

of this. In just a single provision of the bill that we have now passed, we repeal 86 outdated or unnecessary acquisition policies.

American innovators are developing the technologies that can dominate the battlefields of the 21st century. The FoRGEED proposal in this National Defense Authorization Act taps into that talent.

This bill was Member-driven, both in the committee and on the floor. Our committee approved 985 items that were led by individual Senators in this body.

Our September substitute amendment contained 49 amendments—20 from Republicans, 20 from Democrats, and 9 that were bipartisan. The second managers' package was included today, including another 47 amendments—again, bipartisan.

And today we took 14 rollcall votes, and because we are so united and joined together to make a strong voice for national defense, we took 9 voice votes. I don't know when we have done that, but I think it sends a strong message, and I hope it does. Altogether, 1,098 Member items.

This is what collaborative, bipartisan legislation looks like. And in highly charged partisan times, this ought to be refreshing news to the American people.

My friend JACK REED is a veteran of military service, and he is a veteran of this Congress and is a capable partner who works shoulder to shoulder with me on the Armed Services Committee. I want to thank him from the bottom of my heart for his cooperation and diligence in actually getting this bill brought to the floor.

The fact that we were able to finish about 9 o'clock tonight is a testament to that because earlier today, we really did not know around noon if we would be able to come to a consensus. So much negotiation and so much give-and-take has taken place so that we could get on the floor and make a strong statement and send a strong message.

It amplifies the voices of Senators in this body as we begin to conference with our House colleagues.

We are not where we need to be. This doesn't get us everywhere we need to be, but it moves us along the way toward reform and an increase in a realization that we live in the most dangerous world that we have seen in decades.

So I yield the floor with gratitude and thanks to my friend.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, first, I would like to commend Chairman WICKER whose leadership was absolutely essential to reaching this moment. He, too, is a veteran. He, too, understands the needs of our men and women in uniform, and he also recognizes and has contributed significantly with his floor staff, which has set a new standard for acquisitions.

We have to get it through the conference, but I am sure we will.

The hallmark of the Senate Armed Services Committee has long been bipartisanship, and I am glad we have continued this tradition for the 65th consecutive year.

I would also like to thank my colleagues on the Armed Services Committee. We were able to adopt, as the chairman indicated, hundreds of amendments during the committee markup, and I am glad that with bipartisan cooperation this evening, we adopted dozens more.

This is strong, forward-looking legislation that we can all be very proud of.

I am confident we will provide the Department of Defense and our military men and women with the resources they need to meet and overcome the national security threats that we face in a very, very challenging world.

I, too, would like to take this opportunity to recognize the phenomenal staff that made this bill possible. I want to specifically recognize the director of the Democratic staff Elizabeth King and the director of the Republican staff John Keast. They have led their staffs, and they have worked together with the utmost professionalism.

And I would also like to take the time to thank the staffers on the Democratic side, since the chairman has rightfully identified his staff members: Jody Bennett, Carolyn Chuhta, Jon Clark, Jenny Davis, Jonathan Epstein, Jorie Feldman, Kevin Gates, Creighton Greene, Gary Leeling, Maggie McNamara Cooper, Mike Noblet, Chad Johnson, John Quirk, Andy Scott, Cole Stevens, Meredith Werner, Isabelle Picciotti, Brittany Amador, Sofia Kamali, and Noah Sisk.

Also let me thank the floor staff and leadership staff. You have been a part of this process the last several weeks, and you have done a remarkable job. We thank you for that very, very much.

Mr. President, this is a good moment. Now on to the next moment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate 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.

#### H.J. RES. 106

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to overturn the Biden administration's restrictive Central Yukon land management scheme, which threatens Alaska's self-determination and resource development. I ask my colleagues to support

our resolution of disapproval, H.J. Res. 106, to protect Alaska's rights and future.

The implementation of the Biden administration's Record of Decision and Approved Central Yukon Resource Management Plan, RMP, prohibits the development of natural resources and essential infrastructure in a broad and sweeping manner—completely undermining multiple-use management while ignoring the needs and input of local residents. We need to ensure that our conservation policies consider and allow for adequate economic opportunities for the communities and people impacted by those policies.

Alaskans are some of the foremost conservationists in the world, with a long-standing record of balancing conservation with responsible resource and infrastructure development. On top of the jobs provided to Alaskan residents, responsible resource development funds various initiatives across the State, including education, infrastructure, and community services. It feeds our families, sustains our communities, and provides livelihoods for the thousands of Alaskans who work to responsibly develop the vast timber, mineral, material, and oil and gas resources that Alaska is blessed with.

