

A bill (S. 4125) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose a tax on damages received by certain officers of the United States on account of any civil action filed against the United States, and for other purposes.

A bill (S. 4126) to address the ineligibility of Ashli Babbitt for military funeral honors.

A bill (S. 4127) making continuing appropriations for essential Transportation Security Administration pay and operations during the lapse in appropriations beginning on February 14, 2026, and for other purposes.

Mr. SCHUMER. In order to place the bills on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I would object to further proceeding en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bills will be placed on the calendar.

#### SAFEGUARD AMERICAN VOTER ELIGIBILITY ACT—Continued

S. 1383

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, there are so many issues Senate Republicans could be working with us on this week that Americans actually care about. Republicans could focus on whether Americans can afford groceries or on lowering healthcare premiums or bringing down childcare costs or fixing our power grid.

But what have MAGA Republicans chosen to focus on this week? Voter suppression. That is what the Republican Senate is wasting our time on, pushing a voter suppression bill that most Americans do not support—a bill that appeals to only the most fringe element of the MAGA base.

If this is the path our Republican colleagues want to take, Democrats are ready. We will hold the line to ensure the forces of voter suppression do not win the day. We will debate this bill for as long as Republicans want because the more time we spend on this bill, the more Senate Democrats will expose it for what it really is.

I heard our Senator from Utah last night talk on the floor, and he talked—the times I heard him—about having an ID when you go to vote. This SAVE Act is not about voter ID. In fact, the original bill didn't even have a sentence about voter ID, and they had to put it in at the last minute so it could meet their subterfuge argument.

Democrats support commonsense voter ID, but this bill is not that—at all. So don't lie and make it seem like that is the purpose of this bill, because it isn't. It is just a sentence that was added at the last minute so they could engage in this subterfuge.

This is suppression, a MAGA power grab that could disenfranchise more than 20 million American citizens—because what is the core of the bill? The core of the bill is handing the voter rolls over to DHS, putting them through an algorithm designed by DOGE and Musk that supposedly knocks out illegal immigrants from voting.

But the evidence is almost no illegal immigrants vote, and on an experiment

in a county of Missouri, more than half the people knocked out were American citizens, using this algorithm.

Is that what the Senators from Missouri or any other State want—their legitimate citizens being knocked off the ballot, being purged, and then not knowing about it until you show up to vote on election day, and you say to the person at the election facility: Well, I voted at this booth for the last—I have voted at this place for 20 years. I have used the same ID.

Well, you were knocked off.

And to get back on is very onerous and very difficult. It is harder to reregister under this bill than it is to purchase a firearm. It is absolutely crazy.

And it is all based on one fact: that Donald Trump has lied that our elections are rife with voter fraud. We know that is bull. Even the Wall Street Journal—no friend of Democrats; certainly, no friend of mine—said in an editorial yesterday—the Wall Street Journal said the President's voter fraud claims “aren't backed by hard evidence.” And yet that is what this bill is supposedly all about.

I hope every single Republican, yesterday, read the editorial in the Wall Street Journal because they may not listen to us from this side of the aisle, but maybe they will listen to the Journal. The SAVE Act makes voting harder and makes registration much harder for U.S. citizens—for U.S. citizens.

The Journal notes: “Many driver's licenses wouldn't” comply—“wouldn't qualify.”

So I ask my colleagues on the other side of the aisle: Do you want to tell your voters—your citizen voters—that if they move and have to reregister, it is much harder? I don't think so.

The Journal makes another important point. It says the SAVE Act “can't save Republicans from voter anger at unpopular policies.”

Let me say that again, the Wall Street Journal editorial page says: “It can't save Republicans from voter anger at unpopular policies.”

Even the Wall Street Journal seems to recognize why Donald Trump and MAGA radicals are so obsessed with this bill. They think it will save them from what otherwise looks like a bad November—a November where voters are fed up with Trump's policies. That is what is going on here.

If Donald Trump and MAGA Republicans are so worried about November, the answer shouldn't be to take away the vote. They should try to come up with policies that are popular, rethink their awful policies that have made life more expensive and painful for working people.

If Donald Trump and Republicans are worried about November, then maybe they should focus on lowering costs instead of kicking millions of people off healthcare. Maybe Donald Trump should not have started an unpopular war in the Middle East, with no plan on how to get out.

Maybe MAGA Republicans should stand up to Donald Trump's tariffs. A lot of them didn't like them.

A headline from AP reads:

Trump's tariffs are hurting American manufacturers instead of helping them.

Of course, Trump would say we should get rid of the AP when they don't agree with him. That is another issue.

Maybe Republicans should fight against Donald Trump's corruption, his lavish gifts, his pardoning of ultrarich fraudsters, his administration's crypto get-rich-quick schemes.

But instead of doing any of these things, instead of doing what Americans want Republicans to do, MAGA radicals, instead, are trying to tick away the vote. They want to short-circuit the mechanisms of accountability that underpin our democracy.

If MAGA Republicans want to waste this week and beyond on voter suppression, we are happy to have the debate. We are happy to show the American people how radical the SAVE Act is and how out of touch Republicans have become by wasting time on this bill, instead of lowering costs like people want; how they are going to, with this bill, disenfranchise millions of their own voters—Republican voters in red States—by doing this bill.

IRAN

Mr. President, on Iran, well, we are 3½ weeks into Donald Trump's Iran war, and, today, the price of Brent crude hit nearly \$110 a barrel. Experts say that even if the war ended tomorrow, it would take a long time for prices to come back down. We know oil prices are sticky for going down. When oil prices spike quickly, they tend to fall very slowly.

And now central banks are worried that Trump's war is driving up costs not just for energy but for transportation, for shipping, and other key goods that pass through the Middle East.

Mortgage rates, after inching down, are moving back up, and the worst part is there are no signs the war is going to end tomorrow, next week, or any time soon.

Donald Trump, the old saying is: If you break it, you buy it.

Donald Trump is breaking the Middle East, but now he is trying to dodge the cost and leave the American people with the bill.

So I will affirm again what Democrats have been saying for days. We need Cabinet officials to testify because the story from the administration does not add up.

This morning, before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard insisted in her prepared remarks that Donald Trump's operation from last year, Midnight Hammer, did, in fact, obliterate Iran's nuclear enrichment program.

She noted that “there has been no efforts since then to try to rebuild their enrichment capability.”

So what gives now, Tulsi? Why did Donald Trump strike Iran again if you say that Midnight Hammer did, in fact, obliterate the nuclear enrichment program?

And, of course, nobody wants a nuclear Iran.

Why do the American people still not have any clear answers on the goals and timeline of this war?

Secretary Rubio needs to publicly testify under oath. He must answer tough questions from both sides of the aisle—which there will be—in public.

Hegseth needs to testify publicly under oath.

The American people deserve to directly hear from them. They deserve answers. They deserve accountability, and they need to hear from the administration about how we are going to get out of this before it is too late.

#### NOMINATION OF MARKWAYNE MULLIN

Mr. President, finally, on Senator MARKWAYNE MULLIN, he has been testifying before the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs as President Trump's nominee to be the next Secretary of Homeland Security.

I will not be supporting Senator MULLIN's nomination, should it come before the Senate. The problems at DHS, especially at ICE and CBP, run far deeper than who is in charge. What Americans need far more than just a change in leadership is a change in policy. Americans demand legislation to rein in ICE and end the violence.

But the White House is still refusing to engage on some of the most pressing demands that Democrats have called for since day one.

We are going to continue to engage the White House and congressional Republicans, but we need them to get serious about responding to the chaos we have seen in too many American cities. If ICE is not reformed and reined in, sooner or later, another American citizen is at risk of getting killed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

S. 1383

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I would just like to offer a few words of rebuttal for the Democratic leader.

He talked about high oil prices. He didn't mention the fact that when President Biden was in office and Democrats were in charge, in June of 2022, the national average gas price reached almost \$5 a gallon. That same month, inflation was 9.1 percent, a 40-year high.

That wasn't because President Biden was having to do something hard, to take care of the menace that Iran was. President Biden was coddling Iran, pumping billions of dollars into their economy, into their military, into their proxies.

Gasoline was \$5 a gallon because of their war on fossil fuels, because of Democrat policies. So I need to correct the record there.

The second point I want to make is, I heard the Democrat leader say that Democrats are—I think this is what he said—are in favor of commonsense voter ID. Well, if that is the case, I am sure we would be happy to work with

them to deliver that, because 80 percent of the American people agree with the picture ID to vote—80 percent. It is the Democrats who refuse to put any kind of controls to ensure the security of our elections.

But I think he completely mischaracterized what the Senator from Utah's bill, the SAVE America Act, actually does. It is not going to make it harder to vote. It is going to make it harder to cheat, because Americans do not want their legitimate vote canceled by a fraudulent one.

But we are going to actually—we have got this bill on the floor. We are going to be debating it. The way the Senate debates things is we offer amendments. Republicans are going to be offering amendments to add to it things, again, the American people support with 60, 70, 80 percent majorities.

But if Democrats actually have a constructive approach to a commonsense idea that 80 percent of Americans would agree with, talk to us. My guess is Senator LEE would be happy to clarify the legislation to prove the fact that we are not going to make it harder to vote; we are just going to make it more difficult to cheat.

Again, this ought to be, from my standpoint, a very instructive—hopefully, a very productive—debate over the next number of days, maybe number of weeks. This is important.

In 2016, Democrats were the ones that said it wasn't a legitimate election when Donald Trump first got elected. Four years later, the tables were turned. All of a sudden, the other half of America said it was not a legitimate election. This is an unsustainable state of affairs.

The only way to cure it is for commonsense election controls to make sure that we have the integrity so that, no matter who wins the election, both sides agree that that is a legitimate result. That is what we are trying to achieve as Republicans.

Again, we don't want to see somebody's legitimate vote canceled by a fraudulent one.

I think the fact that Democrats are opposed to virtually any—probably all—election integrity measures just proves they want to make it easy to cheat.

I will throw in one final comment. The Carter-Baker Commission—I would call it a completely nonpartisan Commission—looked at our election system and tried to identify, you know, how can we make it as secure as possible. The one area of our elections they thought was the greatest opportunity for fraud was absentee mail-in balloting.

So in light of that fact, what did Democrats do during COVID? They took advantage of that situation and literally doubled the number of absentee ballots while—certainly in my State, the State of Wisconsin, there were all kinds of irregularities in terms of ballots being cured by election clerks, which is not lawful, balloting in

the park, improper assisting of seniors in nursing homes.

There were all kinds of irregularities that in the end were never adjudicated. Like some of the court cases in the 2020 election, they were just thrown out of court, dismissed, because, let's face it, our judicial system really doesn't want to get involved in elections. I don't fault them for that, but it is just the reality of the situation.

So, again, what this debate is about is making sure that every American has the confidence that their legitimate vote will not be canceled by a fraudulent one. That is what Republicans want to do. We want to make it easy to vote but almost impossible to cheat.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MCCORMICK). The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, the Republican majority, representing the views of the President here on the floor of the Senate, are trying to engage not in a save-democracy but a steal-democracy movement. That is what this entire debate is about.

It is about a great fear which the Republicans have that because of their healthcare policies that are raising the price of healthcare for Americans across our country, because of the anger which Americans have, the dramatic spike in the price of oil and gas and home heating oil, that voters are angry across our country, that voters across our country are angry at the lies and the price for food across our Nation, that voters are angry, that there is a dramatic spike in the concern which Americans have about the arresting and incarceration of innocent citizens in our country who have no previous criminal records—all of this is a part of an attempt by the Republicans to steal the election of 2026.

They are afraid that they are going to go to the minority, that they will lose their power, and they know that the only way they can win now is if they steal the election. So this should not be called the SAVE Act; it should be called the Steal Act because they are going to try to suppress the votes, especially of Black and Brown citizens in our country. They are going to attempt to make it very difficult for them to vote, and then, as a result, they are hoping with their fingers crossed that they can win a very narrow election in 2026 in our country.

So democracy is on the line, and the SAVE Act—misnamed—is a direct attack upon our abilities to have free and fair elections in our Nation.

They want to make it very difficult for people to be able to register to vote. They want to make it very difficult for people to be able to actually vote on election day. That is their goal. Their goal is to suppress the vote, not to make it easier to vote in our Nation.

Rather than working with Democrats on this issue, they are just going "my way or the highway." They are just

going in a direction which tries to save the Republican majority this year. The SAVE Act is to save the majority for the Republicans that is right now in serious jeopardy.

Even today, we see that the latest news is attacks upon further Iranian natural gas fields, which is leading to a further spike in the price for oil and gas and home heating oil in the United States of America. People are being shaken upside down at the pumps in our country. People are now paying upwards of 90 cents or a buck more for a gallon of gasoline. That is going to mean, over the course of a year, \$400, \$500 more out of the pockets of every American family.

It is a tax. This war that is illegally and unconstitutionally being run by Trump in the Middle East, in the Persian Gulf, is a tax first on Americans, who will have to pay for that war in higher taxes, and then, as they hit the pump or pay their home heating oil bill or their natural gas bill or their electricity bill, they are going to pay another tax in terms of the higher price they have to pay on top of the price for lost lives. That is the highest price of all. And those lives are being lost in the conduct of an illegal war.

It is all now coming back to our homeland. It is all coming back to the price of oil, of electricity, of natural gas, of home heating oil that every American family is going to have to pay.

The only way to solve this problem is to end that war because as the price of a barrel of oil goes from \$70 a barrel to \$80 a barrel to \$90 a barrel to \$110 a barrel, that then gets translated at the pump into \$3.40 a gallon, \$3.80 a gallon, \$4 a gallon, \$4.20 a gallon, and it is just going to continue to rise and rise and rise as long as this war continues.

So it is absolutely imperative that Trump end this war because families at home are paying the price. It is directly translatable into every single product which is purchased in our country, from food, to the price of airline tickets, to the price of transporting on trucks every single good across our country. That gets built into the price for everything that people are going to be buying this year.

So all I can say is that is what we should be debating on here. We should be debating that war. We should be debating the impact it is having on our economy.

The stark difference between the priorities of both parties is on display here on the Senate floor right now.

The Republicans are trying to suppress the vote so that voters are going to have a more difficult time in reflecting their views on election day this year on this dramatic spike in home heating oil, gasoline, electricity, and natural gas prices in our country. They don't want people to be able to easily vote on them.

They don't want people to be able to easily vote on the fact that 22 million Americans have seen a dramatic spike

in their premiums for their healthcare insurance in our Nation.

They don't want it to be easy at all for people to be able to vote on the price of food or the effect which naming the head of the World Wrestling Federation to be the head of the Department of Education is having upon children's ability to get access to the education they need in every city and town in our Nation, the destruction of the Department of Education. That is cascading down into every community as well. That is reducing funding and requiring communities to talk about raising taxes at the local level.

All of that is what we should be debating out here on the floor, and what the Republicans are saying is: No, we want a debate about suppression of the vote—reducing the number of people who can easily access the ballot box this fall in order to express their views on all of their policies.

