gift you could give to the predators and creeps who want to stalk and spy on children. Sexual predators will have a far easier time stealing and extorting photographs of children, tracking their phones, and spying on their private messages once encryption is breached. Doing so threatens the privacy and security of every single law-abiding American.

Last Congress, I made progress with the bill's sponsors to address some of these concerns. Indeed, I compromised on a version of this bill and had agreed to remove my hold to let that version

pass by unanimous consent. It is unfortunate that the sponsors have chosen to abandon those efforts and instead advance a dangerous bill that makes internet users unsafe. However, I remain open to revisiting those conversations.

For these reasons, I will object to any unanimous consent agreement to take up or pass the STOP CSAM Act of 2025.

TRIBUTE TO RICK BOZICH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as sports lovers, we all have our local columnists who are the go-to source for the ins and outs of our favorite sports teams. In my hometown of Louisville, KY, Rick Bozich, is one of my favorite go-to guys. For 50 years, the Hall of Fame journalist reported on local and national sports in Kentucky and Indiana, 47 of those years covering sports in Louisville. But on July 1, 2025, Rick will be retiring following a long and accomplished career in sports media. And for us sports fans, it is like losing our favorite player. He will be missed.

Rick began his career in Gary, IN, delivering the newspaper to households in his neighborhood. He attended Indiana University, earning a journalism degree in 1975. Following graduation, he worked for a few years at local papers in Indiana, before moving to the Louisville Courier-Journal and Louisville Times. He must have realized quickly that, for a career in sports journalism, few places offer such enthusiastic fans or such deep-seated rivalries as Louisville, KY.

After 34 years at the Courier-Journal, Rick decided to make the jump to television, joining WDRB-TV in 2012. At the TV station, he, alongside his friend and former Courier-Journal colleague Eric Crawford, helped expand the on-air sports department. Every time there was a major sports story, Rick was there, writing about the University of Louisville Cardinals, the University of Kentucky Wildcats, and of course, the greatest 2 minutes in sports: the Kentucky Derby. He has also covered many of the hottest sporting events across the country, including NCAA Final Fours, Super Bowls, World Series, NBA Finals, and the Summer Olympics.

During his long career, he earned honors and awards from national and State press associations. This includes Hall of Fame recognitions by the Kentucky Sports Hall of Fame, the U.S. Basketball Writers Association, and the Indiana Sportswriters and Sportscasters Association. He was also awarded the Red Smith Award for Kentucky Derby coverage and won an Emmy Award for his sports commentating at WDRB-TV. His work has appeared on ESPN, Sports Illustrated, and the New York Times, just to name a few.

I ask my colleagues to join me and all his viewers and readers in honoring Rick and congratulating him on his retirement. While he plans to keep a