

now. We already know from the reports of our colleagues who have seen the video what it shows—first, a strike on a boat; and then, a short while later, a second strike on the disabled wreckage of the boat and two survivors, killing them.

I should make clear: None of these strikes is lawful because these targets are not combatants. There is no imminent threat of invasion, and there is no legal authorization in the United States or international law for the use of military force for drug interdiction alone.

We have condemned campaigns of extrajudicial killings in other countries that have done so to allegedly combat the drug trade—like the Philippines under Duterte—and we must not engage in that conduct here.

But the second strike on September 2 compounds the illegality. It flies directly in the face of laws and values to underpin the U.S. military.

So I ask my colleagues to support this bill. Allow this legislation to pass and ensure that we are not hiding information from the American people. After all, the President of the United States said he was fine with releasing the footage. “Whatever they have,” he said, “we’d certainly release. No problem.”

It is time we hold the President to his promise to be transparent with the American people. Our servicemembers and their families deserve nothing less.

Right now, we have a massive military force in the region. We have killed almost 100 people. We are beginning a blockade of a country with which we are not at war and with which the American people do not want us to go to war—not over regime change, as despicable as the Maduro regime is. The American people do not want to go to war over regime change, which is apparently the real objective here.

We should pass a War Powers Resolution to make clear that Congress does not support a military campaign that may draw us into another endless war or destabilize the region. And we can start by releasing the video of one deadly strike already undertaken, but the evidence of which has been withheld from the American people.

I urge passage of this bill.

As if in legislative session and notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of the bill at the desk to require the release of video strikes conducted on September 2, 2025, against designated terrorist organizations in the area of responsibility of the U.S. Southern Command; that the bill be considered read three times and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. MULLIN. Mr. President, I reserve the right to object.

The junior Senator from California knows good and well what “classifica-

tions” mean because he had 15 years on the House Intelligence Committee until his clearance was pulled in 2023. He understands classifications. He understands when certain things can be exposed and certain things cannot because of the sensitivity of them.

He also understands that committees of jurisdiction are privileged with the correct clearance to be able to watch this video because the junior Senator from California stated that himself. It has been shown to not a partisan but a bipartisan group of individuals who do have the accurate oversight and clearances to watch it.

Now, what is this really about? Politics? Maybe.

During the junior Senator’s time on the House Intelligence Committee, then-President Obama had 500 strikes on terrorist organizations. Let’s keep in mind that we are striking terrorist organizations, and no one is denying that. There are 24 cartels that are being deemed terrorist organizations that are poisoning our streets, that are killing our families, that are killing our friends, that are affecting all of our homes and all of our streets in all of our States all across the country—in fact, to the tune that there have been more people killed in 2024 by drug overdoses—the sum of 10,000 more individuals—than we lost in U.S. personnel during the entire Vietnam war. If that is not an attack on us, I don’t know. If that is not a terrorist organization that is truly poisoning our streets, then I don’t know.

During the time that the junior Senator from California sat on Intel, not one time did he ever ask for the release of the same videos from the Obama administration that killed 3,700 individuals, including U.S. citizens.

Now, if you think there would be transparency, that would need to be released. We would want to see the videos at least on the U.S. citizens who were killed in this manner, not these narcoboats that are poisoning our streets. But that really isn’t what this is about, and the junior Senator from California knows that. This is all about politics. That is what this is about.

Why are we protecting the ones who are poisoning our streets? Shouldn’t we be trying to protect the ones who are on our streets?

I don’t think it is crazy to think that we would want to be proactive about going after narcoboats. I, for sure, want to. I have zero issue with this. I have been able to be briefed. I know the junior Senator was recently briefed; he is just upset that he may not have the clearances to watch the videos anymore.

But there is sensitive material, and it was clearly explained why it can’t be released.

Of all the people in this Chamber, the junior Senator from California knows that when it is in certain classifications, there is a reason for that.

With that, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from California.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. President, first, as my colleague served on the Intelligence Committee when I chaired the committee, he should well know that Members of Congress actually don’t hold clearances that can be revoked; we either serve on certain committees or we don’t.

But more to the point, in listening to my colleague address this motion to release the video to the American people, I have heard very little of the basis for an objection to releasing this video except some nebulous claim that somehow this footage must be classified.

I would pose this question to my colleagues: Do you recognize that this video has already been partly displayed to the American people? The administration was all too proud to show the first part of this same video, the first attack on this ship, to the American people. There was no objection, obviously, to classification or to source of method. They showed that to the whole world. They just didn’t show all of us the rest of that video; that is, they only showed the footage of the first strike. What they withheld was the footage of the killing of the survivors of the strike.

So, to make the claim here without basis that, well, somehow the continuation of that footage is confidential but that the beginning of that footage showing the first attack can be released without injury to sources or methods—it just doesn’t pass the smell test.

This is going to come out. It is just a question of how long we have to fight to make this available to the American people.

But if the administration is proud of this, if the administration is proud of what it is doing in the name of the American people, it should be proud to show this video to the American people. And we should hold the President, who said: Whatever they have, we would certainly release; no problem—we should hold the President to that commitment.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

ROTORCRAFT OPERATIONS TRANSPARENCY AND OVERSIGHT REFORM ACT

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, in January of this year, tragedy struck just a few miles from here when an Army Black Hawk helicopter collided with American Airlines Flight 5342 at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport. Sixty-seven souls were tragically lost in an instant.

After the crash, it quickly became evident that there were commonsense changes that would immediately enhance aviation safety.

The Army helicopter, flying along the Potomac River, had deliberately chosen not to broadcast its location to other aircraft or to air traffic control

using the common aviation technology called automatic dependent surveillance broadcast, or ADS-B. Had the Black Hawk been using ADS-B, like every other aircraft is required to do, tragedy could well have been averted.

We have since learned from the National Transportation Safety Board that the military was routinely flying by its own set of rules, particularly around Reagan National, which meant that there had been numerous near misses before this deadly crash. In fact, just last Friday, an Air Force tanker was flying without using ADS-B and nearly collided into a JetBlue plane headed to New York despite the justifiable public outrage over what happened at DCA. Clearly, the Pentagon's behavior needed to change.