So that is really why we are here today. We are here in order to witness the Republicans' lack of priorities, their lack of focus upon the issues which the American people care most about—gasoline prices, electricity prices, natural gas prices, home heating oil prices—as they watch every day this dramatic rise in those prices as a result of the war in the Persian Gulf—the war illegally declared by Donald Trump—with an escalation again today.

Every time they hit all of those energy facilities in the Middle East, we pay the price. Every consumer, every family pays the price at their kitchen table as they try to figure out their payment of the bill that they are responsible to pay for their family for energy in our country.

So that is what we should be debating, and it should be an all-out debate. We should be having hearings on this issue. We are not having those hearings. We are not having that debate. The only thing the Republicans want to talk about is the suppression of the vote—especially in minority communities and especially in the States that have the highest probability of electing Democratic Senators and House Members this year.

That is what this is all about. It is why Trump tried to cut a deal with Minneapolis on the day that Alex Pretti was murdered, and the White House, his administration, said to Minnesota: If you give us access to your voting rolls, then we will negotiate with you on pulling ICE out. Then they sent Tulsi Gabbard into Georgia just to try to grab all of the election materials at Fulton County—all as a prelude to, as the President says, the invocation of the Insurrection Act, which means the activation of the Marines and the Army in order to be deployed on election day in 2026 to suppress the vote. And we know where he wants to do that—in the States that they are most afraid of losing this year to the Democratic Party.

When he talks about the nationalization of elections, of course it is in com-

plete violation of the U.S. Constitution, which gives that power to the States.

So we are heading towards a constitutional crisis later on this year. Donald Trump is a walking, talking constitutional crisis roaming around the Oval Office every single day trying to figure out how to avoid any accountability, any checks and balances that would be imposed by the U.S. Congress or by the Supreme Court upon his actions.

That is where we are right now. That is the status of the United States of America, and that is why Democrats are going to be standing up and making this case to the American people that they are trying to suppress the vote in order to protect all the impacts which their misbegotten policies have had upon American families in our country. They are living with the consequences economically at home.

Republicans today, by their actions, with their attempt to pass their "Steal the Election Act," are trying to make it very difficult for the American people to make the Republican Party accountable.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. WARNOCK. Mr. President, I am so grateful for the remarks of my colleague and friend from the great State of Massachusetts and for his voice on this very important issue.

I rise today as a child of the Civil Rights Movement, as the blessed beneficiary of its bold moral witness in America, and as a member of only the second generation of our Nation to have full and fair access to the right to vote.

Some have argued that in a real sense, our country did not really become a democracy until 1965 when there were those who stood up with courage and challenged the Nation to live up to its ideals.

I stand here today, and I am able to work in this building on behalf of the people of Georgia—what an honor—to represent 11 million people, to carry on this grand experiment called democracy.

But it is never far from our memory that, at the time of my birth, Georgia's two Senators were Richard B. Russell and Herman E. Talmadge. In many ways, they were effective. They brought great things back to the State of Georgia, but we would not be honest, we would not be telling the full story if we did not remember that they were both archsegregationists and unabashed adversaries of the Civil Rights Movement, which sought to expand the electorate to ensure that this is a House where every American—the citizen—has a voice.

Senator Talmadge once said: We love the Negro in his place, and his place is at the backdoor.

Well, it is a testament to the greatness of this country that I sit in his seat because there were those who

stood up to fight for the highest ideals of our country.

I reference that history because it is relevant in this moment. Nearly 62 years ago to the day, those two Georgia Senators, along with other southern Senators, began a weeklong effort to prevent people who look like me and my parents and my children from fully participating in our democracy. They were trying to narrow the electorate. So I find it interesting and ironic that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who have been leading this effort in recent days have referenced this very history which is the cause for my being here in the first place.

One of them pointed out the fact that when we entered the debate about the civil rights legislation and tried to push it into law, that there were those who stood up day after day, week after week, and he dared to enlist that history as if, somehow, that was some inspiration for what they are trying to do in this moment.

Let me be very clear: You are on the other side of that history. You are on the side of those who are trying to narrow the electorate. So, if you want to pass the SAVE Act, that is your prerogative. If you want to argue that folks have to have a birth certificate or a passport just to be able to register to vote in a country where most Americans do not have a passport, if you want to effectively disenfranchise women, disenfranchise poor people, and working-class people who have to struggle for the right to vote, that is your prerogative. But be very clear: You are not on the side of the movement. You are on the other side of that history. Fight for this, if you will, but you ought to leave the Civil Rights Movement and Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, name out of your mouth.

This country goes through moments where the electorate expands, and then it goes through moments where it contracts. We are in a contraction moment. We are in a moment wherein the words of the administration itself—it was a Cabinet official in the White House herself who said that we just want to make sure “the right people are voting”—the right people—“the right people are voting.”

That was the argument in the 1960s. Of those who wanted to make sure that the right people were voting, had they prevailed, I would not be standing here today.

I don't believe in the right people. I believe in “we the people,” “we the people,” “we the people.” That is not just the first three words of our charter document. It is a creed—“we the people.”

Every American citizen must have access to the franchise, and it must not be treated as a privilege. It is a right. When you put up unnecessary barriers, you undermine that basic understanding that the franchise is not a privilege; it is a right. I often say that a vote is a kind of prayer for the world we desire for ourselves and for our chil-

dren, and our prayers are stronger when we pray together. There are no right or wrong people. There are only the American people.

They put up the SAVE Act, arguing that they want to make sure that it is only Americans who are voting, but they have not demonstrated, and they have provided no evidence that voter fraud is a real thing through voter identification. We know that this will disenfranchise thousands, if not millions, of Americans. We have no evidence that this is a problem that actually needs to be solved. Yet they have shut down much of the business of the Senate in order to do this. They are hell-bent on getting this done.

Donald Trump said that this is his No. 1 priority. So it begs the question, Why is this his No. 1 priority?

With all of the things wrong in our country, why is this the main thing that he feels he must get done? Why is he afraid?

I will tell you why. It is because he knows that he has broken every promise he made. He said that he was going to lower your costs. Instead, he has doubled healthcare premiums for 22 million Americans. His tariffs have cost the average family over \$1,000 a year. Gas prices are spiking and show no sign of coming down anytime soon, but this is his No. 1 priority.

He said he was going to be the President of peace, but he has attacked 17 countries and counting. Yet again, we find ourselves entangled in another endless war with no endgame and no idea of what victory even looks like.

All the while, we have more important problems right here at home. Donald Trump promised to support our farmers. Instead, he has raised the cost of fertilizer and has hamstrung their exports, and farmers all across Georgia are suffering as a result.

So that is really what this is all about. Donald Trump is a failed President, and his support is collapsing. I hear it all across Georgia—in rural towns bearing the brunt of the President's immigration policies and farmers dealing with the realities of a trade war.

This President claims to be “America First,” but in the name of protecting U.S. citizens, his deportation machine has seized over 170 citizens. They have shot and killed two American citizens on a quiet street. I went to stand where they lost their lives. In a real sense, I felt like I was standing on holy ground, made sacred by the blood of patriots who stood up against abusive authority, under the color of law, to remind us that, at the end of the day, this is our country—“we the people,” “we the people.”

It is not the powerful interests who can write big checks to keep politicians in office—“we the people.” Not the lobbyists—“we the people.” Not the American oligarchs—“we the people.”

Now they want to prevent even more citizens from voting, from making our

voices heard. They want to block our ability to stand up in November and say: Enough is enough.

So the President is panicking. He is doing what he always does. He is attacking our elections so that you cannot fire his foot soldiers in Congress. It is pathetic. He looks to me like a scared human being who knows that behind the curtain is a tiny man. We will not be intimidated. Our voices will not be silenced.

The President continues to push the lies that he spread, after he lost in 2020, to create a pretext to interfere in the midterm elections. That is why we saw an FBI raid in Fulton County, GA.

As I watched that FBI raid, I saw the Director of National Intelligence crouched in a corner, talking on a mobile phone, and I wondered, Why was she there? There were bomb threats in polling stations in poor and Black neighborhoods during the 2024 election, which were later traced back to Russian interference. I am still waiting on an answer from her on that.

There she was, engaged in this effort to count the ballots again in the 2020 election, even after the President's own Justice Department found no evidence of meaningful voter fraud. These claims about voter fraud—that is the fraud. That is the fraud. And I think Americans are growing tired of it.

You know, the wonderful thing about our country is that we get to have the argument. The Presiding Officer and I don't agree on a whole range of things, but I just want us to be able to have the argument. It gets rambunctious in the American public square in order to avoid violence, but at the end of the day, everybody gets to go to the polls, and the most powerful words in the democracy are: “The people have spoken.”

So I will always cast my lot on the side of democracy. I am hopeful in this regard. I believe in the people. I want to make sure my constituents' voices are heard—all of my constituents—even when they don't agree with me, even when I don't get the outcome that I want.

When I think about the nature of human power and human pride—forgive me, but I am a preacher after all—and human sin and our desire to make sure that we slant things so that we get the outcome we want—we see it not just in governments; you see it in your own family—the question becomes, How do you balance all of those things? I think democracy is the best we have got. Given who we are as human beings, I will cast my lot with the people's voice, even when I think they have gotten it wrong. I would rather put my trust there.

Reinhold Niebuhr, perhaps, put it best. He said that human kind's capacity for justice makes democracy possible. Our capacity for injustice makes democracy necessary.

At the end of the day the thing that can fix it, whatever issue we have, I believe, is the people's voice. And so I am

disturbed about what I am witnessing. I am disturbed about an attack on Fulton County and in Maricopa County, AZ. It troubles me when ICE lands in Minneapolis, and then the administration says that we are there to deal with violent criminals, we are there to deal with this immigration issue. But then when it comes down to it, the administration says: Do you really want ICE out of your community? Hand over your voter rolls.

Come on, man. I don't care whether you are a Democrat or a Republican, come on. You can see what this is about. What do voter rolls have to do with violent criminals? What kind of ransom note is that to send to the leaders of the people of Minneapolis?

And so the Big Lie continues to live and we need to kill it once and for all and the only thing that can do that is the people's voice.

The President continues to spread conspiracy theories and outright lies. Here is the reality: This bill will disenfranchise thousands, if not millions, of Americans, and that is why they want to pass it so desperately. They are using onerous citizenship verification as a pretext for voter suppression, requiring you to use a birth certificate or passport to register to vote.

And under this bill, a driver's license wouldn't be enough to register to vote. They ought to call the bill what it is. They ought to call it "A Driver's License is Not Good Enough Act." They call it the SAVE Act, but the question is: What are they trying to save? They are not trying to save our elections; they are trying to save their own power at any cost—at the cost of the voices of ordinary people.

Let's think about this in practical terms. If you change addresses, even if you move down the street and you have been voting for years, do you want to have to track down your birth certificate—which you lost while you were moving—in order to register to vote?

You get married and you change your name, you have to go find your marriage license and a birth certificate or a passport to prove that you are a citizen.

More than half of Georgians, or 5.4 million people, lack a valid passport. And as many as 2.2 million women in Georgia may not have their birth certificate that matches their current legal name.

And so women are disproportionately disenfranchised by this piece of legislation, which again is a solution in search of a problem that does not exist.

Let me be really clear. Noncitizens should never vote in our elections. There is no argument about that. But this legislation will only make it harder for eligible American voters to make their voices heard. That is the actual work that this legislation will do.

We know that about 760,000 voting-age Georgians who are U.S. citizens would have difficulty showing documentation proving their citizenship. We know that.

By the way, we have voter ID in Georgia. And I will tell you, for the record, that I think you should have to prove that you are who you say you are before you vote. I support voter ID. We have voter ID laws in my State. You should have to prove that you are who you say you are before you vote. That is basic, but that is not what this is about.

This is about onerous voter ID requirements used as a pretext and as a tool for voter suppression because there are those in the administration who want to make sure "the right people vote." There are currently strong laws on the books that keep noncitizens from voting. They face criminal prosecution and deportation if they vote.

So let's just think about the risk-reward analysis, the cost-benefit analysis. You will be criminally prosecuted if you try to vote and you are not a citizen. You are trying to tell me that folks will risk criminal prosecution in droves to change the potential outcome of an election? Are you trying to tell me that folks will try to vote twice? It is hard enough to get folks to vote once, let alone twice.

And that is probably why Republican secretary of state Brad Raffensperger found only 20 instances of noncitizens registered out of 8.2 million in Georgia—8.2 million people registered to vote in Georgia. The Republican secretary of state found 20 instances of noncitizens who were registered and only 9 had ever attempted to vote and the majority did so before 2012. This is a solution in search of a problem that does not exist.

And so this means that the SAVE America Act would burden or disenfranchise over 150,000 Georgians for every single instance of a noncitizen voting in the last decade. Does that make sense? You keep 1 noncitizen from voting and you disenfranchise 150,000 for every 1? You are trying to tell me that that makes the democracy stronger? more representative of our interests?

And so if there is no meaningful voter fraud, and if this law is so disastrous for voting citizens, the question is: Why is the President so desperate to sign the SAVE America Act into law? And I mean, he is desperate, so desperate that he has threatened his own Republican caucus, said: If you all don't do this, we are not going to do anything.

The President is trying to take away your right to vote so he can hold onto power, and Washington Republicans are trying to help him do it. They are using the SAVE America Act as a pretext for voter suppression. They know their policies are deeply unpopular with the American people, but instead of working to change their policies, instead of working to get more people access to the healthcare that they need, they are taking healthcare away from 15 million Americans. Instead of working to lower the cost of groceries, they

are instituting reckless tariff taxes that make everything more expensive. Instead of actually working on behalf of the American people, they are working to change who can vote in the next election.

And so we are going to stand up. I am certainly going to stand up for all of my constituents, and I mean that. I want the Georgians who are in red districts to know that I am fighting for you and your voice because this administration's so-called SAVE America Act will disenfranchise many of my constituents in red districts. That is because, increasingly, the people's voices are being squeezed out of their democracy. It is the folks with a lot of money, it is the corporate interests that they want to hear from.

And you are living right now with what happens when your voice is diminished. I see it. I see it in rural red counties that I visit all the time where their rural hospital is either closed or it is almost near closing because they cut a trillion dollars out of Medicaid. I see it in the eyes of farmers who are burdened by these tariff taxes and how it is creating damage and wreckage for their businesses.

I saw it the other day in Social Circle, GA, where the administration is determined to put a 10,000-bed ICE detention center in a town of 5,000 people—5,000 people—in Social Circle, GA. The administration went in, bought a warehouse for \$128 million, and the mayor, the city manager, the leadership of Social Circle, GA, learned that there would be a detention center in their town that would triple the size of their town by reading about it in the Washington Post.

So think about that. The mayor, elected to represent his people. The big, bad Federal Government comes in under cover of night and ambushes the duly-elected local officials because they didn't want to hear their voice. They were determined to bring this warehouse to their town whether they like it or not.

I am fighting for those people, even though it is, by and large, a red district. I don't have a lot of votes in Social Circle, GA, but I am a pastor first. I told the people of Georgia that I would fight for them, that I would walk with them even as I work for them. This is about the voices of ordinary people. This is about saving our democracy.