In the heart of my State is the Central Yukon planning area, which comprises 56 million acres in central and northern Alaska, an area roughly equivalent to the entirety of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania combined. The Bureau of Land Management—BLM—manages nearly a quarter—13.3 million acres of that area. The other major landholders within the area include the State of Alaska with 25.4 million acres, approximately 45 percent of the planning area, and Doyon, Limited, one of the 12 land-owning Alaska Native regional corporations established under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act—ANCSA—with an ownership interest in 4.65 million acres. Approximately 3,000 miles of Doyon's land borders BLM land. Many of those millions of acres were selected by Doyon for their economic development potential, consistent with the intent of ANCSA. The northernmost part of the planning area covers the traditional lands of the Inupiat people in the Arctic Slope Region.

This vast area includes enormous critical mineral potential of national and strategic importance. As our geostrategic adversaries continue to place tighter controls on minerals essential for defense, advanced technology, and manufacturing, America needs these resources responsibly developed in places like Alaska. Additionally, the area includes incredible oil and gas resources that help to contribute to America's energy dominance. Further, this region contains abundant timberlands and substantial sand and gravel material resources that are essential for roads, airstrips, and other infrastructure. Local access to these materials allows rural villages

in this region to avoid costly imports that contribute to the high cost of living in these communities.

Importantly, the area also contains the Dalton Highway and the right-of-way for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System, Alaska's most essential piece of infrastructure and a nationally strategic asset for the United States. This system transports crude oil 800 miles from the North Slope oil fields to marine terminals in Valdez and provides the vital access necessary to develop the resources in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, the ANWR Coastal Plain, and construct the Alaska LNG pipeline.

In 1971, the Department of the Interior issued Public Land Order—PLO—5150 withdrawing from selection a 5.3 million acre stretch of Federal land to reserve it as a utility and transportation corridor to facilitate monetizing the oil reserves on the North Slope. These lands covered the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System right-of-way and the North Slope Haul Road, which was later named the Dalton Highway. The significance of these lands to Alaska cannot be understated; they represent the State of Alaska's highest priority land selections, and the State has top-filed for these lands pursuant to Section 906(e) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, ANILCA.

After more than 60 years following the passage of the Alaska Statehood Act by Congress in 1958, Alaska has yet to receive its full land entitlement. To this day, over 60 percent of the land in Alaska is managed by the Federal Government. Key to the State's ability to finalize its land selections is the lifting of PLO 5150, which will enable the State to satisfy a large portion of its outstanding statehood land entitlement and unencumber other lands that have been selected to fulfill the entitlements of Alaska Native Corporations, the University of Alaska, and Alaska Native Vietnam Veteran land allotments.

In 2006, as directed by the Alaska Land Transfer Acceleration Act, sponsored by my colleague Senator MURKOWSKI, BLM released a report finding that withdrawals on 152.18 million out of 158.96 million acres—95 percent—“have outlived their original purpose” and “could be lifted consistent with the protection of the public's interest.” BLM recommended that PLOs be lifted on 50.1 million acres of land it manages in Alaska. In 2012, then Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar wrote Alaska Governor Sean Parnell that “BLM is committed to working with the State to consider further modifications of PLO 5150” and indicated that the BLM Alaska State Office would initiate the planning process for the Central Yukon planning area to evaluate the public lands within the utility corridor located north of the Yukon River and said, “I consider fulfillment of the State of Alaska's land entitlement a top priority.”

Beginning in 2013, BLM began the formal public scoping process for the resource management plan, kicking off a multi-year-long planning process with dozens of public meetings and thousands of hours of hard work by BLM as part of the process of drafting an Environmental Impact Statement—EIS—to satisfy the National Environmental Policy Act. In December 2020, BLM released its Draft Resource Management Plan/EIS and identified Alternative C2 as the preferred alternative, blending resource protection and resource development, closing some 1 million acres to mineral material sales, but leaving 13.1 million acres open to locatable mineral entry. Importantly, Alternative C2 recommended full revocation of PLO 5150, enabling the State of Alaska's top-filed lands to become valid selections. It also recommended revocation of approximately 5.2 million acres of ANCSA 17(d)(1) withdraws opening land for selection by Alaska Native Vietnam-Era Veterans who qualify for a land allotment under the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act, P.L. 116-9.