In July, I, alongside eight of my Republican colleagues, introduced the Rotorcraft Operations Transparency and Oversight Reform—or ROTOR—Act. After several weeks negotiating a bipartisan agreement with the ranking member of the Senate Commerce Committee, MARIA CANTWELL, the committee passed the ROTOR Act unanimously.

Here is what the ROTOR Act does:

No. 1, it tightens the rules for military aircraft so air traffic control and other pilots have a better idea of nearby planes and helicopters.

No. 2, it requires all aircraft, civilian and military, to equip and receive ADS-B signals.

No. 3, it directs the FAA to comprehensively evaluate the safety of airspaces around airports across the country so that no other airspace has the same risk of collisions that DCA did.

No. 4, it improves aviation safety information sharing between the FAA and the military. No longer will there be silos of safety data.

These improvements will save lives.

Earlier this week, the families of the DCA crash victims joined Senator CANTWELL and me at a press conference to highlight how the NDAA had a provision moving backwards on safety and to call for the passage of the ROTOR Act.

Two of those family members, Amy Hunter and Laura Augendre, are in the Gallery today. I am happy that they are here to witness the Senate passing the ROTOR Act, along with the language removing the offending NDAA provision. Senator CANTWELL, Senator MORAN, and I have made significant progress with our Senate colleagues, and we have reached an agreement that will allow the Senate to pass this bill unanimously today.

I am also pleased to report that the ROTOR Act now has the explicit backing of the White House on this revised product. The White House is committed to helping us work with our House colleagues to see that the ROTOR Act passes in that Chamber. We still have a few small outstanding issues, but I am optimistic that we are going to get this done and signed into law as soon as next month.

Before turning it over to my colleagues, I want to note two things.

One, I want to say thank you to Senator CANTWELL for her partnership. She and I have worked hand in hand on this. I am grateful for the trust we have with each other and for the work ethic displayed by Senator CANTWELL and by her staff, who have worked very hard on this matter.

I also want to say that this bill will be a fitting way to honor the lives of those lost nearly 1 year ago over the Potomac River.

The goal of the victims' families is to ensure that no one else endures a similar, avoidable, completely unnecessary tragedy.

With that, I yield to Ranking Member CANTWELL.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise to support the gentleman's future request here and to say that the bipartisan ROTOR Act, the Rotorcraft Operations Transparency and Oversight Reform bill represents a major step forward for aviation safety.

Not even 1 year ago, 67 people lost their lives when a Black Hawk helicopter collided with American Airlines Flight 5342 over the Potomac, and it was one of the deadliest aviation disasters in history. I do thank the families who are represented in the gallery today for their steadfast support. This is an important step to honor the memory of their loved ones.

I want to thank Senator CRUZ for his bipartisanship in reaching this agreement. He and I worked together on legislation we had originally introduced called the Safe Operations of Shared Airspace Act and, working with him, achieved a date certain for when these requirements had to be met. We came together to craft that bill because safety is not a partisan issue, and this bill reflects it. Most of all, I want to thank the families for their steadfast pursuit of the right answers. Even in unimaginable grief, they refused to let their loved ones be forgotten.

When the NDAA language became public that rolled back postcrash safety measures that the FAA, NTSB, and the military had agreed to, the families spoke up. They stood at a press conference with Senator CRUZ and me. They made phone calls. They demanded better, and today, we are closer to delivering on that and what they have asked for.

The ROTOR Act ends the exemption for planes to be in the airspace without a broadcast signal—that includes the military, so no more flying in the dark. And what is most important, it strikes the deadly language that is in the NDAA bill that just passed here that had widened that loophole. The Senate passed the NDAA with that provision in it, but this bill repeals it, and we hope that our House colleagues will take it up very expeditiously, and I thank the chairman for working with the White House and the House to try to get that commitment from them.

But just as we have said, we have no idea how this language got in the bill

in the first place. I won't be surprised if somebody tries to stop us again. But we will be ready, along with the families, along with our colleague Senator MORAN, to fight for this.

This bill requires broadcast technology in aircraft operating in busy airspace. It gives pilots situational awareness and real-time alerts. And NTSB Chairwoman Homendy and her predecessors have been recommending this for over 15 years. So we want to thank her for her leadership.

It also mandates comprehensive safety reviews for all airports across the United States, military and civilian aircraft where they share the same skies. So not just here, but places like San Diego, Tampa, and Norfolk, and it requires the FAA to establish an office dedicated to FAA-DOD coordination. That is really important. It requires a memorandum of understanding with the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard to share safety data, and it directs the Army inspector general to audit pilot training, maintenance protocols and the compliance.

This bill represents real progress. I want to thank the chairman, Chairman CRUZ, for working with all of us on the committee to get this legislation where it is today, passing the U.S. Senate with a firm commitment for aviation safety.

We will work with our House colleagues to continue to strengthen this. We will work with our House colleagues in the future. But passing this bill today may not be the final step, but it is a huge step forward in getting this legislation to the President's desk.

I yield the floor.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I now yield to Senator MORAN, who has been a critical leader in fighting to pass the ROTOR Act and to ensure we have accountability and that we do not repeat the tragic mistakes that led to that horrific accident.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, Senator CRUZ, the Senator from Texas, and Senator CANTWELL, the Senator from Washington State, thank you very much for the opportunity to join with you today and throughout a long process since January 29, earlier this year.

That flight—Flight 5342—originated in Wichita, KS, and, as we know, on January 29, it collided with an Army Black Hawk helicopter, and it changed the way we look at air safety every moment since then.

I appreciate the leadership of my two colleagues on the full committee, as well as Senator DUCKWORTH, my colleague on the Subcommittee on Aviation, to make certain that we take all the steps necessary and to make certain for the families who remind us today, and almost every day since January 29, about the importance of making the skies of the United States safe for those who fly today and in the future.

There are numerous—numerous—circumstances that led to this horrific incident, and NTSB's critical investigation into this collision is continuing. While NTSB's final recommendations have not yet been released, the Chair of the NTSB, Jennifer Homendy, took the unprecedented step of publicly stating that the National Defense Authorization Act does not adequately address the safety concerns surrounding the mixed airspace at DCA.