As I close—and nobody believes a Baptist preacher when he says "as I close," but I am not trying to break any records today. Andrew Young tells me the story of when they passed the civil rights bill into law.

Dr. King and his lieutenants went to see President Johnson. The President was feeling good—and he should. They had passed the civil rights bill into law after that long filibuster that I talked about at the beginning of this speech. They passed the civil rights bill into law, and Dr. King and his lieutenants went to see the President, and Dr. King

said: I am glad we got that civil rights bill into law. Without skipping a beat, he said: Now we need a voting rights law. He wasn't going to let the President bask too long in the glory of that victory. He said: That is great, but my people can't vote in the South. I need a voter rights law, and I need it yesterday.

The President said to Martin Luther King, Jr.: You are right. I get it. But I just can't get that done right now. I don't have the power.

They left the meeting, and the staff was feeling all demoralized and dejected, and they said to Dr. King: What are we going to do? The President said he doesn't have the power.

Dr. King just sort of shrugged his shoulders and said: Well, if the President doesn't have the power, I guess we are going to have to go and find him some.

Think about that. He was just a Baptist preacher, wasn't elected to anything. He was not a U.S. Senator, certainly not the President of the United States. But he said: We are going to go and find the President some power.

Dr. King understood and those who were around him understood that it is not about the people in power; it is about the power that is in the people.

So the people are standing up in this moment, and I am standing with them. No to the so-called SAVE Act; yes to saving our democracy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I very much appreciate the Reverend Senator WARNOCK and his reminder that questions about voting in America are moral questions, they are historic questions, and they are questions about our democracy. I am grateful for his leadership on this, and I hope all of us have a chance—if we didn't get to hear the speech the first time around, that we will get to replay it and listen to what he has to say.

Donald Trump is trying to stop American citizens from voting. Why? Because he knows that his agenda is unpopular and that Republicans can't win based on what he is doing, so he wants to rig the election by picking his own voters. That is what the SAVE Act is all about.

Don't let Trump and the Republicans in Congress fool you. They will say things like: Hey, you should have to show an ID to vote just like you have to do to buy a beer.

But this is not an ordinary voter ID bill. This is not a bill that says everybody either has to show a driver's license or a student ID to vote. This is a way to keep American citizens from voting, and I will just give you one example of this.

If this bill passes, then in 45 of the 50 States, your driver's license won't count as a valid ID. And then it gets better. Let's say you are a married woman who lives in Massachusetts. Let's say that when you got married,

you took your husband's name. Well, when you go to the polls to vote, you can't register by showing them your updated driver's license. Why? Because Massachusetts is one of the 45 States where a driver's license does not prove citizenship.

So you bring along your birth certificate. It shows you were born in the United States. Can you vote now? Nope. Your birth certificate is still under your maiden name.

So, yes, you can use a passport if you have one, but, remember, fewer than half of all Americans have a passport, and it costs \$165 to get one, and it takes a month or two if everything is working on time.

No passport and no birth certificate that matches your driver's license—well, Trump and the Republicans say you are just out of luck. And that is just one example of how this bill will actually make it harder for Americans to vote.

Here is another deeply disturbing thing about this bill. It would require States to hand over sensitive information about voters to Trump's Department of Homeland Security so that some shadowy guys can do whatever they want with it. Maybe they take you off the voters rolls. Maybe they use that information for something else. The point is, nobody really knows what will happen.

This is an Agency whose former leader, Kristi Noem, said just a few weeks ago:

[W]e need to . . . make sure that we have the right people voting.

So just make a guess who is going to get swept off the voter rolls. People that the Republicans think are likely to vote Democratic. So sweep off Black people. Sweep off Brown people. Sweep off women. Sweep off students. Sweep off people in precincts that voted Democratic last time. Sweep off people that you think might vote Democratic in the upcoming election.

I have heard this bill called Jim Crow 2.0, hearkening back to the days in the South when the South blocked Black people from being able to vote with a whole series of tests and barriers so that they just wouldn't have a chance to vote. The Trump bill is Jim Crow 2.0.

Noncitizen voting is extremely rare in America, and the Republicans know that. They have seen the same data that we have. Voter roll audits in Georgia prior to the 2024 election found only 20 registered noncitizens out of 8.2 million registered voters. That is 0.00024 percent. A 2024 Michigan audit found only 16 noncitizen votes out of 5.7 million votes. That is 0.00028 percent.

So then what is going on? Why are the Republicans doing this? Why are they chewing up all of this time in the U.S. Senate to do this? Well, we don't have to guess because the Republicans have been saying the quiet part out loud.

Republicans in Congress know that they are in deep trouble for the mid-

terms unless they can rig the rules and pick their own voters. Donald Trump even said it himself. He said passing the SAVE Act will "guarantee the mid-terms," because the Republicans know and Donald Trump knows that the policies they are shoving through right now are wildly unpopular.

So while Trump and Republicans try to spread conspiracies and lie about the SAVE Act, it is important that each and every one of us stays focused on what the Trump administration is really doing.

#### IRAN

Mr. President, here is what the Trump administration is really doing: After promising no more wars, Donald Trump has dragged the United States into an illegal and reckless war with Iran. That is lie No. 1. Already, at least 200 American servicemembers have been hurt, and 13 servicemembers have lost their lives. There are American lives lost and families grieving because Donald Trump dragged us into a war based on lies, a war launched without an imminent threat to our country and without any end in sight.

When he ran for President, Trump promised no wars. In fact, he kept saying he would be the "President of peace." He lied.

The United States is spending at least \$1 billion a day on the war with Iran. If we put the money we are using at war with Iran toward healthcare, we could lower costs for millions of Americans.

Just this week, Donald Trump's own Energy Secretary said out loud:

We were very aware that we would cause a little bit of increased prices on Americans.

Think about that. Trump and his top officials knew that this war would raise costs for Americans, and they did it anyway.

In just the first 6 days of the war, the Trump administration spent an estimated \$11.3 billion. That was in 6 days. We also lost three F-15 aircraft in just those first few days. That will cost us another \$300 million. Estimates say that the Trump administration has kept burning about 1 billion taxpayer dollars a day on the war in Iran, and now we are on day 18. Some estimates look more like \$2 billion a day. That is over \$23,000 every second, something like \$11.5 million since I started this speech.

So let's look at Trump's war-mongering by the numbers. Mr. President, \$11.3 billion, the estimated cost of the first 6 days of Trump's war; \$5.6 billion, the cost of munitions spent by the Pentagon in the first 2 days of the war; \$300 million, the cost to replace the three F-15s lost to friendly fire in the first week of the war; \$50 billion, how much the Trump administration says it wants to add to an already massively inflated defense budget to pay for a war that was never authorized by Congress; \$1 trillion, the Pentagon's budget this year; \$1.5 trillion, the total amount Trump is reportedly requesting for the Pentagon budget for next year. That

means Republicans in Congress want to increase the Pentagon's budget by \$500 billion.

To put these numbers in context, the Trump administration will spend \$30 billion in just the first 30 days of the war. That is exactly how much we could have used to lower costs for millions of people for an entire year—people who got knocked off their healthcare or saw their premiums go up because of Trump's healthcare cuts. So instead of going to war with Iran, we could lower healthcare costs and actually save lives here at home.

Here is one more: \$12 billion—a number we have already passed—\$12 billion is what it would cost to restore the expanded child tax credit for 1 year. So in less than 2 weeks of Donald Trump's war, we spent the same amount of money that would have lifted millions of kids out of poverty.

For the same amount the United States is burning on just 1 single day of Donald Trump's reckless war with Iran, we could provide a full year's worth of food assistance for nearly half a million Americans or Medicaid coverage for 300,000 children.

But there is more we could have done with the \$12 billion the Trump administration has spent on war with Iran. We could have provided housing assistance for around 1 million Americans. We could have lowered prescription drug costs for tens of millions of people. We could have paid the entire National Park Service for more than 3 years. We could have given Pell grants to 1.6 million students so they could afford to go to college. We could have provided retirement and disability pay for veterans wounded in combat and still had plenty of money left over. We could have helped pay the salaries of more than 100,000 teachers and nurses—2 jobs that are crucial, and where we have seen shortages. We could have funded Direct File, the program that lets Americans file their taxes online and for free. We could have funded that for two whole decades. We could have provided humanitarian assistance for countries around the world for almost 3 full years. That is a huge amount of money.

And I want to talk about one more thing we could be spending taxpayer money on instead of Trump's reckless war in Iran: making childcare more affordable for families.

Here is the thing: People have been getting childcare all wrong. Childcare costs are painfully high. Right now, families are having to choose between breaking the budget, being forced to cut back on work hours, or settling for lower quality care just to ensure that their kids have a safe place to be while the parents are working. In 49 of the 50 States, families pay more for childcare for their two kids than they do for rent.

And the reason why costs are so high is that, right now, people think of childcare as a privilege or as a service that is for sale. That is wrong. We

should be thinking of universal childcare as basic public infrastructure. We should be thinking about it the same way we think about roads and highways. Why? Because, for this country to work, we need to care for our kids. And when parents don't have childcare, they can't go to work.

Investing in universal childcare is also good for our kids' development, and it is good for our economy. We need affordable childcare just as much as we need schools to educate our workers and bridges to connect goods to the market. It is basic infrastructure to make this country run. It is the infrastructure we need to thrive. And, up until now, our Nation just hasn't been thinking about childcare that way. This is why we need to invest in childcare for every family.

It is just basic supply and demand. There are a whole bunch of families that need childcare, but there are a whole lot fewer childcare workers. Normally, when we want to attract more workers to an area, we just pay them more. But childcare prices are already sky high, and families just can't afford it. So where does that leave us? There is a huge gap that the Federal Government needs to fill.

Imagine: If the Federal Government didn't invest in roads and bridges, we just wouldn't have them.

And that is what is happening with childcare, and it is why we need to invest in universal childcare and raise wages for childcare workers. They should at least make the same amount as local public schoolteachers.

In the wealthiest country on this planet, access to affordable, high-quality childcare and early childhood education should not be a privilege reserved for the rich; it should be a right.

But instead of talking about lowering childcare costs, Donald Trump is delivering a punch to the gut to every parent struggling with those costs. Donald Trump is spending billions of dollars a week bombing Iran for reasons he cannot explain, but he cannot find a nickel to help the millions of people who are struggling to pay for healthcare, groceries, or childcare.

But this is a one-two punch. The Trump administration is spending a tremendous amount of money on war, and the war is also driving up costs for Americans.

Take the price of gasoline over the past month. For months, Donald Trump has been saying gas prices are going down. He has been loud and proud about it. Right now, the average price for gas is more than \$3.70 a gallon, more than 80 cents higher per gallon than just 1 month ago, when Donald Trump started this war. That is more than a 25-percent increase in gas prices in a single month, which Donald Trump called a "very small price to pay"—whoa, spoken like a billionaire.

We have not seen gas prices jump this much since Russia attacked Ukraine.

And now Donald Trump's war is choking off the Strait of Hormuz. That

is where about one-fifth of the world's oil and natural gas supply comes through, and right now it is all bottled up.

So what does that mean? Trump's war with Iran means gas prices are skyrocketing for American families here at home. And Donald Trump's response?

If they rise, they rise.

In other words, he just doesn't care.

Here is another one: food prices. About a third of the world's fertilizer goes through that same Strait of Hormuz, and prices jumped up by 30 percent in the days after Trump started this war. One U.S. farmer even said his fertilizer suppliers are warning they just can't get the fertilizer. It is not only that the price has gone up; it just literally is not available.

So you have all this fertilizer that can't go through the Strait of Hormuz, that can't make it to our farmers here in America. And without that fertilizer, the farmers say they just can't plant as much food this year. And what is that going to mean? It means food prices will go up.

So that is gasoline; that is food. But the prices of clothes, of technology, of basically anything that is moved around by trucks that use gasoline or diesel—the prices for all of those goods will go up as well. Diesel prices are already up by more than 25 percent, raising the cost of shipping goods—including Amazon packages and food—nationwide. And jet fuel prices have shot up by 58 percent since Trump started the war. Airlines are passing these costs on to consumers by pushing ticket prices up even higher.

Donald Trump's war with Iran is gearing up to become another forever war that burns billions of taxpayer dollars and makes life even more expensive for Americans here at home. This is a war that the American people do not want and did not ask for, but they are the ones who are footing the bill.

And what does the Trump administration have to say about that? Well, listen to Trump's top economic adviser. He said:

If [the war] were to be extended, it wouldn't really disrupt the U.S. economy very much at all. It would hurt consumers, and we'd have to think about . . . what we would have to do about that. But that's really the last of our concerns right now.

Consumers, "the last of our concerns"; higher prices for your family, "the last of our concerns"—according to the Trump administration.

Look, you don't need to wonder why prices are going up. The Trump administration has said the quiet part out loud. The higher costs American families are paying are the last of the concerns for the Trump administration, and they can't even be bothered to worry about lowering costs for the American people.

Lie No. 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6: Donald Trump, Pete Hegseth, and other top Trump officials just can't keep their story straight. They have no clear plan and

for weeks have failed to tell the American people what the goals are for this war and when this war will end.

First, Trump said the war would be over in 4 to 5 weeks. OK, that was 3 weeks ago. Since then, Trump has said all of these things: The war is “won.” The United States still needs to “finish the job.” The operations could end “soon.” The military may need to go “further.”

Every hour, the Trump administration’s justification for this war sounds completely different.

Why did the United States strike Iran? On March 2, Pete Hegseth said it was to end a 47-year war. The same day, Hegseth said it is because Iran refused to negotiate. And in another comment on the same day, Marco Rubio, the Secretary of State, said it was a response to Israel planning to strike. And then—yep, on the same day—Donald Trump said it had nothing to do with Israel planning to strike. Donald Trump said:

[I]f anything, I might have forced Israel’s hand.

Rubio then said Iran would have “so many short-range missiles” in a year. That is the reason to initiate the war.

Two days later, Trump says the reason why the United States struck Iran is because he had a “good feeling” that Iran would strike U.S. assets and our personnel in the region.

Look, it is just one story after another, and none of them add up. How can the American people trust this government when this government can’t even keep its own story straight?

And the Trump administration clearly has no plan for how this war will end. On the very first day of the war, Trump called the attacks “major combat operations in Iran.” A week later, Trump called it a “short-term excursion” that we are “getting very close to finishing.”

And what is the goal? The administration has no clue. On day one of the war, Trump told the American people he had to attack Iran because Iran posed an imminent threat based on their nuclear capabilities. But remember, last June, Trump bombed Iran and claimed that Iran’s key nuclear enrichment facilities had been “completely and totally obliterated.” Both of those things cannot be true at the same time.

And understand this: If Trump believes that Iran’s nuclear ambitions are a threat, then he had a chance to curb them. In fact, the United States had a deal that could have prevented Iran from getting a nuclear weapon. That was President Obama’s nuclear deal with Iran, and Trump ripped up that deal and—here is the best part—got nothing—nothing—in return.

