

matters, not political correctness. The NDAA refocuses our military on lethality and readiness, and it rolls back these divisive DEI policies, which the Democrats have given us the last 4 years. Those liberal Democrat policies took time, money, and attention away from the training and preparation and combat effectiveness.

The bill on the Senate floor today restores policies that are merit-based and mission-focused.

Additionally, the NDAA builds on the recruitment surge we have been experiencing in this country. We have seen it during the past year, during the Trump administration. Recruitment numbers went up. They started to go up the day President Trump was elected back to office.

It gives our troops a well-deserved pay raise and increases recruiting bonuses. Better pay improves recruiting and retention and the readiness of our troops.

A stronger military means a stronger America. This bill prioritizes defending our homeland, and it does that because threats at home and abroad are continuing to increase, and they are increasingly connected.

We saw that in the terrorist attack in Australia. We also see at home that a terrorist gunman from Afghanistan attacked our National Guardsmen right here in Washington, DC.

This bill strengthens the tools needed to keep our border secure. At the same time, it invests in the next generation of missile defense, and that includes the Golden Dome initiative. It expands counterdrone authorities to protect military bases, critical infrastructure, and public spaces.

In Wyoming, protecting the homeland is what we do every day. Cheyenne, WY, is home to the F.E. Warren Air Force Base. F.E. Warren is home to Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missiles. These are critical to our Nation's nuclear deterrence. The NDAA modernizes communications and electrical infrastructure at F.E. Warren for this critical program. Furthermore, it invests \$4.3 billion in the Sentinel missile program. These are the missiles that will replace the Minuteman III missiles. Wyoming will be the first to receive these new missiles.

As China advances hypersonic missiles, modernizing our nuclear deterrent is essential to keeping America safe. The bill we are voting on today modernizes our military across the board. It is going to make our warfighters more lethal and more intimidating.

Investments in shipbuilding and new fighter aircraft will strengthen American dominance in the air, as well as the sea.

At the same time, cutting unnecessary spending will make the Pentagon more efficient, more effective, and more accountable.

The National Defense Authorization Act restores America's "Arsenal of Democracy." For far too long, bureau-

cratic hurdles slowed production. They stifled innovation. And this bill removes those barriers and accelerates the delivery of new technology.

During World War II, American industrial strength was decisive to victory. Industrial strength is the foundation of safety and security and of our liberty. When we innovate, we deter aggression. Weakness invites conflict. That is what happens. Weakness invites conflict. My friend and colleague Senator KENNEDY of Louisiana always says, "Weakness invites the wolves." Strength deters the enemy. It deters and prevents wars.

Under this bill, we are sending a clear message—a message that we will defend our Nation, that we will support our troops, that they will outbuild and outinnovate our adversaries and never apologize for American strength.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AMENDING THE NATIVE AMERICAN TOURISM AND IMPROVING VISITOR EXPERIENCE ACT TO AUTHORIZE GRANTS TO INDIAN TRIBES, TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, S. 612 is a bipartisan bill that amends the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience Act, which authorizes grants to Indian Tribes, Tribal organizations and Native Hawaiian organizations to support recreational travel and tourism activities.

This bill just makes it easier and less bureaucratic for both the administration and the recipients of this grant program. I am glad it is passing today as the 15th bill from the Indian Affairs Committee to pass out of the Senate this year.

I am proud of the work we have done on the committee, on a bipartisan basis, with Chair MURKOWSKI and others. There is a lot more work to do to support Native communities across the country in the new year.

Mr. President, notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 72, S. 612.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 612) to amend the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience Act to authorize grants to Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and Native Hawaiian organizations, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which

had been reported from the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Mr. SCHATZ. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 612) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 612

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. NATIVE AMERICAN TOURISM GRANT PROGRAMS.

The Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience Act (25 U.S.C. 4351 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by redesignating section 6 (25 U.S.C. 4355) as section 7; and

(2) by inserting after section 5 (25 U.S.C. 4354) the following:

"SEC. 6. NATIVE AMERICAN TOURISM GRANT PROGRAMS.

"(a) BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS PROGRAM.—The Director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs may make grants to and enter into agreements with Indian tribes and tribal organizations to carry out the purposes of this Act, as described in section 2.

"(b) OFFICE OF NATIVE HAWAIIAN RELATIONS.—The Director of the Office of Native Hawaiian Relations may make grants to and enter into agreements with Native Hawaiian organizations to carry out the purposes of this Act, as described in section 2.

"(c) OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.—The heads of other Federal agencies, including the Secretaries of Commerce, Transportation, Agriculture, Health and Human Services, and Labor, may make grants under this authority to and enter into agreements with Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and Native Hawaiian organizations to carry out the purposes of this Act, as described in section 2.

"(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$35,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2025 through 2029."

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, this summer marks an important milestone in the great American experiment. On July 4, 2026, our country will celebrate the 250th anniversary of our founding—a nation founded on the universal principle that all people have inherent God-given rights. To protect those rights, our forefathers established a democratic republic.

Throughout the year, communities from sea to shining sea will hold events celebrating our rights and freedoms.

This is also a fitting time to reflect on our Nation's history. The story of America is filled with acts of courage and righteous struggles. America has

not always lived up to its high ideals; however, the principles laid out in its founding document have proved enduring.

The Declaration of Independence states:

All men are created equal . . . endowed with certain unalienable Rights . . . life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

This has been successfully wielded to secure freedom for those overlooked at our Nation's founding.