And while the NDAA is critical to bolstering our defense capabilities, I have major concerns with the portion of the bill that is being fixed by the efforts today, here on the Senate floor, with this unanimous consent request.

After numerous conversations with my colleagues Senator CRUZ and Senator CANTWELL, we secured an agreement from the Senate leadership—and I thank that Senate leadership, Senator THUNE—for an amended version of the ROTOR Act that would be quickly brought to the Senate floor for consideration to reinstate and advance critical standards of safety for commercial and military aviation.

We are doing that right now.

The ROTOR Act closes the loopholes that have been described by my colleagues and strengthens ADS-B requirements for commercial and military aircraft, among many other things.

It requires safety reviews of DCA, and it requires better coordination between the FAA and DOD. I commend the FAA Administrator for his commitment, and particularly Secretary Duffy, for their combined commitment to air safety.

In fact, when we conclude this effort here on the Senate floor, our committee is in session. Our subcommittee is in session with Administrator Bedford, the FAA Administrator, to review what other steps are being taken across the country for safe airspace at every airport.

We are bringing technology to bear that has only been talked about in the past and is now being accomplished. Our aviation system is fragile, and over the last year, Congress has passed significant legislation investing in that airspace to increase the safety and to make sure that all who fly can be and are safe and feel safe.

Now is not the time to take any steps backward, and that is what we were worried and concerned about that the NDAA provision does.

While Congress works to ensure in law the safety of our airspace, our DOT and FAA leaders are committed to abide by current safety standards, maintaining that safety at the DCA airspace.

As both have said, more work can be done, but it is a pretty good day to be taking the steps we are taking and knowing that more is to come in honor of those who perished, on January 29, from Kansas, across the country, and around the world.

I yield back to the chairman of the committee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, as if in legislative session and notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 269, S. 2503.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2503) to require all aircraft to be equipped with Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast In, to improve aviation safety, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which was reported from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in italic, as follows:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Rotorcraft Operations Transparency and Oversight Reform Act" or the "ROTOR Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **ADMINISTRATOR.**—The term "Administrator" means the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.

(2) **ADS-B IN.**—The term "ADS-B In" means onboard avionics equipment that receives and processes Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast transmissions that are broadcast in accordance with sections 91.225 and 91.227 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulations), and other aviation advisory information from ground stations, that provides the aircraft with awareness to the location of other aircraft and traffic advisories.

(3) **ADS-B OUT.**—The term "ADS-B Out"—

(A) has the meaning given such term in section 91.227 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(B) broadcasts information from the aircraft in accordance with sections 91.225 and 91.227 of such title 14 (or any successor regulations).

(4) **AFFECTED AIRCRAFT.**—The term "affected aircraft" means any aircraft that is required to operate in accordance with section 91.225 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

(5) **APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.**—The term "appropriate committees of Congress" means the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

(6) **CABINET MEMBER.**—The term "Cabinet Member" means an individual who is the head (including an acting head) of the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Defense, the Department of Education, the Department of Energy, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of the Interior, the Department of Justice, the Department of Labor, the Department of State, the Department of Transportation, the Department of the Treasury, or the Department of Veterans Affairs, or any other individual who occupies a position designated by the President as a Cabinet-level position.

(7) **FAA.**—The term "FAA" means the Federal Aviation Administration.

(8) **NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION; NCR.**—The terms "National Capital Region" and "NCR" mean the geographic area located within the boundaries of—

(A) the District of Columbia;

(B) Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties in the State of Maryland;

(C) Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria in the Commonwealth of Virginia; and

(D) all cities and other units of government within the geographic areas described in subparagraphs (A) through (C).

(9) **POWERED-LIFT.**—The term "powered-lift"—

(A) has the meaning given such term in section 1.1 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation); and

(B) includes vertical-lift flight mode and wing-borne flight mode, as such terms are defined in section 194.103 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation).

(10) **ROTORCRAFT.**—The term "rotorcraft" has the meaning given such term in section 1.1 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation).

(11) **TRANSPORT AIRPLANE.**—The term "transport airplane" has the meaning given such term in section 4474(i) of title 49, United States Code.

(12) **UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM.**—The term "unmanned aircraft system" has the meaning given such term in section 44801 of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 3. REVISION TO EXCEPTION FOR ADS-B OUT TRANSMISSION.

(a) **ADS-B OUT REFORMS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Beginning on the date of enactment of this section, in applying section 91.225(f)(1) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, the term "sensitive government mission" shall be narrowly construed and shall not include training flights, proficiency flights, or flights of Federal officials below the rank of Cabinet Member.

(2) **RULEMAKING AND ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Administrator shall—

(i) issue or revise regulations to update section 91.225(f) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, to comply with the requirements of this section; and

(ii) revise any memorandum of agreement between the FAA and any other Federal, State, local, or Tribal agency to conform with the revised regulations described in clause (i).

(B) **REPORT.**—If the Administrator fails to issue or revise regulations pursuant to subparagraph (A) or revise any memorandum of agreement between the FAA and any other agency pursuant to such subparagraph, the Administrator shall, within 30 days, submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the status of such regulations, including the reasons that the Administrator has failed to issue or revise such regulations within the period required under such subparagraph.

(b) **GAO REVIEW AND REPORT.**—Not later than the date that is 2 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) review the utilization of exceptions under section 91.225(f) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation), as revised under subsection (a), to determine—

(A) whether the Department of Defense and other relevant Federal agencies or other applicable operators have utilized such exceptions in accordance with relevant laws and regulations; and

(B) the extent of such utilization;

(2) compare the utilization of exceptions specified in such section 91.225(f) before and after the issuance of revised regulations under subsection (a); and

(3) submit to the Administrator and the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the findings of the review conducted under paragraph (1) and the comparison conducted under paragraph (2).

(c) **FAA REVIEW OF NON-COMPLIANT OPERATORS.**—Upon submission of the report under subsection (b)(3), the Administrator shall—

(1) determine whether any Federal agency or other applicable operator that has been found to

have not utilized the exceptions under section 91.225(f) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation), as revised under subsection (a), in accordance with relevant laws and regulations shall be permitted to continue to utilize such exceptions; and

(2) not later than 30 days after the date on which the Comptroller General submits the report under subsection (b)(3), brief the appropriate committees of Congress on such determination.