So instead of doing the hard work of diplomacy to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon, Trump lies to the American people while dragging us into yet another reckless war that is costing American lives.

If you can believe it, Donald Trump and Pete Hegseth have even given con-

flicting takes on whether or not this war is over. On March 8, Hegseth said:

[T]his is only just the beginning.

The next day, March 9, Trump said the war is “complete, pretty much.” But he also said: “You could say both,” very complete and just the beginning.

Trump also said that we “haven’t won enough” and that we will “go further.” But just days later, he said:

We won. The first hour, it was over.

And then he said:

We don’t want to leave early, do we? We’ve got to finish the job.

Then, last week, Trump said we are ramping up strikes.

How long will this war go on? Well, one day after the war, Trump said “4 to 5 weeks.” The same day, Hegseth said “more or less than 2, 4, or 6 weeks.” And then he added:

It could move up. It could move back.

Then Hegseth said:

We’ll go as far as we need to go to advance American interest.

On March 10, Hegseth said it is up to Trump. He said:

Our will is endless. Ultimately, the President gets to determine the end state of those objectives.

On March 11, Trump said the war with Iran will end “soon.”

Look, this is not a game. This administration is sending young Americans to die overseas, and that means our government leaders need to treat this conflict with life-and-death seriousness. Instead, they don’t even have the decency to level with the American people.

Yet another lie from the Trump administration was about the horrific U.S. military strike on an elementary school in the early days of the war. Last week, a preliminary investigation by the Department of Defense confirmed that it is likely that it was our own military that bombed a girls school in Iran. This was one of the most devastating military mistakes in decades. Mr. President, 175 people were killed; most of them were children.

Now, before the investigation, Trump said over and over that the attack was done by Iran. But even after the investigation, Trump kept lying to the American people. He said he “didn’t know” about the investigation—an investigation done by his own military on one of the most horrific military mistakes in recent history.

And, remember, Pete Hegseth gutted the office that was in charge of preventing civilian harm. How do I know? I led the charge to establish that office in the first place.

Hegseth is also purging the military’s legal experts, the people who act as legal guardrails and ordered a “ruthless” overhaul to make sure that no one else who might question him is left standing.

It is a betrayal of our servicemembers and a betrayal of the American people that we still have no answers and no accountability.

So what would accountability look like here? Well, for starters, Pete Hegseth should be fired immediately. Hegseth’s long pattern of chaos and incompetence has put our servicemembers and the American people at risk, and we haven’t even scratched the surface of Signalgate or Hegseth’s role in boat strikes that could be war crimes.

Pete Hegseth has got to go, and he needs to go now.

The basic story here is pretty straightforward. Working families are struggling to pay for basic needs like groceries, housing, healthcare, and electricity. And now, prices are shooting up even higher because of Donald Trump’s new war in Iran.

Donald Trump’s dangerous actions overseas are making everyday life both more expensive, and regular Americans are paying the price. That is Trump’s America in a nutshell. And instead of changing their policies and actually trying to help the American people and not just themselves and their rich buddies, Trump and the Republicans are working to keep as many Americans from voting as humanly possible.

That is what this bill is really about, and every Senator who cares about our democracy should vote no.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARSHALL). The Senator from the great State of Texas.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I came back to Washington, DC, on Monday afternoon and decided I was going to leave some hamburgers—some Whataburgers—it is a famous hamburger from Texas—with some of the TSA agents who have not received a paycheck now for two pay periods.

We have seen the pictures during spring break and during all the activities in Austin—South by Southwest is going strong. So there is a lot of stress on the men and women who are working in the Transportation Security Agency, and they are not being paid because of the Democrats’ obstruction.

In fact, they are objecting to the payment of not only TSA agents but also the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Coast Guard, and, as it turns out, one of the premier criminal investigation directorates in the Immigration and Customs Enforcement known as Homeland Security Investigations.

This morning, during the “Worldwide Threats” hearing before the Senate Intelligence Committee—this was a public hearing—the FBI Director confirmed that Homeland Security Investigations was a critical part of the interagency process to deal with the threat of homegrown terrorism.

On March 1, we had a gunman go to 6th Street, a heavily populated area where people like to party, and proceeded to kill 3 innocent people and wound 12 others. He wore a sweatshirt that said “Property of Allah” and a T-shirt underneath that bore an Iranian flag.

Of course, we are all familiar with the incidents that have occurred in New York, in Virginia, in Michigan at the synagogue, and numerous other places which will be repeated time and time again as long as Democrats decide not to pay the very people whom we are depending on to investigate these cases and protect the American people.

I know a lot of focus has been on TSA—and, certainly, they deserve to be paid and are doing heroic work. And by delivering some lunch to them, I thought: Well, this at least will show some appreciation. Unfortunately, I couldn't deliver them a paycheck. That is all I could do because of the obstruction on the Democratic side of the aisle.

But this is something that I don't know whether the American people or even Members of the Congress are fully aware of; that by blocking the Department of Homeland Security funding, the Homeland Security Investigations directorate, in the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Department of DHS, is not being paid, which is endangering the safety of the American people. Director Patel of the FBI confirmed that this morning.

This has got to stop. It is hurting a lot of innocent people for no good cause. It is all based on political posturing, and innocent people are being hurt in the process.

S. 1383

Mr. President, the Senate, obviously, is currently debating the SAVE America Act. I am grateful to our colleague from Utah Senator LEE for introducing this legislation and to Senator THUNE for bringing it up to the floor for debate and vote.

I want to recognize the contribution of my friend across the Capitol in the House of Representatives CHIP ROY and others who championed this legislation all along.

It does some very simple things that in a normal world would not be controversial. It says: If you want to vote, you have got to be an American citizen, and if you want to cast a ballot, you have to have photo ID—the same thing you need to get on an airplane or to buy cigarettes or a six-pack of beer at a convenience store.

Not particularly—shouldn't be a controversial matter.

But you know, you begin to wonder, OK. Why would they oppose something that has such broad support among the electorate based on public opinion polling?

Is that because the Democrats believe that illegal immigrants ought to be able to vote and that a person ought to be able to cast a ballot without being able to confirm they are, in fact, the person they claim to be?

I think that is a very troubling matter, and I just think it is Trump derangement syndrome myself. It is almost like anything or everything that President Trump proposes or does, Democrats reflexively oppose.

The Senator from Massachusetts was just here complaining about trying to take out the Iranian nuclear threat.

Iran is the No. 1 state sponsor of terrorism. They have been enriching uranium in order to build a nuclear weapon. They have been building a stockpile of ballistic missiles and testing a space program that essentially will give them the technical knowledge they need to deliver intercontinental ballistic missiles, to ultimately manufacture those.

And our colleagues on the other side of the aisle say this was not a threat to the United States. Well, in this same hearing we had this morning on global threats before the CIA, the DIA, DNI, all the alphabet soup of Federal intelligence community components, they said this was a threat not only to us and our interests but also to our allies in the region. And the idea that we would sit back and do nothing while Iran acquires a nuclear weapon is just sheer madness.

Again, you have to ask yourself, Why would our Democratic colleagues say: "Well, that is OK. We are not going to do anything when they, the Iranian regime, has had American blood on its hands and is responsible for killing Americans over the years since the Iranian Revolution in 1979"?

And can you imagine them getting access to a nuclear weapon, what that would do to the Middle East and world peace and then acquiring the ballistic missile capability to be able to deliver that weapon thousands of kilometers away?

Well, the very least that I think would happen is all the Gulf States would start to acquire nuclear weapons and we would have a nuclear arms race and who knows what would be the outcome of that.

So I don't know what it is about the way Democrats react to President Trump's proposals. It seems like they want to take the opposite view of President Trump no matter what it is. They wouldn't even stand up at the State of the Union when he said: Stand up if you believe that we ought to enforce our laws and we ought to celebrate the people who keep our communities safe.

And almost all—virtually, all—of the Democrats sat on their hands because the last thing they would want to do is be found to agree with President Trump, even with something as obvious as that. So they picked the side of illegal immigration and nonenforcement of our immigration laws, which proved to be an unmitigated disaster during the Biden administration, and we are now having to clean up that mess.

So it just is amazing to me that we find ourselves, at this particular time in our Nation's history, where we are so polarized and where there is no willingness to try to work together in the best interests of the country.

So here we are, on a bill that would require only American citizens to vote

and that you need a photo ID in order to cast your ballot.

Well, our Democratic colleagues are, of course, doing what they usually do under these circumstances and saying this legislation will disenfranchise voters. Well, it will disenfranchise illegal aliens. It will disenfranchise noncitizens. That is the point.

And they don't want to do that?

Well, again, you have to wonder why. Is that because they want noncitizen, illegal immigrants to be able to vote? Well, we know for every illegitimate vote cast that it undermines and dilutes the vote of those of us who are American citizens and who are entitled to cast a ballot.

Well, I don't really get it. They are certainly appealing to a slice of the American electorate that I have a hard time understanding but they ought to at least tell the truth. And the truth is, we are perfectly capable of making sure that this bill does not disenfranchise any American citizen and that every American citizen who is entitled to vote can get a government-approved voter ID.

We already do that in many of the red States like Texas. It is just some of the blue States where they like lax voting integrity laws.

And you have to, again, wonder why that is. And it doesn't lead you to a very pleasant or welcomed conclusion.

We all know, as I said, that public opinion is on the side of this legislation. Seventy-one percent of voters, under a recent Harvard-Harris poll, including 50 percent of Democrats and 69 percent of Independent voters, support the SAVE America Act.

A 2025 poll from the Pew Research Center showed 83 percent of voters—you don't get consensus like that very often on any particular issue—but that 83 percent, including 71 percent of Democrats, supported requiring a photo identification when someone casts their ballot.

These are apolitical polling organizations. They are not funded by Republican donors, and they don't have ties to any political operatives on the right.

So the idea that Republicans are somehow trying to ram through a piece of partisan legislation, there is no evidence of that. It is false. It is untrue.

The majority of Americans, including a majority of many Democrats and Independents, support the SAVE America Act and its goals. If there are things that we need to do to tweak the bill to make it better, if our Democratic colleagues would help us in a way that they think would make sure we don't inadvertently disenfranchise anyone, we are more than happy to work with them. That is how legislation is supposed to be written.

So it is shocking to me that none of our Democratic colleagues are willing to vote with Republicans on this commonsense piece of legislation.

Furthermore, the talk about disenfranchisement of voters is simply insulting. It is blatantly untrue. Americans need a government-issued ID in

order to drive a car, to buy a phone, to open a bank account, to buy a six-pack of beer, to get on an airplane, and the list goes on.

I have never heard a complaint from any one of my almost 32 million constituents about their inability to drive because of the onerous burden of getting a driver's license, a photo ID. You can't rent a house without a government ID. The American people are smarter than I think Democrats give them credit for, that Democrats really think the American people won't be able to deal with this challenge of demonstrating that they are, in fact, legally qualified to vote, and that they are who they say they are by producing a photo ID. Well, one objection we have heard from our colleagues is: Well, it is already illegal for noncitizens to vote, so why do we need a law requiring proof of citizenship?

Well, if it weren't for the blue States that have lax voting laws—they don't check ahead of time to make sure somebody is actually legally qualified to vote. Once someone casts a ballot, it is almost impossible to figure out how to identify and prosecute that individual, and the election is already over.

Well, we look at the crime wave we see in many blue cities across the country after they have defunded the police. That is another bright idea of our friends on the left. It has resulted in thefts, carjacking, and murder. All of these activities were illegal, but because the law wasn't being enforced to deter these crimes, they happened.

So just because something is illegal without enforcement, deterrence doesn't occur, and that is why we need a photo ID.

It is also because with the dramatic increase of mail voting, voting by mail that happened during the COVID pandemic, many Americans rightly became worried that this process of voting by mail could be abused. If a ballot is mailed to the wrong address, particularly if it is not solicited, if it is just mailed out en masse to various addresses, there is not much stopping the wrong person from filling it out, forging a signature, and dropping it in the mail. Without an enforcement mechanism like the SAVE America Act to prevent fraudulent voting, it makes no difference that it is technically already illegal. Without enforcement, it is going to happen.

We are blessed to live in a country, a democratic Republic, founded on the principle of self-government, but the essence of the authority that we exercise here in Congress is as a result of the consent of the government. That is where all authority comes from, the American people. And it is antithetical to the idea of consent of the governed that somebody who was not legally qualified to vote can cast a ballot or somebody who wrongly claims to be another person can drop an unsolicited mail ballot into the mail and have that vote counted.

It undermines the very basic foundation of what makes our country

unique. Plus, people who are citizens and who are qualified to vote are entitled to know that their vote isn't going to be offset or diluted or undermined by somebody who is not legally qualified to vote. They deserve to know—we all deserve to know—that when we go to the polling place and cast a vote, that our vote is not being diluted by fraudulent voters who are voting early and often or by somebody who is not qualified to vote by virtue of the fact that they are not a citizen, they are illegally in the country.

Now, in my State and in many red States, I am grateful that our State legislatures have taken steps to address this problem, but in many blue States, that is not the case. That is the reason we need a national law to deal with that because of the blue States that are okay apparently with allowing noncitizens to vote and they don't require any identification, so somebody can falsely claim to be somebody else and mail in an unsolicited mail-in ballot.

So I am grateful to our leadership in the State of Texas, Governor Abbott and the rest, who make sure that we have safe and secure elections through secure mail-in voting, and I am proud we have taken this issue seriously and required voter ID. We started doing that more than a decade ago.

But in many States, blue States, as I said, they have not done their due diligence to protect elections by preventing noncitizens or illegal aliens from voting. The American people deserve better than this. It is not enough to have safe and secure elections in places like Alaska and Texas; we need them in all 50 States and the District of Columbia.

Nor is it enough for it to be technically already illegal for noncitizens to vote because, as I said, without enforcement, that is a meaningless requirement. The right of the American people to participate in the process of self-government must be effectively safeguarded in every State across the Nation in order for Congress to exercise the only legitimate authority there is in a democratic Republic, which is based on consent of the governed.

It is based on the fact that we run for elections and we are elected by people who were qualified to vote to represent their views in the Senate and in the House of Representatives.

The solution is clear, and it is just flabbergasting that this is even controversial that our Democratic colleagues would be opposed. I have done everything in my power, including supporting the use of the talking filibuster and being open to other reforms to the legislative filibuster, as I discussed in a recent op-ed in the New York Post, in the hopes of passing this bill through the Senate and getting it to the President's desk.

Seventy percent of Americans support the SAVE America Act. Now, the Senate must do whatever it takes for

this monumental legislation, this commonsense legislation, to become the law of the land.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I thank Senator CORNYN for his strong remarks in support of honest elections. I come to the floor for a different reason. But in support of what Senator CORNYN said, I want people to know that I have spoken on this issue already and I am not going to speak again, but I support and am a cosponsor of the SAVE America Act.

#### SUNSHINE WEEK

Mr. President, in eighth grade civics and high school government classes, people studying the Congress and article I of the Constitution probably go away from that study with a view that Congress only passes legislation and appropriates money.