One of those overlooked things that we are not very proud of—not proud of at all—is slavery. In a speech delivered in 1852, the great abolitionist Frederick Douglass quoted these words to land a damning blow against slavery. His Fourth of July speech made it patently clear that the practice of slavery was an affront to the universal principles enshrined in the Declaration of Independence.

The Declaration of Independence was also influential to the women's suffrage movement. It was used as a model for the movement's Declaration of Sentiments, which was signed at the first women's rights convention, organized by women in 1848.

The history of the suffrage movement has a special place in my heart, so I am going to show you a front-page story of the Des Moines Register of August 30, 1920. You can see the same picture in the Waterloo Courier.

This woman is Mrs. Louis Grassley—Ruth Grassley, my mother. August 30 is 1 or 2 days after the Secretary of State of the U.S. Government informed the secretary of state of Iowa that women could vote. And there was an election in Black Hawk and Grundy Counties that my mother participated in 1 day after the Secretary of State said that women could vote. I think this goes back a couple of weeks before that because Tennessee, by a 1-vote margin, was the 36th State out of the 48 States at that particular time—the last State—to ratify the 19th Amendment. Then, I presume, it took a couple of weeks to get it out to the States that they could vote. So I presume that on August 29 or maybe even as late as August 30, through a telephone call to this meeting that women could vote, my mother was voting.

My mother was Ruth Corwin Grassley. She was, as I just told you, one of the very first women—for sure in Iowa but maybe in the entire United States—to cast a vote after the ratification of the 19th Amendment. As I just showed you in the Des Moines Register and also the exact same picture in the Waterloo Courier—it verifies what I just told you.

The Waterloo Times Tribune reported this quote:

Black Hawk and Grundy County women gained fame Friday by being the first in the state and probably the first in the nation to take advantage of the privilege of equal suffrage.

Growing up, I was unaware that my mother took part in this history. In fact, this picture came to my attention

probably 20 years after my mother's death. She never bragged about anything, so it is not surprising that we did not hear about this part of her life in history.

She took great pride in being a dedicated schoolteacher. She instilled in her students and in her own children lifelong lessons of civic responsibility. I imagine she saw herself as simply exercising her freedom to vote to make sure her voice was counted.

To honor my mother and all suffragettes, I proudly cosponsored the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commemorative Coin Act. It was enacted at the end of 2019. The bill authorized the U.S. Mint to issue special-edition silver-dollar coins commemorating the adoption of the 19th Amendment in 1920. This program resulted in the sale of over 56,000 coins, with a portion of the proceeds being directed toward the Smithsonian Institute's American Women's History Initiative.

The U.S. Mint is now set to commemorate like coins for the 250th anniversary of our Declaration of Independence. This includes five quarter designs emblematic of this historic anniversary and commemorative dollar coins. My understanding is the original five quarter designs will depict historic American events, such as women's suffrage and abolition.

I am obviously here because I am very much interested in the fact that it doesn't look like they are going to have a women's suffrage coin. The current Treasury Department abandoned the designs that were first suggested, and the women's suffrage coin was one of those. In my view, this is a very big mistake. The forthcoming anniversary is a perfect time to honor historical events that have made America what it is today. The historic victory won by suffragettes after more than 140 years of fighting for the right to vote is as worthy as any.

While the Treasury has since finalized five different quarter designs, it has yet to announce the final designs for other commemorative coins. To correct the mistake that was recently made, Treasury officials should consider honoring the suffrage movement and other worthy events as part of the 250th anniversary commemorative dollar coin program.

You can see that I am kind of shocked that the executive branch of government would change what was studied for a while and suggested. It didn't meet the ideology of this administration. I don't think that what they want to substitute is not worthy of consideration, but I think we have to remember that in the preamble of the Constitution, it didn't say that we were going to create a perfect Union; it was that we were going to work toward a more perfect Union. And when we forget the work of women for 140 years who tried to get the right to vote and one of them—the suffragettes—is from the county next to the county I spent 92 years in, living in Iowa, we take

great pride in what it took to get the 19th Amendment adopted.

So I hope I can get some reconsideration on the part of the administration about honoring the suffragettes with a coin at this particular time.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

PREVENTING CHILD TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2025

Mr. OSSOFF. Mr. President, child trafficking in Georgia and nationwide is a crisis and one of the most heinous crimes imaginable. In my State, the Georgia Department of Public Health this year reported that more than 370 girls are trafficked in Georgia every month—370 girls every month.

It is every parent's worst nightmare. I have got two young daughters at home, and I know that there is no more fundamental question for any human being than, Is my child safe?

That is why here in the Senate, despite whatever differences and divisions we might have, we have to work together to protect children from trafficking. That is why Senator GRASSLEY and I, together, have authored the Preventing Child Trafficking Act to strengthen prevention, investigation, and prosecution of child trafficking crimes and to ensure that prosecutors and law enforcement officials work together with those who provide supportive services to victims and survivors because too often the children who have endured this crime and this trauma fall through the cracks and are targeted and victimized again.

Now, the Government Accountability Office is one of the top Federal watchdogs, and its investigation found that this failure of prosecuting and enforcement authorities to work with those who provide services to victims leaves American children at risk in Georgia and across the country.

We have also found, through congressional investigations, that something that sounds simple—law enforcement working with those who serve victims—is essential to protecting children.

That is why Senator GRASSLEY and I have written this bill to solve this problem to protect children in Georgia, in Iowa, and across the country.

So I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation because there is nothing more important than protecting children.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am happy to join Senator OSSOFF in support of our bill, the Prevent Child Trafficking Act. This is an important bill with an important objective: fostering communication between the Department of Justice and Health and Human Services with the result, we hope, of preventing children from falling prey to the evils of human trafficking.