(d) **REPORTS.**—

(1) **TO THE ADMINISTRATOR.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this section, and on a quarterly basis thereafter, each Federal, State, local, and Tribal agency that performs sensitive government missions as described in section 91.225(f)(1) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation), as revised under subsection (a), shall submit to the Administrator a report that includes—

(A) an attestation that such operations are regularly transmitting ADS-B Out and are conducted with proper consideration to aviation safety; and

(B) a list of operations delineated by flight in which the ADS-B Out equipment is not in transmit mode because the aircraft was performing a sensitive government mission, including the airport, airspace location, date, time, duration, and mission type of each such operation.

(2) **TO CONGRESS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, and biannually thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the frequency and nature of the ADS-B Out exceptions granted to Federal, State, local, and Tribal agencies under section 91.225(f)(1) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation), as revised under subsection (a). Such report—

(i) shall include—

(I) aggregated data on the operations in which ADS-B Out equipment is not in transmit mode by each agency described in paragraph (1); and

(II) a determination from the Administrator as to whether each operation described in paragraph (1)(B) jeopardizes aviation safety; and

(ii) may include a classified annex.

(B) **SPECIAL NOTIFICATION.**—If an agency described in paragraph (1) operates a flight using an exception granted under section 91.225(f)(1) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation), as revised under subsection (a), 5 or more times in a calendar month, or fails to provide to the Administrator the attestation required under paragraph (1)(A), the Administrator shall notify the appropriate committees of Congress of such use within 14 days of being notified of such use. For the purposes of this subparagraph, a flight shall be interpreted as the period beginning when an aircraft moves under its own power for the purpose of flight and ending when the aircraft lands.

(e) **ANNUAL INSPECTOR GENERAL AUDITS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Beginning on the date that is 3 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation (in this section referred to as the “Inspector General”) shall conduct an annual audit of FAA oversight of all operations that utilize an exception under section 91.225(f) of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation), as revised under subsection (a), including Federal agency operations.

(2) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—In conducting an audit under paragraph (1), the Inspector General shall assess the efficacy of FAA oversight related to the following:

(A) Ensuring exceptions under such section 91.225(f)(1) (or any successor regulation) are strictly utilized by operators in accordance with relevant laws and regulations.

(B) Ensuring exceptions under such section 91.225(f)(1) (or any successor regulation) are not routinely used by operators.

(C) Identifying and engaging with any operator not in compliance with relevant laws and regulations relating to exceptions under such section 91.225(f)(1) (or any successor regulation).

(D) Any other factor determined appropriate by the Inspector General.

(3) **BRIEFINGS TO CONGRESS.**—The Inspector General shall brief the appropriate committees of Congress on an annual basis after the completion of each annual audit.

SEC. 4. ADS-B IN REQUIREMENTS.

(a) **REQUIREMENT FOR ADS-B IN OPERATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Administrator shall issue a final rule in accordance with section 553 of title 5, United States Code, to require any person operating an aircraft (other than an unmanned aircraft, as defined in section 44801 of title 49, United States Code) required to be equipped with ADS-B Out in accordance with section 91.225 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation), to be equipped with and operating with ADS-B In equipment that provides the aircraft with awareness to the location of other aircraft and traffic advisories, unless otherwise authorized by air traffic control.

(2) **COMPLIANCE DEADLINES.**—In issuing a final rule under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall—

(A) include an effective date of not later than 60 days after the date on which such final rule is published in the Federal Register; and

(B) require aircraft described in paragraph (1) to be equipped with ADS-B In not later than December 31, 2031.

(3) **FINAL REGULATION REQUIREMENTS.**—In issuing a final rule under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall, at a minimum, do the following:

(A) **PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.**—The Administrator shall establish appropriate performance requirements for ADS-B In equipment to provide integrated safety-enhancing capabilities for a pilot or other flight crew, including by increasing situational awareness to the location of other aircraft and providing traffic advisories with alerting sufficient to provide traffic advisory indications while airborne and on the airport surface, such as visual and aural advisories.

(B) **ALTERNATIVE EQUIPMENT OR TECHNOLOGY.**—With respect to aircraft with a maximum certificated takeoff weight of less than 12,500 pounds when operating under part 91 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, the Administrator shall establish performance requirements for alternative equipment or technology that the Administrator determines acceptable in satisfying the ADS-B In requirement. The performance requirements shall, at a minimum—

(i) provide similar or improved situational awareness to the location of other airborne traffic, as well as traffic advisory information; and

(ii) leverage the use of portable ADS-B In receivers or equipment that allow display on an existing or future electronic flight bag or panel mounted display, provided that the installation or use of such equipment does not adversely affect other required avionics or the airworthiness of the aircraft.

(C) **GUIDANCE.**—The Administrator shall issue relevant guidance for aircraft operators and other appropriate stakeholders regarding the types of equipment that satisfy the performance requirements described in this paragraph.

(4) **OTHER REQUIREMENTS.**—In issuing a final rule under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall include—

(A) requirements for ADS-B In equipment and the use of such equipment;

(B) technical assistance to facilitating ADS-B In equipage across the entire fleet of affected

aircraft, including, as appropriate, guidance under part 26 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, to provide support for affected transport airplane operators in complying with the requirements of this section;

(C) any other associated guidance necessary to assist operators and other stakeholders in identifying equipment that satisfies the ADS-B In performance standards described in paragraph (3) prior to the compliance deadline described in paragraph (2)(B);

(D) a determination of alternative equipment or technology described in subsection (e); and

(E) a presumption, absent clear and compelling evidence to the contrary, that ADS-B In equipment is cost beneficial and improves aviation safety.

(5) **CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFINGS.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, and every 90 days thereafter, the Administrator shall brief the appropriate committees of Congress, as well as publish a publicly available report, on the status of—

(A) the ADS-B In rulemaking required under paragraph (1); and

(B) after the compliance deadline described in paragraph (2)(A), the implementation and oversight of such ADS-B In requirement.