I wish they spent as much time on the constitutional responsibility of the Congress to be a check on the executive branch of government. I call that oversight; in schools, it is probably called other terms. I come to the floor today to emphasize this because this is the 21st anniversary of Sunshine Week.

Sunshine Week continues to be a crucial reminder of the importance of open government and transparency. Sunshine Week emphasizes the checks and balances of government. There are 535 Members of Congress that have the responsibility of not only passing laws but to see that the President faithfully executes those laws according to congressional intent and when the President doesn't do that, to call a President out on that point of view. It is too bad we only use 1 week a year out of 52 to emphasize that. But Sunshine Week emphasizes something that is pretty simple: The public's business ought to be public.

It also emphasizes another thing: that transparency and accountability are important checks on the Federal Government. It reminds bureaucrats that they ultimately work for and answer to "we the people."

One transparency tool that I value is the Freedom of Information Act. That law requires government to proactively make materials public and also to respond to our requests and the public's requests for information.

After all, if it doesn't deal with national security and people's privacy, the public's business ought to be public. Last year, I held a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing highlighting how important this law is to government transparency, and congressional oversight is a part of my constitutional duty to protect taxpayers and to hold government accountable to the American people. That also applies to 534 other Members of Congress.

Now, a very important way to make this role of checks and balances work is listening to whistleblowers. Whistleblowers play a very critical role in this

duty of congressional oversight. Whistleblowers are, for the most part, in the executive branch of government.

They know what is being done according to the law and money being spent appropriately. They see something wrong, they tell higher-ups in their Agency about it. Sometimes that doesn't happen, or they don't get the actions that they think is appropriate to make sure the law is followed. So then these whistleblowers end up coming to those of us in Congress.

Whistleblowers are patriots and our most powerful tool in rooting out waste, fraud, and abuse—and, of course, misconduct, including the weaponization of our government.

Too often, whistleblowers are treated like skunks at a picnic in the Agencies they work in when they ought to be commended for their bravery. It ought to be easier, not harder, for whistleblowers to report misconduct, particularly to the Congress. Whistleblowers must be protected from retaliation and fully informed of their rights under the laws we have passed protecting whistleblowers.

That is why this Congress, I have introduced legislation to extend the anti-gag provision to cover Federal employees of executive Agency government corporations. This anti-gag provision requires government nondisclosure policies and similar agreements to inform employees that they can blow the whistle to Congress and to the Agencies' inspectors general.

I have also introduced bipartisan legislation clarifying that duty speech whistleblowers have the same burdens of proof as other Federal employees to prove retaliation.

I have worked with the Trump administration to fix the wrongs of the Biden administration for whistleblowers across multiple Federal Agencies. I have urged Secretary Bessent to remedy the Biden-era retaliation against IRS whistleblowers Gary Shapley and Joseph Ziegler. Thanks to the Trump administration—because this wouldn't have happened without Trump's being reelected—in March of 2025, these whistleblowers were promoted to leadership positions. Of course, let me emphasize, they shouldn't have been fired in the first place. These are two examples of whistleblowers being treated like skunks at a picnic.

I have also worked with the Trump Department of Homeland Security to secure promotions for Customs and Border Patrol whistleblowers Mark Jones, Mike Taylor, and Fred Wynn in May of 2025. These men faced severe retaliation during the Biden administration.

In August of last year, I assisted 10 FBI whistleblowers with their compensation agreements with the FBI. These whistleblowers were subject to demotions, security clearance suspensions, and other retaliation for reporting misconduct at the Biden Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Earlier this year, I worked with the Trump administration to secure an Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms whistleblower new employment and a financial agreement. He, like others, was severely retaliated against by the Biden Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms Agency.

Thanks to whistleblowers, we know that partisan FBI agents and Department of Justice prosecutors created and advanced the partisan investigation known as Arctic Frost. Arctic Frost was a vehicle to improperly investigate the entire Republican political apparatus. Subpoenas went out for about 400 conservative and Republican organizations and individuals.

Jack Smith and the FBI secretly obtained tolling data for Republican Members of Congress. Jack Smith and his team issued at least 197 subpoenas targeting these 400 individuals and entities.

By the way, all of these entities and individuals were Republican.

Jack Smith set out—almost the day after Trump announced he was going to seek reelection—to put President Trump in prison, and that all went on during the Biden administration.

I have launched a new Arctic Frost website that outlines my investigations and the thousands of pages of records that I have made public. I would like to note to everybody: A majority of these records were made public through me from whistleblowers, not the government Agency itself, which once again emphasized that if you want the public's business to be public, if you want transparency to bring accountability, you will see the very important role that whistleblowers play in government accountability.

In November last year, I also made public records showing that partisan officials at the Department of Justice and the FBI interfered with investigations into alleged wrongdoing by the Clinton campaign. Despite records showing that FBI agents had evidence the Clinton campaign and the Democratic National Committee intentionally concealed payments that targeted then-Candidate Trump—meaning during his first campaign—Department of Justice officials Richard Pilger and J.P. Cooney declined to investigate. Pilger and Cooney were also at the center of green-lighting Arctic Frost and Jack Smith's elector case against President Trump.

Now, it happens that political infection isn't just a Department of Justice and FBI problem. In November 2024, I wrote to FEMA after reports alleged Agency workers instructed a team responding to hurricane survivors to avoid homes with yard signs showing support for President Trump. Reportedly, at least 20 homes in Florida weren't given opportunities for FEMA assistance. In response to my oversight requests, the Trump FEMA told my office it had fired three employees who had engaged in this type of misconduct for political purposes, which was pre-

sumably to hurt President Trump's election efforts.

Through my oversight, I have also exposed flaws in the Health and Human Services program called the National Human Trafficking Hotline. I have also pressed the State Department on then-Secretary Kerry's obstruction of arrests of Iranian terrorists. Third, I have sought to obtain information from multiple Agencies on the Afghan evacuees responsible for the horrific shooting of two servicemembers from the West Virginia National Guard.

The Federal Government isn't the only bad actor that whistleblowers provided sunlight on. Last Congress, the Simon Wiesenthal Center disclosed to my office that Credit Suisse obstructed an internal investigation of the bank's Nazi-linked accounts. In February 2026, I held a bipartisan Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on this very matter. It revealed that Credit Suisse had maintained at least 890 accounts linked to Nazi officials. My hearing also revealed that UBS—a bank that has since acquired Credit Suisse—has begun similar obstructive conduct.

So, here, I get to the end of my remarks.

As my examples show, whistleblowers are the key to transparency. Sunshine Week, which we are celebrating this week, is an opportunity for the country to highlight the righteous fight for transparency in government.

Again, I repeat: The public's business ought to be public. The transparency of everything that goes on in government brings accountability. Sunshine is essential to making government accountable to "we the people."

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

S. 1838

MR. RISCH. Mr. President, I come to the floor today in strong support of a bill that I have supported from the very beginning, that being the SAVE America Act.

The SAVE America Act is common sense. At its core, this legislation is about something very simple: protecting the integrity of our elections. All this bill does is it ensures that U.S. citizens vote in U.S. elections and that when you show up to vote, you have to prove who you are. That is not too much to ask of someone who is showing up to vote. It is common sense.

Now, while it is simple, it is also essential. The right to vote is the foundation of our Republic. Trusted, secure elections are what have made us the greatest Nation in the world and the beacon of freedom for nearly 250 years. We cannot take this for granted.

Across the country, we have seen radical groups weaken election integrity and chip away at Americans' confidence in elections. In some places, voter rolls have been padded with non-citizens, and basic verification methods have become an afterthought, which undermine the constitutional

rights of the rest of us who are American citizens.

The SAVE America Act puts a stop to this by requiring proof of citizenship when registering to vote—something many States, including my State of Idaho, already enforce. Idaho already has some of the most secure elections in the Nation. The SAVE America Act simply holds the rest of the country to the same standard we follow in the Gem State, thus ensuring that all of us in America are held to the same standard and to an election that is a believable election that has the confidence of Americans.

There has been a great deal of misinformation regarding the SAVE America Act, so let me state clearly what this act does and does not do.

First, the SAVE America Act does not federalize our elections. It keeps them squarely in the hands of the States, as it should be.

Second, some of my Democrat colleagues claim this legislation is voter suppression. That is simply false. The requirements to vote in our elections are clear: You must be a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years old, and a resident of the State where you are registered. That is not too much to ask. It certainly doesn't suppress votes. The SAVE America Act does not change those requirements or add unnecessary redtape. What it does do is to ensure that the most fundamental requirement—U.S. citizenship—is actually verified when someone registers to vote.

Under current law, individuals can register to vote in Federal elections by simply checking a box claiming they are a citizen. The SAVE America Act closes that loophole by requiring proof of U.S. citizenship at the beginning of the voter registration process.

It only needs to be done once. That is not voter suppression. It is basic election integrity.

Third, Democrats are arguing that requiring identification makes voting harder.

But Americans already show identification for countless—countless—activities in routine, daily life. We need it to drive a car. We need it to board an airplane. We need it to go to work for a job, and so much more. If we expect ID for these basic actions, it is only reasonable to expect the proof of citizenship before someone is allowed to participate in Federal elections.

Poll after poll shows that the vast majority of Americans—Republicans and Democrats and Independents—support requiring identification and proof of citizenship to vote. So let's do our job and vote for what the American people want.

Every American should have confidence that when they cast a ballot, their vote counts and is not diluted by noncitizens voting in the same election. The SAVE America Act ensures that is what happens.

Safeguarding our elections is not only common sense. It is integral for a

country like the United States of America that is a robust democracy to have in order for people to have confidence in the country.

That is why I am committed to doing what it takes to pass the SAVE America Act. I am proud to support this bill and work with my Republican colleagues to get it to the President Trump's desk to be signed into law.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BARASSO). The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I think all of us know here in the Senate that Senators have the ability to write the titles of their own bills. You can give a bill whatever name you want, whether it is accurate and true or misleading. And in this case, we have a bill that has been entitled the SAVE America Act. But make no mistake, this is not about saving America. That is a fraud on the American people.

And what we are hearing from our Republican colleagues and what we hear from the President of the United States is that there is this rampant noncitizen voting in our elections. Donald Trump says there are so many noncitizens voting at the polls that they are rigged. In fact, that is why he lost in 2020, he says.

But, of course, we know there is zero proof for that. We know, in fact, that it is a big lie.

It is already illegal to vote if you are not a U.S. citizen. And the cases of noncitizen registration and noncitizen voting are vanishingly rare, almost nonexistent.

So what is this really about? Well, it is about Trump's obsession with a Federal takeover of our elections. That is not my word; that is his. He said he wanted to "takeover" our elections. And they do—Donald Trump does—want to make it particularly hard for voters who they think will vote against them. He wants to make it particularly hard for those voters to actually be able to cast their votes.

And that is what this bill is all about. It is about making it more difficult for millions and millions of Americans to exercise their right to vote, and it is calculated to try to make it harder for those Americans who President Trump assesses will vote against him or against Republicans.

Why else would Donald Trump have said it will "guarantee the midterms"? By "it," he meant this bill. So the President of the United States is saying that if Republicans pass this bill, it will guarantee them the midterm elections.

The only way that could be true is if this bill were designed to try to prevent, slow down, make it harder for millions of Americans to cast their vote who Republicans and Donald Trump think will vote against Republicans in the midterms.

He goes on to say: "If you don't get it, big trouble"—meaning, if we actually let American citizens vote and we don't put up these additional restrictions, President Trump assesses that Republicans will lose the midterms.

And he is desperate to change that. We already saw that in the redistricting effort in Texas and other places around the country. This is part and parcel of that effort.

Donald Trump said that was the goal, and, in fact, recently fired former Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem said the same thing in different words.

Here is what she said, a few weeks ago, in Arizona: "We have been proactive to make sure that we have the right people [to vote]—"

And then she said the other part out loud—

[to vote to elect] the right leaders.

In other words, let's try to shape the electorate by passing this bill so that we—we the Republicans and President Trump—get the voters they want to elect the "leaders" they want, meaning Republicans.

That is what this is all about. It is not about saving America. It is about saving Republicans in the midterm elections and beyond.

And they do this by making it harder for citizens to vote. So, yes, it is suppressing the vote. If you make it harder for anyone in this room who is an American citizen or anybody around the country to go out and cast their vote, if you put up hurdles to casting those votes, yes, it is making it more difficult to vote. That is suppressing the vote.

So let's look a little more deeply at the underlying claims behind this bill—the claim that we have all these noncitizens that are voting.

They can't prove it. In fact, the Speaker of the House, MIKE JOHNSON, said that noncitizens voting is something they know is happening "intuitively"—"intuitively."

He went on to say:

But it's not been something that is easily provable.

Not something easily provable—that is ridiculous. Of course, it is provable. People go into a voting booth. They give their name. That is a matter of the official record. And you can go about finding out whether the person who registered and cast their vote, in fact, is an American citizen. It is provable.

And the problem Republicans have is they set out to prove it and came out completely empty—completely empty.

Let's look at the findings of the conservative Heritage Foundation. So this is a conservative think tank, a Republican think tank. They could only find 24 instances in 20 years of somebody who voted without being a citizen, or maybe it was just registered to vote—but 24 instances between the year 2003 and the year 2023. This is what they are calling a rampant problem.

The Cato Institute, which is not a liberal organization, put out a report last month noting that Utah—the State of Utah—reviewed its approximately 2.1 million voters, and found 1 confirmed noncitizen who had registered but never voted.

I mean, it is certainly possible that if you are a permanent resident, if you have a green card, you might mistakenly believe you can vote in an election and register, and then realize you really can't and then not cast the vote.

So Utah looked at 2.1 million voters, and not a single one—not a single non-citizen among them—cast a vote and only 1 registered.

In Georgia, out of 8.2 million registrants, Georgia found only 20 who were noncitizens. I don't even know if they ended up voting or not.

So, obviously, in this country, we want only American citizens to vote, and that is what is happening. American citizens are the ones who are voting, not noncitizens.

And if you think about that, it makes intuitive sense, right? The penalty—the Federal penalty—for providing false information when you register is up to 5 years in prison. And then, if you actually go ahead and cast a vote as a noncitizen, it is up to another 1 year in prison.

Nobody—nobody—is going to risk going to prison for 6 years in order to cast a vote in an election. I mean, that defies common sense, and it also defies the fact, which is why Republicans can't come up with any proof to support their claim, which they argue justifies this bill—none.

Again, the Speaker says it is an intuition. In other words, it is a feeling he has got, but there is no proof to support it. It is because there isn't any.

So that is the false claim being made to justify this bill. In other words, it is a bill in search of a problem, but actually the problem doesn't exist. So it is obviously in search of something else, and that something else is making it harder for millions of Americans to vote.

As I mentioned, Donald Trump thinks if this bill is passed, it will "guarantee" the Republicans "the midterms." The former Secretary of Homeland Security says we need this bill to get the right voters to vote for the "right leaders."