While not perfect, Alternative C2 served as an important discussion point and something the largest land stakeholders in the area—the State of Alaska and Doyon—could work with toward a balanced final Record of Decision. However, following the election of President Biden, he announced plans to review the Central Yukon RMP EIS, one of 70 Executive actions the Biden administration took targeting Alaska. In April 2024, BLM issued its Proposed RMP/Final EIS, identifying a new Alternative E that was not previously made available for public review and comment and contained sweeping restrictions on land use. The Proposed RMP/Final EIS had protests filed from Doyon Limited, the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, the Alaska Miners Association, and the State of Alaska—all denied, ignoring Alaska Native voices and the people who live in and responsibly develop Alaska every day. This new Alternative E became the Central Yukon Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan in November 2024, which the passage of this joint resolution of disapproval would invalidate.

While the approved Central Yukon RMP applies only to the BLM-managed areas within the planning area, it affected access for other landholders in the region, principally Doyon and the State of Alaska. The Central Yukon RMP designated 21 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern spanning 3.6 million acres and reclassified Visual Resource Management areas in ways that hinder infrastructure development.

Section 1326 of ANILCA provides clear and unambiguous restrictions on executive branch actions with respect to future withdrawals and further studies or reviews without congressional approval. Under ANILCA's “no more

clause,” BLM may not withdraw more than 5,000 acres, in the aggregate, without congressional authorization. Designation of ACECs that remove lands from operation of the public land laws is a de facto withdrawal and an insult to Congress's express intent in ANILCA, locking up critical resources that our Nation needs to counter our dependency on hostile foreign powers.

Doyon, the largest Alaska Native Corporation stakeholder in the Central Yukon Planning Area, notes these restrictive land designations complicate access to their lands and prevent it from realizing the economic and other benefits that Congress intended it would enjoy as a result of ANCSA's settlement of Alaska Native land claims. Doyon's letter of support for the disapproval resolution called the Central Yukon RMP “misguided and harmful” and cites the profound implications on the ability to place communication, electric transmission, and other infrastructure these land restrictions create, adding further obstacles to the extraordinary challenges faced by rural communities in Alaska, many of which are disconnected from the road system.

Furthermore, the approved Central Yukon RMP did not recommend revoking PLO 5150—which has long outlived its original purpose—or ANCSA 17(d)(1) withdrawals, with limited exceptions, frustrating the State's ability to fulfill its statehood land entitlement and perpetuating unnecessary encumbrances on public lands in contradiction to BLM's own findings in the Alaska Land Transfer Acceleration Act Report to Congress.

Fortunately, elections have consequences, and on his first day in office of his second term, President Trump signed Executive Order 14153, “Unleashing Alaska's Extraordinary Resource Potential,” which called for the rescission of the 2024 Record of Decision and a reimplementa-tion of the draft RMP and EIS issued in December 2020. The Executive order further directed the Secretary of the Interior to evaluate the potential rescission of PLO 5150, and Secretary Burgum has admirably taken concrete steps toward delivering on that commitment. This disapproval resolution would effectuate the President's directive in Executive Order 14153, immediately rescinding the Record of Decision and would advance the ongoing work to revoke PLO 5150 and review outdated ANCSA 17(d)(1) withdrawals predicated on the underlying EIS, which would not be invalidated by H.J. Res. 106.

The House has already passed this joint resolution, recognizing the impact that this highly restrictive plan would have on our national security, the massive Federal overreach stifling economic development opportunities, and the disregard for Alaska Native voices. I spoke of Doyon, Limited's letter of support earlier, but this resolution is also supported by the North Slope Regional Trilateral which is made up of the elected leaders of the

North Slope Borough, the Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope, which is the regional Tribe, and the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, the Alaska Native Regional Corporation for the Inupiat people living on the North Slope of Alaska. It is supported by the Alaska Miners Association, Americans for Prosperity, the American Energy Alliance, the National Federation of Independent Businesses, the American Exploration and Mining Association, Citizens for Responsible Energy Solutions, the Resource Development Council for Alaska, as well as the Trump administration.

I urge my colleagues to reject unlawful regulatory overreach, reinforce American mineral and energy security, and uphold Federal law and Alaska Native land rights by supporting the Alaska delegation and voting for this joint resolution of disapproval and rescinding this Record of Decision.

#### VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, had Kaine amendment No. 3337 to Calendar No. 115, S. 2296, FY2026 National Defense Authorization Act, NDAA, been a recorded rollcall vote, I would have voted no.

#### VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, had Kaine amendment No. 3337 to Calendar No. 115, S. 2296, FY2026 National Defense Authorization Act, NDAA, been a recorded rollcall vote, I would have voted no.

#### VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, had Kaine amendment No. 3337 to Calendar No. 115, S. 2296, FY2026 National Defense Authorization Act, NDAA, been a recorded rollcall vote, I would have voted no.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### REMEMBERING SUE HECHT

• Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, on behalf of myself and Senator ALSOBROOKS, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Sue Hecht—a distinguished public servant, trailblazer, and protector from Frederick, MD, who passed away on September 23, 2025.

Born in Takoma Park on December 7, 1947, Sue devoted her life to public service and community betterment. She was a proud graduate of Hood College and later earned her M.B.A. from Frostburg State University. Before entering elected office, she worked as a freelance writer, a program specialist with the Frederick Job Training Agency, and, most notably, as the executive director of Heartly House, Inc., a non-profit dedicated to supporting victims of domestic violence. These early roles

shaped her lifelong commitment to giving voice to the vulnerable and building systems of care.

Sue was first elected to the Maryland House of Delegates in 1994. During her time in the statehouse, she served on numerous committees, including appropriations. In her second and third terms, she was appointed as deputy majority whip—a testament to her skill and initiative. She fought fiercely on behalf of her constituents, but always with grace and humility. Sue was well known in Annapolis and back home in Frederick for her leadership, compassion, and steadfast support of her colleagues and her community.

Sue also served as a leader among women legislators, rising to become president of the Women Legislators of Maryland. She was deeply committed to ensuring that women's voices were represented in every policy discussion and that issues affecting families, from childcare to healthcare to workplace fairness, received the attention they deserved.

Throughout her life, Sue served in numerous positions with a variety of organizations, including the Frederick County Commission for Women, the Frederick County Affordable Housing Commission, the Maryland Family Violence Council, the Frederick County Consortium of Human Service Providers, and the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence. Her contributions were widely recognized, earning her honors such as the Dorothy Beatty Memorial Award from the Women's Law Center of Maryland, recognition as one of Maryland's Top 100 Women, and the Consumer Legislator of the Year Award from the Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition.

Above all, Sue will be remembered as a mother, a wife, a friend, and an inspiration. She is survived by children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, brothers, and numerous nieces and nephews. Her daughter Shannon Aleshire followed in her footsteps of public service, serving as the CEO of the Mental Health Association of Frederick County.

Maryland has lost a fierce advocate for the most vulnerable among us. Sue was an impactful legislator, a courageous leader, and a neighbor whose legacy will endure in Frederick, across Maryland, and beyond. We ask our colleagues to join us in extending condolences to Sue's family and in honoring the indelible impact she made in Frederick County and across Maryland.●

##### REMEMBERING PETER SIMONE

• Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life of my friend Peter Simone, a longtime North Providence Councilman. One of the best things about politics is the people you get to meet, and one of the best people I got to meet was my friend Peter Simone. Peter passed away this week and is survived by his dear wife Irene, his two daughters Helene and Annmarie, his beloved grandson Matthew, and many wonderful friends.

Peter was born in Providence and was a proud graduate of LaSalle Academy, where he met Irene at a LaSalle dance. He moved to North Providence and took a job at the Monet Jewelry factory, where he worked as an industrial engineer until his retirement. In 1976, Peter threw his hat into the ring in politics and won a seat on the North Providence Democratic Town Committee, before running successfully for the North Providence Town Council in 1982. He served as a councilman from District 1 for 22 years, distinguishing himself as a tireless advocate for his community. In a town known for lively rough-and-tumble politics, Peter was a true gentleman who served in public office for all the right reasons.

Peter stepped back from the council in 2004 to spend more time with his beloved family before taking on a new role overseeing the student page program for the Rhode Island Senate, where he mentored the next generation of Rhode Island's leaders, including his grandson Matthew.

Peter was one of the very first people who supported my political career, taking me in when I was just finding my way. You always remember the people willing to take a risk and lend you their credibility, early on, when the outcome is not a sure bet, and I will always remember him. Peter Simone was a sweet and fine man, a political veteran of the old school, and a foxhole friend, and I will miss him dearly.●

#### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-2002. A communication from the Chairman of the Surface Transportation Board, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fees for Services Performed in Connection with Licensing and Related Services—2025 Update" (Docket No. EP 542) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2025; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2003. A communication from the Supervisory Program Analyst, Media Bureau, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations (Adamsville, Texas and Richland Springs, Texas)" ((DA 25-867) (MB Docket No. 25-156)) received during the adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2025; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2004. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Section