(b) **NEGOTIATED RULEMAKING COMMITTEE.**—

(1) **COMMITTEE.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Administrator may establish a negotiated rulemaking committee (in this section referred to as the “committee”) pursuant to section 565 of title 5, United States Code, to negotiate proposed regulations to implement the requirements described in subsection (a).

(B) **MEMBERSHIP.**—If the Administrator elects to establish a committee under this subsection, the committee shall be composed of—

(i) representatives of—

(I) the FAA;

(II) air carriers;

(III) avionics manufacturers;

(IV) aircraft manufacturers; and

(V) general aviation organizations;

(ii) the exclusive bargaining representative of air traffic controllers of the FAA certified under section 7511 of title 5, United States Code;

(iii) organizations representing certified collective bargaining representatives of airline pilots, including the principal organization representing the largest certified collective bargaining representative of airline pilots;

(iv) aviation safety experts outside of the FAA; and

(v) any other representatives determined appropriate by the Administrator.

(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**—If the Administrator elects to establish a committee under this subsection, the Administrator shall do the following:

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator shall direct the committee to make recommendations relating to—

(i) ADS-B In equipment and its use;

(ii) ADS-B In equipment performance standards pursuant to subsection (a)(3);

(iii) the consideration of effective approaches to facilitating ADS-B In equipage across the entire fleet of affected aircraft, including requirements under part 26 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, to provide support for affected transport category airplane operators in complying with the requirements of this section; and

(iv) with respect to aircraft with a maximum certificated takeoff weight of less than 12,500 pounds when operating under part 91 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, a recommendation for low cost alternative equipment or technology in accordance with subsection (e).

(B) **LACK OF COMMITTEE CONSENSUS.**—In the event the committee does not reach a consensus regarding a recommendation for low cost alternative equipment or technology under subparagraph (A)(iv), the Administrator shall, after the submission of the committee under paragraph

(3), consider prescribing a low cost alternative that includes the criteria described in subsection (e).

(3) **SUBMISSION TO THE ADMINISTRATOR.**—If the Administrator elects to establish a committee under this subsection, not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the committee shall submit to the Administrator—

(A) a consensus proposal of regulations to implement the requirement described in subsection (a)(1); or

(B) in the event the committee does not reach a consensus, a report identifying any points of agreement and disagreement with respect to such proposed regulations.

(4) **PROPOSED RULE.**—If the Administrator elects to establish a committee under this subsection, not later than 180 days after receiving the submission of the committee under paragraph (3), the Administrator shall issue a proposed rule, in accordance with section 553 of title 5, United States Code, that either—

(A) to the maximum extent possible consistent with the legal obligations of the FAA, uses the consensus proposal of the committee under paragraph (3)(A) as the basis for the proposed rule for notice and comment, including with respect to any standards or requirements described in subsection (a)(3); or

(B) in the event the committee does not reach a consensus, considers the points of agreement and disagreement submitted by the committee under paragraph (3)(B).

(c) **CONSULTATION REQUIRED WITHOUT NEGOTIATED RULEMAKING COMMITTEE.**—If the Administrator does not establish a committee under subsection (b), prior to issuing a final rule, the Administrator shall consult with appropriate stakeholders in conducting the rulemaking required under subsection (a)(1), including at a minimum the representatives described in subsection (b)(1)(B).

(d) **PHASED-IN RETROFIT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In issuing a final rule under subsection (a)(1), the Administrator shall—

(A) establish a process by which the operator of an affected aircraft, in service as of the date on which the final rule under subsection (a)(1) is published in the Federal Register in accordance with subsection (a)(2)(A), may apply to the Administrator to request additional time, not to exceed a period of 1 year after the deadline described in subsection (a)(2)(B), to finalize equipage of its fleet and make ADS-B In operational, provided that—

(i) an aircraft operator, owner, or their agent submits an application deemed acceptable to the Administrator for additional time for compliance, including a justification for such request and an attestation of actions to date demonstrating progress toward achieving compliance;

(ii) the Administrator, in consultation with the Secretary of Transportation, determines additional time is required to mitigate a significant disruption to air transportation; and

(iii) the Administrator determines the aircraft operator or owner does not have any uncorrected violations of subchapters F and G of chapter 1 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(B) notify the appropriate committees of Congress not later than 14 days after making a determination under clause (ii) or (iii) of subparagraph (A).

(2) **SPECIAL RULE FOR AGENTS.**—With the exception of an agent representing an owner or operator of transport airplanes, for the purposes of this subsection, an agent may represent more than 1 aircraft operator or owner of the same type, model, or manufacturer and may submit 1 or more applications under paragraph (1)(A)(i), each of which may contain multiple aircraft operators or owners.

(e) **LOW COST ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF COMPLIANCE.**—In issuing a final rule under subsection (a)(1), the Administrator shall determine low cost equipment or technologies that provide

similar or improved situational awareness to the location of other airborne traffic, as well as traffic advisory information, that satisfy the ADS-B In equipage requirement for aircraft with a maximum certificated takeoff weight of less than 12,500 pounds when operated under part 91 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations. In making such a determination, the Administrator shall consider the use of—

(1) portable ADS-B In receivers; and

(2) equipment that allows display on an existing or future electronic flight bag or panel mounted display, provided the installation or use does not adversely affect other required avionics or the airworthiness of the aircraft.

(f) **PROACTIVE EQUIPAGE.**—With respect to any aircraft for which ADS-B In equipment is available and complies with the requirements of the final rule issued under subsection (a)(1), the operator of any such aircraft shall take all appropriate actions necessary to equip such aircraft with ADS-B In prior to the compliance deadline described in subsection (a)(2).

(g) **SEPARATION STANDARDS; RELEVANT CONTROLLER TRAINING.**—

(1) **RULEMAKING.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 18 months after the effective date of the final rule described in subsection (a), the Administrator shall issue a notice of proposed rulemaking to establish separation standards, as appropriate, that leverage ADS-B Out or ADS-B In equipment, and all other available technological capabilities in the air traffic control system, to achieve safety and efficiency benefits throughout the national airspace system, including on an airport surface and within Class E airspace (as defined in section 71.71 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation).