Now, I was just listening to one of my Republican colleagues on the floor talk about how we need ID for all sorts of things, and, of course, that is true. You need a license to drive a car. But guess what. That license that you get, that is not proof of citizenship. That doesn't qualify under this bill. Even the new REAL IDs don't qualify for proof of citizenship under this bill because there are noncitizens who have those forms of ID. So when Republican Senators talk about these other forms of ID that we use every day, suggesting that they could be used for this purpose, that is just not true.

What this bill does is essentially narrow the forms of ID that you need to prove that you are a citizen in the first place to essentially two categories.

One is a passport. Now, it turns out that only about half of Americans have a passport. So that means half of the American citizens that are preparing

to go out and vote will not be able to vote because they wouldn't have the proof of citizenship. They don't have a passport.

Or it is an original birth certificate. Well, I think we all know that there are lots of Americans that don't have their original birth certificate.

In fact, if you are a woman who has gotten married and changed her name, that original birth certificate won't provide you the proof of citizenship required under this law.

And research at the Brennan Center at the University of Maryland shows that more than 21 million American citizens do not have these required documents readily available—21 million American citizens who will be forced to go through all these additional hoops and, by the way, pay money in order to get the required ID.

And, of course, in America, we are not supposed to have a poll tax. You are not supposed to have to pay the government any money for the right to exercise your right to vote. But that is what this bill does for maybe up to 21 million of our fellow American citizens.

So if there really were proof of an epidemic of noncitizen voting, of course, we would need to look for ways to prevent that from happening. We would have to come up with some form of required ID to meet that problem. But there is no proof there. There is no "there" there.

Now, one of the ways that the Trump administration proposed for trying to get to the bottom of all this claimed fraud was to require States to send the Department of Homeland Security their voting information. In fact, the Department of Justice has been asking a lot of States for this information. You may recall that Attorney General Bondi and former Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem were telling people in Minnesota: You know, we will call back ICE and their lawless efforts if you give us your voter ID information.

Of course, in our country, we have State-based elections, thank goodness. Thank goodness we count our elections at the State level. Can you imagine if we did what Donald Trump wants to do, which is federalize the elections and count them at the White House? I mean, do you remember in 2020, after he lost, the President of the United States was calling down to Georgia—Fulton County—and saying: Find me—what was it?—6,000-some votes.

Thank goodness we don't have centralized Federal elections in the United States of America because you can be sure that President Trump would make sure, when he conducted the count at the White House, it would come out his way.

So we don't have that, but we now have a Department of Homeland Security that is essentially demanding that States provide the Federal Government with their voter information. A lot of States are suing. They are fighting

back. Some States have been providing that information to the Department of Justice and to other entities. But it turns out that when the States hear back from the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Homeland Security is giving them all sorts of misinformation.

Let's look at a couple examples of States that have already shared their voter roll data with DHS. This was, again, for the purpose of DHS checking to make sure that voter rolls in those States did not include noncitizens. So DHS was going to scrub those records and let the States know what kind of problems they have.

Well, Missouri's records were reviewed by DHS, and it turns out that DHS found hundreds of voters that DHS said were ineligible to vote. Guess what. It turned out that DHS was wrong and that they were eligible voters. So DHS was essentially telling the State of Missouri that eligible American citizen voters in fact were not eligible.

One county clerk in Missouri said of the DHS system:

This is not ready for prime time. And I'm not going to risk the security and constitutional rights of my voters for bad data.

That is a clerk in the State of Missouri.

An election administrator in Texas said:

I really find no merit in any of this.

That was after three eligible Texas voters—in other words, eligible American citizen Texas voters—had been flagged for removal by DHS.

So here is the State of Texas: OK, DHS, take a look at our voter files, and you find all those people that are really not American citizens.

Well, guess what. They didn't get any back that flagged people who were not American citizens. They did get back people that DHS claimed were not eligible, but when Texas inspected it, it turns out they were eligible to vote. That is the kind of operation the Trump administration is running at DHS.

In addition to requiring this essential Federal takeover of review of the voter rolls, this second bill that has been introduced by Republicans in the Senate is even worse than the first. The first was called the SAVE Act. This one is called the SAVE America Act—which, as I said, the real purpose is to "Save the Republican Party in the Midterm Elections Act."

But this second one actually makes it harder for people to register to vote and to vote. It includes new provisions that President Trump has demanded prohibiting vote-by-mail except in very, very narrow circumstances.

In order to vote by mail, a voter would have to submit sworn certifications to the specific circumstances, including their health status or travel plans, to their board of elections. Even after that, you can't just drop the ballot in the mailbox; you have to send it by certified mail, with signature verification.

So this isn't a voter ID bill. That is just untrue. It is a specific kind of ID that is required, which millions of American citizens don't have. It is really a "Show Me Your Papers Voter Purge Bill," making it harder for American citizens to exercise their right to vote.

As I said earlier, the real purpose is not to prevent noncitizens from voting; it is to prevent citizens who the Trump administration and Republicans assess will vote against them in the midterm elections—to make it harder for them to vote.

You are seeing many other efforts that are ongoing right now to try to rig the midterm elections. I mentioned earlier the efforts to redistrict in Texas. We see challenges to the Voting Rights Act. We see this bill. It is a sign of desperation. It is a sign that Donald Trump knows that the American people don't like what they see coming out of this administration.

After all, this is a President who, as a candidate, said he would keep us out of wars—especially in the Middle East—and he would focus on lowering prices. That is what Candidate Trump said. What has President Trump delivered? He has gotten us involved in more conflicts than any other President in a very long time—including an illegal war of choice in Iran as we speak.

#### THE ECONOMY

Mr. President, prices and costs are going up, up, up. The price of groceries is going up. The price of rent and mortgages is going up. Healthcare is going up.

By the way, we could have at least reduced some people's healthcare costs if this Senate had voted to extend the Affordable Care Act tax credits, but Republicans in this body blocked that effort. So I have constituents in Maryland who now have to pay more because while the Republicans' so-called Big Beautiful Bill permanently extended tax cuts for billionaires, they let the one tax credit that helps middle-class families afford their healthcare—they let that lapse.

Billionaires—permanent tax cuts. American working families' tax credit for healthcare—that one they let die, go away, so healthcare costs are going up really for everybody.

Childcare costs are going up.

Instead of addressing those issues, we have a President who continues to hide portions of the Epstein files from the survivors as well as from the American people, and we have a President who is engaged in driving up costs for the American people instead of bringing them down.

I don't know exactly how many days it has been since the Supreme Court struck down his illegal tariff tax, but it has certainly been enough time for the President and his administration to say that they are going to send the money they stole from the American people back to American households. Mr. President, \$1,700 per household is

the estimate of what those Trump illegal tariff taxes cost on average.

Give them their money back, President Trump. Do it today.

But that is not what President Trump is doing.

#### IRAN

Mr. President, the war in Iran has already cost us the lives of 13 service-members. Hundreds more have been injured. Over 2,000 civilians have been killed throughout the region, from Iran, to Lebanon, to Israel, including over 160 Iranian schoolgirls killed, apparently, by a U.S. Tomahawk missile.

That war is making us less safe, not more safe. We all know that the administration has no endgame. They took the lid off Pandora's box.

They, together with Israel, took out a number of members of the Iranian regime. It is a heinous regime, and it has been brutal to its own people. But public reporting indicates that our intelligence Agencies assess that if you got rid of the top-level Iranian leadership, very likely, they would be replaced by even more radical leaders, people who are closer to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard—in other words, people who are even more dangerous and more likely to destabilize the region. And that is what we are seeing.

We are spending a billion dollars of taxpayer money every day—probably more—on this war that is making us less safe.

By the way, for the President who said he was going to reduce prices, oil and gas prices are going up, up, up.

#### CORRUPTION

Mr. President, the American people don't like what they see. On top of this, it is mixed with a toxic amount of corruption. We have the President's son-in-law Jared Kushner going around and pretending to be the big peacemaker in the Middle East—look how that is going—and at the same time doing big, huge deals with Gulf States, with Saudi Arabia and others.

We know that this is a President who, with his so-called meme coin, has pocketed millions and millions of dollars for himself and his family, accepted a luxury jet from the Qatari royal family and a gold-plated Rolex desk clock from Swiss business leaders, and in exchange for a gold crown, gave South Korea a lower tariff rate.

Probably one of the most corrupt transactions of them all was with the UAE, because what happened with the UAE was just before Donald Trump was inaugurated as President. Someone in the UAE—one of the members of the royal family—made a huge investment in the Trump family stablecoin business—a huge investment.

It wasn't long thereafter that the President's son Eric Trump went to the UAE. And guess what happened. Sheik Tahnoon, who is a member of the royal family, invested billions of dollars in that Trump family stable coin business.

Then it was about 2 weeks later that Donald Trump goes to the UAE and

says to the UAE that he is going to relax the restrictions the United States had in place on the transfer of very sophisticated technology to the UAE—semiconductor technology, AI technology.

We were especially worried about transferring that technology to a particular set of companies in the UAE because of their relationships with China. But do you know what? The UAE—a member of the royal family—had just invested a lot of money in the Trump family stablecoin business, and so, hey, Donald Trump relaxed the restrictions on the transfer of U.S. technology to the UAE and put that at risk of transfer to China.

It is massive corruption that benefited the Trump family at the expense of American national security.

So, yes, the American people don't like what they are seeing. We are seeing that in all the polling.

S. 1383

So what this bill before us is, is the last-ditch effort by the President of the United States and Republicans in the Senate and the House to try to save themselves in the midterm elections—not by winning fair and square, not by saying that every American citizen should be able to exercise their right to vote, but by making it harder for those American citizens that they think are likely to vote against them and for Democrats—making it harder for those people to vote. It is not the SAVE America Act. It is the "Save the Republican Party in the Midterm Elections Act."

You would think that President Trump would recognize that where the American people really want to see action is on meeting the promises that he made—like keep us out of foreign wars, including this illegal war of choice in Iran, actually do something to bring down prices.

I have tried to get the White House interested in the bill I have introduced. It is called Power for the People Act. It has a very simple idea, premise, which is that consumers across America—ratepayers, our constituents—they shouldn't have to be paying higher electricity costs to fund data centers being built by the richest companies and corporations on the planet. In my State of Maryland, we are part of a 13-State grid called PJM. People living in those areas have spent \$28 billion in higher electricity costs already for those data centers.

We really need to focus on what candidate Trump said he wanted to focus on—bringing down costs and ending foreign wars—not doing the opposite. And this bill is an attempt by Donald Trump and Republicans in Congress to prevent the American people from expressing their views at the ballot box in November 2026 by making it harder for millions of Americans to vote. That is what this is really about, and I urge my colleagues to strongly oppose it.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASIDY). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, nearly 5 years ago, I stood on the Senate floor, and I said that we were “facing the most dangerous and overt threat to our democratic system in generations.”

I was speaking then in support of the John Lewis For the People Act. Along with my Democratic colleagues, I was pushing to expand Americans’ right to vote and push back against the influence of dark money in our elections.

But the threat facing us then pales in comparison to the one that we face today in the form of the Republicans’ so-called SAVE Act because their SAVE Act does nothing to save anyone from anything. It does not protect our freedoms; it does not protect our elections; and it does not protect our country. Instead, it actively targets all three.

So I rise again today to face down this new dangerous and overt threat, this time coming from within our own Federal Government. I rise again today in defense of our right to vote because our right to vote is the foundation of every other right that we have. From our right to bear arms to our right to peacefully protest, it is only through our right to vote that we can protect those freedoms and demand a government that does the same. We know this to our core, to our founding, to the genesis of our country.

When, 250 years ago, we fought for independence from Kings, we did so for a government of the people, by the people. The future of that government right now depends on protecting Americans’ right to vote. It depends on ensuring that this lever to hold our leaders accountable, to steer our country’s future, and to deliver on our country’s promise remains in the hands of Americans—that is, in the hands of all Americans.

And when I think about the importance of this fight, I think about my former colleague whose office was right across the hall from mine when I was a Member of the House of Representatives. I think about Congressman John Lewis. I think about him and the thousands who marched in Selma and put their lives on the line to call for the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. I think about the thousands who fought against reading tests and poll taxes, folks who faced lynching for having the audacity to cast their vote, folks who ensured access to the vote wouldn’t belong only to the wealthy, landowning men.

I think about the thousands of women who organized and marched to demand passage of the 19th Amendment, the women who led that movement and the women who rightly demanded to be included within it.

And I think about the legislative and courtroom battles that delivered the

right to vote to Native Americans and Mexican Americans, a right so fundamental to our democracy but one that generations upon generations of Americans had to fight for, continuing into today.

It is our right to make our voices heard through our vote, regardless of income or education, regardless of race or gender. When we, as Americans, exercise our right to vote, we hold in our hands the reins of this great democracy. And while I stand here in reverence of that incredible right and the decades and decades of work that have brought it into the reach of millions, I also stand here in defense of it because it is truly under direct threat right now.

Republicans’ SAVE Act would strip the right to vote from those who don’t already have a passport or a birth certificate or the time and money to expedite getting one. It would strip the right to vote from women who took their husband’s last name and don’t have the means to get the affidavits or extra documents to prove that they are the same person they were at birth. It would effectively strip voters of the ability to register to vote by mail. And the substitute amendment that was offered yesterday would eliminate most mail-in voting altogether.

This SAVE Act is today’s poll tax, today’s exclusion of everyday Americans. Senate Republicans claim that this is necessary to confront the threat of foreign citizens voting in our elections, but the requirements their SAVE Act imposes are neither necessary nor justified. They are by design. They are intended to reimpose a wealth requirement to vote, and they are intended to attack married women’s right to vote.

These are the real threats that this legislation poses. This is not a voter ID bill; this is a voter suppression bill. And while the consequences will fall heaviest on married women and those without the money and time to get the necessary documents, it is up to all Americans to push back—which reminds me of the words of Benjamin Franklin.

When asked at the Constitutional Convention if our Founders had created a monarchy or a republic, Franklin famously said:

A republic, if you can keep it.

We can, we must, and we know how because generations upon generations have fought for our sacred right to vote, and in that fight, they have shown us the way because these are not the first threats we have faced to elections in our country’s history or even in my limited time in the Congress.

In 2016, we saw Russia execute a concerted campaign to mislead and divide Americans, all in an effort to influence that year’s Presidential election. As a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, I helped investigate those efforts, recommending reforms to push back and supporting funding to improve election security across the

country, including in my home State of New Mexico.

In 2021, we saw then-defeated President Trump push his Big Lie and urge insurrectionists to storm the Capitol to stop the 2020 Presidential election certification. As a Member of this body, I joined my colleagues in ensuring that the election certification would continue and, later, in clarifying our laws to fortify our election certification process going forward.

And, last July, I helped introduce the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act to fully restore that landmark legislation and to override the Supreme Court’s 2013 decision that took an ax to the heart of it.

But now, as we enter this midterm election, we see the threats for what they are—and who they are coming from. They aren’t coming from foreign governments or defeated candidates this time. They are coming from within our own Federal Government and directly targeting American citizens’ right to vote. They are coming from our Commander in Chief and they are coming from our Department of Justice and they are coming from many in the Republican Party. They are coming from folks who would rather sabotage and strip away Americans’ right to vote than face the American people’s dissatisfaction or, for that matter, be willing to tackle affordability.