(B) **CONSULTATION.**—In conducting the rulemaking under this subsection, the Administrator shall consult with appropriate stakeholders, including, at a minimum—

(i) representatives of—

(I) air carriers;

(II) original equipment manufacturers; and

(III) general aviation organizations;

(ii) organizations representing certified collective bargaining representatives of airline pilots, including the principal organization representing the largest certified collective bargaining representative of airline pilots;

(iii) the exclusive bargaining representative of air traffic controllers of the FAA certified under section 7111 of title 5, United States Code;

(iv) aviation safety experts from outside the FAA; and

(v) any other stakeholder deemed appropriate by the Administrator.

(2) **REQUIRED UPDATES TO FAA ORDERS.**—Not later than 18 months after the issuance of the notice of proposed rulemaking under paragraph (1)(A), the Administrator shall complete revisions, as appropriate, to FAA Order 7110.65 and other relevant FAA Orders, to increase safety and efficiency benefits in the national airspace system.

(3) **RELEVANT CONTROLLER TRAINING.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the compliance deadline described in subsection (a)(2), the Administrator shall revise initial and recurrent air traffic controller training, as appropriate, in accordance with FAA Orders 3000.22 and 3120.4 and revise associated orders and directives, as appropriate, to ensure such controllers are trained to apply any new separation standards and procedures.

(B) **REQUIREMENTS.**—In revising training under subparagraph (A), the Administrator shall—

(i) consider human factors impacts, appropriate phraseology adjustments, and surface movement applications; and

(ii) consult with the exclusive bargaining representative of air traffic controllers of the FAA certified under section 7111 of title 5, United States Code.

(h) **ACAS-X ACTION PLAN.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress an action plan for advancing the deployment of the Airborne Collision Avoidance System-X (in this section referred to as “ACAS-X”), or any variant or successor technology, in the national airspace system. The Administrator shall publish the action plan in a publicly available format not later than 10 days after submitting such action plan to Congress.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—In developing the action plan under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall include—

(A) a strategic roadmap for the deployment of ACAS-X technology, including steps required for widespread adoption among aircraft operators (including rotorcraft operators);

(B) actions and funding necessary to complete any applicable research, development, testing, evaluation, and standards development needed to support the certification of such technology;

(C) plans for engagement with appropriate stakeholders, including—

(i) aircraft operators, including those in the Department of Defense;

(ii) aviation safety experts outside the FAA;

(iii) avionics manufacturers;

(iv) aircraft manufacturers;

(v) general aviation organizations;

(vi) the exclusive bargaining representative of air traffic controllers of the FAA certified under section 7511 of title 5, United States Code;

(vii) organizations representing certified collective bargaining representatives of airline pilots, including the principal organization representing the largest certified collective bargaining representative of airline pilots; and

(viii) any other stakeholders determined appropriate by the Administrator;

(D) engagement with foreign civil aviation authorities to harmonize international standards for certification of such technology;

(E) ACAS-X interoperability considerations for aircraft operators (including rotorcraft operators) equipped with ADS-B Out and ADS-B In equipment;

(F) an assessment of safety benefits for aircraft operators equipping with such technology, including civil and military operators; and

(G) any recommendations for administrative or legislative action, as determined appropriate by the Administrator, to advance such technology deployment.

(3) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—The Administrator may take actions, as appropriate, to implement the action plan developed under paragraph (1).

(4) **BRIEFING.**—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Administrator submits the action plan under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall brief the appropriate committees of Congress on the contents of such action plan and any prospective actions to implement such plan.

(i) **ARAC TASKING.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator shall task the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (in this section referred to as the “ARAC”) with reviewing and assessing the need for aircraft operating in Class D airspace to be equipped with ADS-B Out and ADS-B In equipment.

(2) **REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**—Not later than 1 year after initiating the review and assessment under this section, the ARAC shall submit to the Administrator—

(A) a report on the findings of the review and assessment under paragraph (1); and

(B) any recommendations for legislative or regulatory action the ARAC determines appropriate.

(3) **BRIEFING.**—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the ARAC submits the report under paragraph (2), the Administrator shall brief the appropriate committees of Congress on—

(A) the findings and recommendations included in such report; and

(B) any plan to implement such recommendations, including a justification for any recommendations the Administrator determines should not be implemented.

SEC. 5. INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE ARMY AUDIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Inspector General of the Army shall initiate an audit to evaluate the Army's coordination with the FAA, pilot training, and qualification standards, and the Army's use of ADS-B Out and whether it adheres to Army policy, regulation, and law.

(b) ASSESSMENT.—In conducting the audit required by subsection (a), the Inspector General of the Army shall assess practices and recommendations for the Army, including—

(1) whether Army policy and United States law was adhered to, and the Army's coordination with the FAA, during National Capital Region ("NCR") operations of pilot training and qualifications standards in the NCR;

(2) the Army's policy on ADS-B Out equipage, usage, and activation;

(3) maintenance protocols for UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters operated by the 12th Army Aviation Brigade including, but not limited to, the calibration of any system that transmits altitude and position information outside the aircraft and the calibration of systems that send altitude and position information to the pilots inside the aircraft, and the frequency with which such maintenance protocols occur;

(4) compliance with the September 29, 2021, Letter of Agreement executed between the Pentagon Heliport Air Traffic Control Tower and the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Air Traffic Control Tower regarding flight operations in the NCR; and

(5) the Army's review of loss of separation incidents involving its rotorcraft in the NCR along with possible mitigations to prevent future mishaps.

(c) PUBLIC DISCLOSURE.—Not later than 14 days after the audit required by subsection (a) is concluded, the Secretary of the Army shall—

(1) transmit a report on the results of the audit, without redactions, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives; and

(2) publicly release the report without redactions, except to the extent required for national security reasons.

(d) INTERIM REPORTING.—Not later than 180 days after initiating the audit required by subsection (a), and every 180 days thereafter until such audit is concluded, the Inspector General of the Army shall brief the committees of Congress described in subsection (c)(1) regarding the progress of such audit.

SEC. 6. SAFETY REVIEWS OF AIRSPACE.

(a) FAA-DOD COORDINATION.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Administrator shall establish or designate an office within the FAA as the "Office of FAA-DOD Coordination" (in this section referred to as the "Office"), which shall—

(1) coordinate airspace usage of military aircraft and rotorcraft with relevant FAA lines of business, including the Air Traffic Organization;

(2) coordinate with the Office of Audit and Evaluation of the FAA to ensure employee complaints and whistleblower protections are considered;

(3) consider opportunities to improve management and consolidation of aviation safety information system databases to enhance civil and military aviation incident reporting; and

(4) carry out the safety review required by subsection (b).

(b) SAFETY REVIEWS.—

(1) REVIEW OF RONALD REAGAN WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Office is established or designated, the Administrator shall initiate a safety review of all military, law enforcement, and civilian rotary wing, powered lift, fixed wing, and unmanned aircraft system flight operations and flight routes in the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area Special Flight Rules Area, including but not limited to flight operations conducted by the Department of Defense, emergency response providers, and air medical transport operators, to evaluate any associated safety risk to commercial transport airplane operations at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport.

(B) CONSULTATION.—In conducting a safety review under subparagraph (A), the Administrator shall consult with—

(i) the Secretary of Defense;

(ii) Federal, State, and local agencies;

(iii) law enforcement agencies;

(iv) emergency response providers, including air medical transport operators;

(v) air carriers;

(vi) aviation labor organizations, including, at a minimum—

(I) the exclusive bargaining representative of air traffic controllers of the FAA certified under section 7511 of title 5, United States Code; and

(II) organizations representing certified collective bargaining representatives of airline pilots, including the principal organization representing the largest certified collective bargaining representative of airline pilots; and

(vii) other stakeholders determined appropriate by the Administrator.

(2) OTHER AIRPORT REVIEWS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall conduct safety reviews of all military, law enforcement and civilian rotary wing, powered lift, fixed wing, and unmanned aircraft system flight operations and flight routes at other Class B airports (as listed in section 1 of Appendix D to part 91 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation)) and within the lateral boundary of Class B airspace, at commercial service Class C airports (as listed in FAA Order JO 7400.11J (or any successor order)) and within the lateral boundary of Class C airspace in the national airspace system, and at Class D airports that provide passenger service under part 121 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, determined to meet the risk criteria set forth in subparagraph (C), including flight operations conducted by the Department of Defense, emergency response providers, and air medical transport operators, to evaluate any associated safety risk to commercial transport airplane operations.

(B) CONSULTATION.—In conducting a safety review under subparagraph (A), the Administrator shall consult with—

(i) the Secretary of Defense;

(ii) Federal, State, local, and Tribal agencies;

(iii) law enforcement agencies;

(iv) emergency response providers;

(v) air carriers;

(vi) aviation labor organizations, including, at a minimum—

(I) the exclusive bargaining representative of air traffic controllers of the FAA certified under section 7511 of title 5, United States Code; and

(II) organizations representing certified collective bargaining representatives of airline pilots, including the principal organization representing the largest certified collective bargaining representative of airline pilots; and

(vii) other stakeholders determined appropriate by the Administrator.

(C) PRIORITIZATION AND RISK CRITERIA.—In prioritizing the safety reviews of Class B, Class C, and Class D airports described in subparagraph (A) and conducting the safety reviews pursuant to subparagraph (A), the Administrator shall, at a minimum, consider the following risk criteria:

(i) The type of airspace the airport is located in and the type of tower at the airport.

(ii) Whether the airport has radar on the field.

(iii) The total number of air traffic operations at the airport per calendar year, as reported in the Operations Network (OPSNET) data of the FAA, and the rate of growth measured over a 20-year period prior to the initiation of a safety review under this section.

(iv) The Traffic Collision Avoidance System (TCAS) resolution advisory rates at the airport compared to the number of arrivals at the airport.

(v) The presence of parallel runways.

(vi) The presence of visual flights (in this subparagraph referred to as "VFR") corridors in proximity to the airport.

(vii) The presence of a helicopter corridor in proximity to the airport or nearby helicopter operations.

(viii) The presence of dense VFR operations at the airport.

(ix) The presence of complex VFR procedures at the airport or in the adjacent airspace.

(D) DEADLINE OF INITIATION OF REVIEWS.—The Administrator shall initiate the reviews under this paragraph by the following deadlines:

(i) CLASS B AIRPORTS.—With respect to Class B airports, not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this section.

(ii) CLASS C AIRPORTS.—With respect to Class C airports, not later than 90 days after the initiation date of the Class B airport reviews.

(iii) CLASS D AIRPORTS.—With respect to Class D airports, not later than 90 days after the initiation date of the Class C airport reviews.

(3) REQUIREMENTS.—In conducting the safety reviews required by paragraphs (1) and (2), the Office shall do the following:

(A) Analyze air traffic and airspace management.

(B) Evaluate the level of coordination the Administrator exercises with the Secretary of Defense and the heads of any other Federal agencies, and emergency response providers as appropriate, to inform the designation and approval of airspace use and flight routes for non-transport airplane operations.

(C) Assess any risks posed to transport airplanes from military aircraft and rotorcraft, civil rotorcraft, powered lift aircraft, and unmanned aircraft systems operating in Class B, Class C, or Class D airspace in proximity to Class B, Class C, or Class D airports.

(D) Review relevant incidents submitted to the Administrator through Air Traffic Mandatory Occurrence reports (as documented via FAA Form 7210-13), Aviation Safety Reporting System reports, and Aviation Safety Action Program reports, and relevant reports submitted to the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration through the Aviation Safety Reporting System, to identify any safety trends regarding the operation of military aircraft and rotorcraft, civil rotorcraft, powered lift aircraft, and unmanned aircraft systems in Class B, Class C, or Class D airspace near Class B, Class C, or Class D airports.

(4) DEADLINES FOR COMPLETION OF SAFETY REVIEWS.—

(A) RONALD REAGAN WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT.—The Administrator shall complete the safety review required by paragraph (1) not later than 120 days after the date on which such review is initiated.