The legislation they are using to do that is their so-called SAVE Act, one of the most extreme voter suppression bills in recent history. It is intended to undermine our elections, using tactics that are straight out of an authoritarian playbook.

But we know how to defeat this new threat: Vote no. Vote no on the SAVE Act because it would require every American to prove their citizenship with a passport or a document like a birth certificate every time they register or reregister to vote, because about 140 million Americans don’t have passports and about 21 million Americans don’t have ready access to documents proving their citizenship either.

But the process to get a passport, that is not fast, that is not easy. In fact, that is not inexpensive. Requiring voters to purchase or renew a passport for \$130 is a modern-day poll tax. This is Jim Crow 2.0. That is even assuming you can get yours in time to actually be able to use it to vote in this year’s election.

And while I support verifying citizenship, that process should not be limited to just passports and birth certificates. We already have ways to do this, like the motor voter program, which the SAVE Act would effectively eliminate. That program verifies citizenship.

Vote no on the SAVE Act because it would require people whose names don’t match their birth certificates, like women who have taken their husband’s last name, to provide notarized affidavits, documentation that will undoubtedly take more time and more money to produce.

Vote no on the SAVE Act because it affects our veterans too. With the SAVE Act, many servicemembers and veterans won't be able to register to vote or to vote with their military IDs, even people who fought for this country.

Vote no on the SAVE Act because even if you happen to have the right documents, you will find that the bill all but eliminates voter registration drives, online registration, and automatic registration.

Vote no on the SAVE Act because even when it is done eviscerating your rights to vote, the SAVE Act would turn its sights on election officials. It would require massive, unfunded changes on how elections are administered on the ground overnight, changes that local governments would be forced to pay for, all while exposing election officials to criminal and civil liability.

If you are tempted to vote yes, let me ask this: What does it say about leaders whose sole strategy for remaining in power requires depriving American citizens of the right to vote?

It shows they are weak. It shows they are scared. It shows that their allegiance is to power, not to the American people. And it shows that they have no intention of delivering what the American people actually want right now, which is to bring down costs.

In the end, the conclusion is clear: The SAVE Act is straight-up voter suppression, and it is fundamentally undemocratic, un-American, and wrong.

It is not just me saying that, not just my Senate Democratic colleagues saying that; my constituents see it for what it is too.

Marie from Albuquerque writes:

This act is a blatant attempt to disenfranchise millions of voters of their rights . . . it is a blatant attempt to undermine our entire election system.

Deborah from Las Cruces says:

Especially in New Mexico, so many citizens do not have the resources to get the sort of documentation [that] this act requires. It will target not only those in need, but also women who have recently married and changed their name, people who have moved to a different home, Native Americans with little access to the bureaucracy to [even] obtain documents, and older people who may have been born at home and never had a birth certificate to begin with.

Dawn from Rio Rancho writes:

It would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to implement, streamline, and add staff because we would all have to go in-person. And if you live in a rural community, the whole process is even harder.

Mariah from Santa Fe writes:

This is a brazen attempt to strip the voting rights of trans, immigrant, and women voters across the country, and the GOP's way of putting their thumb on the scale of America's future . . . ALL of us deserve a part in the great experiment of American Democracy. So much progress is made when we're all included, not excluded.

And Ms. Marsh Davis from Bloomfield says:

This legislation is not about election security. It is a coordinated effort to suppress

lawful voters by turning registration into a bureaucratic obstacle course. . . . Voting should not hinge on flawless paperwork. When officials are afraid to register voters, democracy suffers. . . . Voter suppression is not always loud. Often, it works through inconvenience, confusion, and quiet disqualification—ensuring voters only discover the problem when [it's] too late.

These are the voices of my constituents from New Mexico, and they are not alone because right now most Americans know that the SAVE Act is not the answer; they see through Republicans' voter suppression scheme; and they are asking us here in the Senate to fight back.

So let me close with some words from U.S. Senator Dennis Chavez of my great State.

Either we are all free, or we fail; democracy must belong to all of us.

I have a passport. I have the same last name today as I did when I was born. The SAVE Act won't stop me from voting, but it will stop thousands upon thousands of my constituents.

I will repeat: This is not a voter ID bill; this is a voter suppression bill. All American citizens should have the same right to vote as the Senators in this room.

All American citizens deserve to hold the reins of this great democracy in their hands.

So for those constituents, for all Americans, I say again:

Either we are all free, or we fail; democracy must belong to all of us.

I call upon my colleagues in the Senate: Choose freedom, choose democracy, and say no to this so-called SAVE Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The minority leader.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, in a moment, my good friend my colleague from Georgia will offer a resolution that is very simple: It says fund TSA. Period. No ands, ifs, or buts, no excuses, no secondary reasons.

If Senators want to fund TSA, they should simply support the resolution of Senator WARNOCK. No ands, ifs, or buts.

Who is blocking TSA money from being approved? Republicans.

On several occasions, Democrats have gone to the floor and said: Let's just fund TSA. We know that there are discussions about ICE and Border Patrol that we haven't resolved, but why hold TSA hostage? Why hold passengers at our airports who are waiting on long lines hostage?

All the Republicans have to do is say: Yes, and those lines will be greatly re-

duced or go away, the waiting will be greatly reduced, and people will be much happier.

So to hold our airport travelers and our TSA workers as hostages is so much the wrong thing to do, and the American people don't like it.

But the American people should know, if they get up and block the Warnock resolution, it is Republicans blocking funding for TSA, creating those long lines, and standing in the way of funding our hard-working TSA workers.

Democrats are giving Republicans another chance. We can fund TSA workers today. We can make sure our airports are secure today. We can make sure the workers are paid today. They just need to get out of the way and stop blocking TSA officers' paychecks.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. WARNOCK. Mr. President, I am so grateful for the leadership of Senator SCHUMER, and he speaks for all of us.

The thing that we have in common on both sides of the aisle is that my colleagues and I travel back and forth from this city to our home States every week. Airplanes are our other office.

So every week I fly here or fly back home. I pass by hard-working agents of the TSA. I get to see their dedication up close, their professionalism. They are public service in action, and they are working long hours around the clock every day of the year.

Wherever we are trying to go, our TSA agents get us there safely; safely to work, safely back to our families, wherever the public is trying to go. And these public servants sacrifice their holidays, their special moments with their families so that we can get to our families.

They work nights and weekends to make sure that we in this Chamber and the millions of Americans that travel from our Nation's airports can do that without fear.

So this is basic. No one should be fooling around with the TSA agents. We have our differences, our debates in this Chamber, but for the second time of the year, our TSA workers are working without pay because of Washington dysfunction.

Here is what I believe: I believe that if you are working—particularly, during a government shutdown—then you should be fully paid. I believe this so much that I have broken with Members of my own party to vote to pay all Federal workers, which includes TSA officers, during government shutdowns.

I think it is simply wrong for my Republican colleagues to use these hard-working Americans as leverage, as pawns, in what they are presenting as a false choice to the American people.

Here is the choice that they are presenting to us. They are saying to us: Either shut down the government, denying working people the money that

they have earned, or vote to continue to support the President's paramilitary force that is wreaking havoc in our streets and killing ordinary citizens for exercising their First Amendment rights.

That is a false choice—one I simply cannot accept—and it confounds common sense.

The time is always right, as Dr. King used to say, to do what is right. So I am calling on this Chamber to pay TSA workers right now before we, again, all head to the airports. Let's keep having this debate, but pay the TSA workers.

So with that, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 4127, the Transportation Security Administration Pay Act, that the bill be considered read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I do thank my colleague for coming to the floor to be able to talk about this today. He and I are both on airplanes a lot.

The comment that has been made here on the floor, though, is: Before we leave here this week, this should be resolved. I could not agree more on that principle.

In fact, last Thursday, I came and said we should not leave at all this weekend; we should commit to stay. In fact, Senator HASSAN and I, my Democratic colleague from New Hampshire, she and I have a bill that says when we get to a moment like this and we have an impasse, we stay; we don't leave.

I brought that to the floor last Thursday and said: Let's stay.

And everybody left, went right past TSA officials who are not being paid and went wherever people went over the weekend.

I am saying the same thing again. We should stay here and work out our differences. The easiest way to actually resolve this long term is to say, when we get to an impasse on funding, those workers are still paid. There is an automatic continuing resolution that kicks in to make sure they are paid, but we stay in session 7 days a week until we resolve the issues.

We shouldn't have weekends when there is a problem somewhere in funding around the country. The pressure should be on us to be able to get things resolved, to debate it out.

We are the grownups that are supposed to be talking about all these things and working out all of our differences, but that is not happening. And that has been frustrating.

Last Thursday, I brought up that the White House had sent over a counterproposal. There was a proposal that was sent over at the very beginning of this closedown of DHS, and the White House said: Here are some ideas we want to have.

The Democrats then said: No, we want this instead.

They sent it back over to the White House.

The White House then said: OK, we will take some of your ideas, and we will send this back to you.

And then they waited 18 days for Senate Democrats to respond to the White House. For 18 days, the White House just had to wait for a counteroffer. As my Senate colleagues were just saying, we are thinking about it.

Well, that response did finally come on Monday, but it was a response back to the White House of the same thing they had said before.

The White House is trying to get this resolved, not just for TSA. But how about for the Coast Guard? My Democratic colleagues came and said: Well, OK, we will fund the Coast Guard, as well, and TSA, and the Secret Service.

Do you know who has not been funded? There is no offer to fund Customs officials that actually work at all of our ports of entry. Their pay is going to be blocked. For Homeland Security individuals, there has been no offer to be able to pay those folks at all. For the Homeland Security investigators that actually handle child trafficking, human smuggling, and all of our investigations along the border dealing with drug smuggling, there has been no offer to fund them at all.

This is silly to try to break this up into different aspects of who is going to get funding and who is not going to get funding. TSA is going to get funding, but the Customs officials aren't going to get funding. Coast Guard is going to get funding, but the people investigating human smuggling are not going to get funding.

Let's sit down and figure this out. Let's not have 18 days between an offer and a counteroffer. Let's actually figure this out. Senator WARNOCK and I could probably sit down this afternoon and solve this.

All that everyone is looking for is: How do we actually get people in the room, willing to make the decision and making the decisions on this, so we can get this all worked out and done?

I was incredibly humbled because, when I walked through TSA this week, I walked through with grief as I walked through, because all I can think is, these folks are busting it. When I get there early in the morning, they have been there for hours already, and they are not getting paid.

The folks in Oklahoma are still showing up. We are not seeing the long lines and sick calls and all that, because that is not happening in my State. People are still showing up. And I walk past them embarrassed, saying: I am so sorry we have not been able to get everybody together to be able to get this solved.

But when I came through this week, as I walked through, the first TSA agent that I encountered said to me: We have something for you. And the second person, as I came through the

line, said: Don't walk away. We have something for you.

And then, when I got to my gate, the head of the TSA group in my city walked out and handed me their challenge coin from my local TSA group. And he handed it to me, and he said: We see what you are doing. You are trying to get us paid. You are trying to get everybody paid. And we are really grateful that you are actually trying to get this solved. And we just want to say thanks because it has been a really hard year of sometimes funding happening and sometimes not.

In fact, one of the agents in Oklahoma City, last month, told me they feel like their check is bipolar because they never know where it is going to be at any moment. That just shouldn't be so. That just shouldn't be.

So my challenge, this week, is the same as it is every week. Let's stay here until this actually gets done. Let's not walk away. Let's sit down. Let's figure out how we actually solve this. Let's not take 2½ weeks to do a counteroffer to a legitimate offer from the White House.

And can I just remind my colleagues, the White House's counteroffer expanded the use of body-worn cameras dramatically. It required ID on every single officer. These were all requests that my Democratic colleagues have made to be able to put in. They said that they won't do enforcement activities in sensitive locations and make sure that all Members of Congress can do oversight and get access to detention facilities.

I mean, the list goes on and on and on. This is the list of what my Democratic colleagues all asked for. But it never seems to be enough, and my fear is that it is because the politics are better than the resolution.

Well, it is not if you are a TSA officer. It is not if you are in the Coast Guard. It is not if you are a Customs official. It is not if you are a Homeland Security investigator. Your family is not getting fed. It is not getting better for them. So the politics may be helpful for some, but it is not helpful for all.

So let's do it, at least while we are in the debate, where we started this debate. We didn't start with a shutdown. We started with, OK, let's at least agree we will keep the government open in all these areas while we are debating.

We started with just 2 weeks here, and said: For 2 weeks, let's do a continuing resolution. Let's keep our argument going but pay everybody.

That is where we began on this, but it seems like the easiest thing that we could literally do today and keep our argument going, because, hopefully, we are close, at least, on all this agreement, if we can ever get everybody to sit down in one room and to solve them.

So I am just going to ask—to repeat—what we did at the start of this.

I ask the Senator if he would modify his request so that the Senate can proceed immediately to the consideration

of Calendar No. 156, H.R. 4553, which is a 2-week continuing resolution for Homeland Security. I ask that Senator WARNOCK would substitute his amendment No. 4353 to be considered and agreed to, that the bill be amended and be considered read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator so modify his request?

Mr. WARNOCK. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard to the modification.

Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. LANKFORD. Painfully so, I do object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. WARNOCK. Mr. President, let me be very clear. Our differences here are differences in principle, and they have real consequences on the streets of America in realtime right now.

This is not just some theoretical argument. This is not about politics. This is about the people.

I disagree fundamentally that we ought to have an unaccountable paramilitary force wreaking havoc on the streets of our country. ICE, as Trump has remade it, is killing American citizens.

And I can't pretend like that is not happening. I stood where Renee Good was shot and killed while her vehicle was driving away. I stood where Alex Pretti lost his life while just trying to defend and protect a woman who we all saw being abused by ICE agents in realtime.

And so this idea that we either have to fund that or shut the government down is a false choice. Republicans have the majority in the Senate. They have the majority in the House. They have the White House. We can pay our workers right now.

By the way, ICE already has more than enough money. They gave ICE \$75 billion in the "One Big Ugly Bill."

Let me put that in perspective. In terms of funding, ICE is now bigger than the U.S. Marines, and my Republican friends are saying to me and saying to my colleagues that if you don't give this overgrown paramilitary force of masked agents jumping out of unmarked cars more money, we are going to leave TSA workers and others unpaid.

I think that is patently unfair. I think we ought to fund the Federal workers; we ought to fund FEMA, the Coast Guard. We ought to fund Homeland Security while we have a principled argument about what is happening with ICE, because what is happening there gets to the very basic things that I learned in my ninth grade civics class about the engagement between law enforcement and ordinary citizens every single day. And what we are witnessing, in this moment, is unacceptable.

Pay the TSA workers. That is my offer. That is my request. And, therefore, I object to the Senator's modification.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHMITT). The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. I appreciate my friend RAPHAEL WARNOCK coming to the floor, the Senator from Georgia, and being able to talk about these issues.

The challenge of this is that the request has been made to say: Let's reform ICE.