(B) OTHER AIRPORTS.—The Administrator shall complete a safety review required by paragraph (2) not later than 180 days after such review is initiated.

(5) REPORTS.—

(A) REVIEW OF RONALD REAGAN WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT.—Not later than 60 days after completing the safety review required by paragraph (1), the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report detailing the analyses and results of such review, together with relevant findings and recommendations, including any corrective action

plans to address any risks identified, and recommendations for legislative or administrative action determined appropriate by the Administrator.

(B) **OTHER AIRPORT REVIEWS.**—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this section, and every 6 months thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report detailing the analyses and results of the safety reviews completed pursuant to paragraph (2) since the preceding report under this subparagraph (or, in the case of the first such report, since such date of enactment), together with relevant findings and recommendations, including any corrective action plans to address any risks identified, and recommendations for legislative or administrative actions determined appropriate by the Administrator.

(6) **DESIGNATION.**—The Administrator shall designate a person within the Senior Executive Service of the FAA to be directly responsible for the completion of the requirements of this subsection.

(7) **STAFFING.**—The Administrator shall ensure adequate staffing to conduct the safety reviews within the deadlines specified in this section.

SEC. 7. FAA-DOD SAFETY INFORMATION SHARING.

(a) **MOU WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Administrator shall enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Secretary of the Army to permit, as appropriate, the sharing of information from the Army's Safety Management Information System with the FAA to facilitate communications and analysis of any applicable impacts to the safety and efficiency of civil aviation operations and to mitigate risk in the national airspace system.

(b) **OTHER DOD MOUS.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Administrator shall enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the following military departments to permit, as appropriate, the sharing of information from applicable aviation safety information systems to facilitate communications and analysis of any applicable impacts to the safety and efficiency of civil aviation operations and to mitigate risk in the national airspace system:

- (1) The Department of the Navy.
- (2) The Department of the Air Force.
- (3) The Coast Guard.

(c) **CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.**—Not later than 7 days after the date on which the Administrator enters into any Memorandum of Understanding under subsection (a) or (b), the Administrator shall notify the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 8. REPEAL OF PROVISION REGARDING ADS-B EQUIPMENT ON CERTAIN AIRCRAFT OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

Section 1046 of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note) is repealed.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be withdrawn; the Cruz-Cantwell substitute amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; the bill, as amended, 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. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment, in the nature of a substitute, was withdrawn.

The amendment (No. 4070), in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

The bill (S. 2503), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, congratulations, again, to my colleagues. Thank you to the U.S. Senate and its leadership for seeing that a version of the ROTOR Act was passed by unanimous consent.

NOMINATION OF JARED ISAACMAN

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, today we consider the nomination of Mr. Jared Isaacman to serve as NASA Administrator, a critical position whose leadership will help determine the success of America's ambitious scientific and exploratory goals in space science.

The next NASA Administrator will be tasked with leading the United States and all of humanity to places humans have never ventured, but they will face equally great challenges here on Earth, leading a workforce that has faced a year of upheaval and navigating an administration that has grounded progress rather than fostered it.

Last Spring, President Trump requested a \$6 billion cut to NASA, the largest cut in the Agency's history, with cancellation of more than 40 missions and cuts to others, including some already in the final pre-launch stages, such as the Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope. Then, only a few months later, the administration worked to push out as many scientists and engineers as possible through their resignation program, resulting in thousands of experienced and dedicated workers leaving the government, often as a result of fear and uncertainty around the future of their jobs. Some of these top scientists were recruited to research labs and universities in other nations, further eroding America's competitive edge. Now, 11 months since the inauguration, the workers remaining at NASA are simply looking for the stability and opportunity to do their world-leading work. The next administrator must bring a greater respect for and commitment to the NASA workforce.

In addition to their attacks on the workforce, vital earth science missions have faced cancellation because the Trump administration dislikes that they provide us with information about our changing climate. There has been bipartisan pushback to this direction for the Agency coupled with bipartisan support for providing NASA the resources they need to conduct their operations. Despite this resistance, the tension between the branches of government remains, and the next admin-

istrator will have a vital role to play in standing up for the Agency.

Maryland is the cornerstone of innovation in space science, centered around the crown jewel of American space science, the Goddard Space Flight Center, the Space Science Telescope Institute, AURA, and the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory, alongside contractors and small businesses who support their essential work. Wallops Space Flight Center is just over the border in Virginia, but many of its employees and contractors call Maryland home. Space research and technology are a critical and productive part of Maryland's economy, and in turn, these entities are critical to the United States' broader space goals.

When President Trump attempted to cut NASA's fiscal year 2026 budget by an unprecedented amount, he did not target all parts of NASA equally. NASA Science was singled out for a 46-percent reduction in overall budget, which would disproportionately impact Goddard. The next Administrator will need to be ready to fight not just for individual parts of the Agency or flashy programs, but for the entire mission. If NASA seeks to take us back to the Moon and eventually to Mars, it will be cutting-edge science that takes us there and that path runs through Maryland.

I have had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Isaacman twice and watch both of his confirmation hearings, and I appreciate his willingness to engage on Maryland and national priorities for NASA's mission. During both my meetings with Mr. Isaacman, he relayed his belief in the importance of the NASA Science mission and the work done at the Goddard Space Flight Center. At the same time, however, I was alarmed to read Mr. Isaacman's Project Athena, his proposed plan for the Agency that suggested that NASA science should be a service to the commercial industry, rather than continuing to serve the public. I was further discouraged by his proposed plan to move certain mission control operations away from Goddard and to mark other Goddard facilities for possible "deletion." The next NASA Administrator will need to approach the highly technical work and the people who perform it with respect and understanding for how their contribution fits into our larger goals.

I expect Mr. Isaacman's nomination to be confirmed, and it is my sincere hope that he means it when he says that he intends to prioritize and foster the cutting-edge research and science done by NASA, rather than cut it. I intend to work with him and the entire Agency through my role as Ranking Member of the Senate Commerce, Justice, Science—CJS—Appropriations Subcommittee to support and provide critical oversight over the important work of NASA in Maryland, across the country, and around the world.

Mr. Isaacman's actions on the job, not his words during the confirmation