You referred to law enforcement families who get up every day and put their lives on the line to be able to protect the country as paramilitary officers jumping out on people. I don't refer to them that way.

But I would only say, the White House has said: We agree with you; let's reform them.

They put in writing: new deescalation training, requirements for badges, requirements for individuals that step out of the vehicle to then identify themselves on it, changes in the way they handle uniforms, body-worn cameras, changes in processing.

My colleague is saying: I can't agree to move and just ignore this didn't happen.

No one is asking for that—no one. What we are saying is we agree with you. Let's make changes in this. I don't like what I have seen. You don't like what you have seen. So let's change it. Let's require body-worn cameras. Let's require badges. Let's require a change in uniforms. Let's require differences in how we actually identify officers and uniforms and vehicles. And those are all reasonable things.

So the offer has been made. Then let's make that change. The problem has been there has been no answer back. We are OK to make those changes. We have literally put in writing, in legislative language, that this could go into appropriations today to say: Let's actually do these changes and things that you are recommending on it.

But, at the end of the day, that isn't what moves.

What moves is back and forth, on different things like this, to try to identify TSA and divide TSA folks from Customs folks and say: Customs folks are bad, but TSA agents are good.

I think both of them are good families, because CBP is included in this as well. Those are the folks working on our docks at Long Beach right now. Those are the folks working in our international Customs, trying to be able to bring stuff off a ship and get inspections on it. They are not being paid. In fact, they are not even going to offer to pay them because they are looped into Border Patrol folks.

That is the problem. Once you slice it all up and say, "This person gets this; this person doesn't," it doesn't work. So because that doesn't work, the offer has been made: Let's fix the way we are

handling ICE and the way we are handling patrols. But we have got to have somebody say yes. In the meantime, offers keep getting sent over, and we are waiting on a yes to be able to actually move to resolve the issues.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

S. 1383

Mrs. MOODY. Mr. President, I know how hard the Presiding Officer and so many of our colleagues have worked to get the SAVE America Act to the floor. I want to thank the Presiding Officer because more than 200 years ago, this Nation began as a bold experiment in self-representative government, guided by the enduring words "we the people."

While the challenges we face today may seem more modern, more complex, and more immediate than those confronting the Founders, the principles they laid out still offer us lasting guidance because "we the people" agreed as to how we would live among one another. We laid out our founding documents in how we would create and enforce and uphold our laws. We made it clear that our strong Republic depended on "we the people" being engaged in our elections so that we could elect our representatives—the representatives of "we the people"—to serve us.

That is why the issue before us—the SAVE America Act—is so important. It is because it is grounded in a simple, commonsense—indeed, a foundational—principle that only American citizens should vote in American elections.

This should not be controversial. We should not have to dedicate days and days and days on the Senate floor in the United States of America to guarantee the foundational principle that only Americans should vote in American elections. It is a basic safeguard of our Republic that ensures that our government remains truly of, by, and for the American people.

In the very beginning, our Founders understood the importance of protecting elections. The Framers knew that our laws and our systems should reflect the will of the American people—no one else. So Americans must trust that their elections are not corrupted or skewed or nullified by non-citizens or fraudulent voting.

Right now, as I stand here, the American people have been very clear with us—with all of us—not just with those of us on the Republican side in this room but all of us—the Independents, the Democrats. They have been clear. Over 80 percent of the American public agree and think that we should have IDs presented when we vote. Eighty-three percent of Americans support voter ID laws.

I sat there on the dais late last night and listened to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle come up with some plausible reason they may oppose this simple concept, and none of it holds water.

They say it will keep certain people from voting, so we fixed that. You can file a paper and explain right there when you vote who you are and why you don't have the correct ID. It is very simple.

They say it is going to harm people. In fact, the people they profess to be protecting in some way have come out and said they want voter ID—the very people they think this will harm.

This is not a fringe idea. It is broadly supported. It is a commonsense safeguard.

Questions about election integrity are not new. They were debated by the Founders themselves.

We now have States that give licenses, admittedly, to people who are here in our country who are not here legally. Many States do that. We also have many of those States that sign people up to vote right when they give them that ID.

So people ask: Why now? Why do we need ID now?

Because of the nonsense and the subversiveness of radicals in the States in this country.

In Florida, where we have done everything right—everything we can do to secure our elections—how do Floridians know that their votes are not being diluted by some of these lawless, radical States?

I am one of the newest U.S. Senators here, and I am constantly asking: Who do the Democrats stand for? They will fly off to other nation-states to defend noncitizens. They will even stand up for communists in New York. For the life of me, I think they are even putting their necks out there for cartels time and time again.

When the rubber hits the road, they know exactly what they want to advocate for. They know exactly who they want to defend and who they will stand up for. But when it comes to American citizens and having their backs: We are going to fight it. We are fighting it for somebody.

It may not be American citizens, but they are fighting against it for somebody.

We have to ensure people's confidence in the system and in the legitimacy of our election results, and if we see resistance on the other side of the aisle to even the most basic safeguard—that of requiring an ID at the ballot box—it does not make sense. In fact, the States that have implemented voter ID laws did not see participation decline. In most cases, participation increased.

In the Federalist Papers, it was warned that groups may place their own interests above the public good, risking instability and distrust. That certainly feels familiar to me these days. One of the ways we protect against that danger is by ensuring that the rules governing our elections are fair, consistent, and trusted by the people because when trust erodes our entire system, our Republic is weakened.

The SAVE America Act helps to reinforce trust in our elections, but it is

about more than this one bill; it is about preserving the great experiment of the United States of America, of “we the people” governing ourselves and doing so through our duly elected officers. That is how we hold them accountable to “we the people,” and power rests where it should—with the people. It is about protecting this great Nation that has endured for 250 years.

Because of that, regardless of what party you identify as supporting, I urge my colleagues to pass the SAVE America Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I am so grateful that we are having this discussion on the floor.

I will note that our friends across the aisle wanted a unanimous consent just to pass pay for TSA workers. I think it is imperative that we remind the body and also remind our citizens that this is one of their ploys. They have a ploy that they are trying to pull off here wherein their goal is to defund Federal law enforcement, abolish ICE, and return to a wide-open border. The only way they can get to that is if they use the American people and TSA workers as pawns in their scheme and say “We are only going to fund them but not the rest of Homeland Security,” because their goal is to defund Federal law enforcement, to abolish ICE, and to return to an open border.

But the American people are smart. They are watching, and they are listening. They see that what the Democrat Party has chosen to do with this continued shutdown—for now more than a month—is to not fund FEMA. Of course, many people need emergency management assistance right now. They don't want to fund TSA. They are asking them to work without paychecks. It is the same thing for the Secret Service. By the way, it is the same thing for those in Homeland Security Investigations, who are going after drug dealers, pedophiles, predators, and a lot of bad actors who came in across our border during the Biden administration.

So the American people know what this is about. They also know that by a vast majority—83 percent, actually, including 71 percent of all Democrats—83 percent of the American people think it is reasonable that if you go to the polls to vote, you show an ID. They do this many times a day, and they think that is common sense. You prove that you are who you are. If you go to a doctor's office, you are going to do that. When I go to the children's school to have lunch or pick them up, I show that ID. So of course you should do that when you go to the polls and cast that ballot.

In Tennessee, we have been rated No. 1 in election integrity. There is a reason for this. In Tennessee, you do a few simple things when you cast that vote. You show an ID. Our voter rolls are well maintained, and if you are going

to register, you have to be a U.S. citizen. All common sense. All supported by 83 percent of the American people. You do that because you respect “one person, one vote,” and you want each and every vote to count.

You do that because you respect the men and women who have put on the uniform and have fought to defend the freedom of this great Nation so that you and I and each of our citizens have the opportunity to go to the polls and cast that vote. It is why voting has remained such a cherished institution in our representative form of government.

The SAVE America Act would require that everyone present that ID when they cast a ballot, it would require proof of citizenship in order to vote, and it would make certain that people who are not citizens are not going to vote in our elections.

This legislation should be going to President Trump's desk, and I am so pleased that he has really come out in front of this discussion and said: Let's get this done.

I find it really almost laughable that some of my colleagues are trying to say: Well, this would disenfranchise people. It would make it difficult for people to vote.

No, it would not, but what it would do is make certain that we know who is voting.

I think the other thing, too, is that it would make it harder to cheat. If you clean up your rolls, if you have to prove that you are a citizen, if you have to prove that you are who you are when you go to the polls to vote, it would make it more difficult to cheat.

There are 14 States in this country that require zero documentation in order to vote, and there are 12 other States that do not require a photo ID to cast a ballot. Some of these States—California, Hawaii, and New York—fail to take basic steps to ensure the accuracy of their voter registration lists.

There are some ways that States could do this if they wanted to. This isn't rocket science. These are things that the secretaries of state organization will tell you that many States do—States like Tennessee—choose to do this.

Many of these States that work to keep these rolls clean and accurate go through and compare their voter rolls with the Social Security Administration's death records. Now, why would they do that? Well, it is to make certain that if you are mailing out ballots, you are not mailing unsolicited ballots and that you are not mailing ballots to an address where someone is deceased and someone could possibly have that ballot fall into hands and have someone vote who is not allowed to vote.

Our colleagues across the aisle, in addition, like to claim that there is very little illegal alien voting that takes place here in the country—oh, that never happens.

I heard one of my colleagues earlier today talking about this issue and saying: Well, there is just not that much

of a problem here. But just this week, the New York Post reported that illegal aliens from China, India, Cuba, and other nations have voted in United States elections and, you know what, it goes back decades.

And across the country, the Heritage Foundation has documented hundreds of instances of proven voter fraud. In October, Texas discovered more than 2,700 potential noncitizens on its voter rolls using the Federal Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements database—one database, 2,700. Ohio, that same month, found more than a thousand potential noncitizens registered to vote in the State. Governor Youngkin over in Virginia removed more than 6,000 noncitizens from Virginia's voter rolls last year.

And it is important to note that it is State Republican leaders who are leading the effort to show respect for the voter, clean up the voter rolls, and ensure that everybody's vote counts.

If there is someone illegally in the country and they are voting, that cancels out the vote of a citizen. It is imperative that States that have these large noncitizen populations make certain that noncitizens are not voting.

I would encourage my colleagues across the aisle, instead of enabling fraud, they should stand with the American people. As I said, 83 percent of the American people support the SAVE America Act. And they should stand there in support of fair, honest, transparent elections.

It is time to pass this legislation and move it to President Trump's desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. HAGERTY. Mr. President, the SAVE America Act answers one simple question: Should noncitizens be able to cast a vote in American elections?

The answer is clearly, incontrovertibly, no. Indeed, the right to cast a vote in American elections is something that belongs to American citizens alone. It is a precious right. The American people understand this.

And you know what? The American people agree. More than 90 percent of Republicans, more than 80 percent of Independents, and more than 70 percent of Democrats want proof of citizenship—a valid ID—in order to vote in American elections. Why wouldn't they?

With such a groundswell of support from the American people, it makes me wonder why my colleagues on the other side of the aisle don't support voter ID. You must ask yourself: Who are they representing? They can't be representing their constituents. If they were, they would be screaming from the rooftops: Pass voter ID into law today. But they are not. They are not.

Then you ask yourself: Who is their constituency? Is it illegal aliens? Someone in a far-off land they have never met? Are they representing some moneyed interest that are opposed to voter ID?

These are all valid questions, but the bottom line is this: The opponents of

the SAVE America Act are not representing the will of the voters, including those of their own party. Voters across this Nation are not being represented.

I can tell you that whether I am back in Tennessee or here in Washington, I constantly hear from my constituents about the need to pass this piece of legislation. Tennessee requires an ID to vote, and we have the strongest election integrity laws in the United States. We get it in Tennessee.

Tennesseans, like the majority of Americans, understand that every vote cast by an illegal immigrant or anyone who isn't a citizen disenfranchises an American citizen.

A vote against this legislation, frankly, is a dereliction of duty. It is further proof of what I think many Americans feel about Congress, that the politicians they sent to Washington don't care about their views and can't be bothered to represent them. Americans are frustrated when the very second a politician is sworn in, that politician seems to forget all about the very people that they took a solemn oath of office to represent, defend, and protect.

I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to do the very thing they were sent to Washington to do. It is simple. Represent those who sent you here. Vote in favor of the SAVE America Act.

I suggest the absence of a quorum. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HAGERTY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. SCHMITT. Mr. President, I would also—before I talk about the SAVE Act, I just want to point out how the Democrats at this point, time and time again, have refused to fund the Department of Homeland Security at a time where we have conflict, at a time where we have seen terrorist attacks on the homeland—whether it is in Austin, Old Dominion, in Michigan—through the disastrous immigration policy overseen by the Biden administration with the Democrats where 15 million people came in here illegally, many of which we have no idea who they are. Most of them, we have no idea who they are. We do know that there are tens of thousands of murderers, hundreds of thousands of violent criminals.

And the Democrats hate ICE and want to defund ICE so much they are willing to endanger the lives of the American people for this showboating and grandstanding.

So anything they do out here to act like—it is just covering their rear ends because they know they are the ones responsible for defunding the Depart-

ment of Homeland Security—that means TSA agents, that means the travel of the American people, that means the Coast Guard, that means the Secret Service, that means investigating people who are trafficking children here.

This is a wildly bizarre, out-of-step ideology at this point where open borders is now in their DNA, and their refusal to want to get rid of people who shouldn't be here in the first place and prioritizing people who are here illegally over American citizens is nuts.

S. 1383

Mr. President, which leads me to the SAVE Act, the SAVE America Act, this is about making sure that American elections are for Americans and also protecting women and girls from having men participating in their sports and children being mutilated and offered up at the altar of a radical ideology. Yesterday, Democrats unleashed a coordinated barrage of lies about this amendment, this amendment that I have, the substitute amendment, the SAVE America Act. President Trump has talked about it, wildly supported.

They have told lies about it, from claims of voter suppression and mass disenfranchisement, to the absurd charge that it somehow makes it harder for married women to vote.

How insulting. How insulting. It is pure unadulterated fearmongering without any basis in fact or in law. So today, I rise to do one thing they fear the most: present the actual text of the bill.

The SAVE America Act has three clear claims, this amendment that is pending: Title I, SAVE American Voters restores integrity to our Federal elections. What could be more important in this Republic, this continent-wide Republic, where we committed to ourselves this idea of self-government and structure, to make sure that people who are voting are who they say they are and they are not here illegally.

It requires proof of citizenship to register to vote, requires voter identification, makes in-person voting the rule for able-bodied Americans, while preserving absentee ballots for our military, individuals with disabilities, caregivers, those who are sick, those who are even traveling, and verified hardship cases that the State can determine.

Title II, SAVE American Sports, defends biology and biological reality in women's and girls sports.

And title III, SAVE American Children, protects innocent children from irreversible medical mutilation and chemical castration.

That is what we are actually debating, not all these lies and all the nonsense to distract the American people from really popular issues—80-20 issues, 90-10 issues. These are common-sense issues, and they are very afraid of them. They are very afraid of having to vote on these things. They are very

afraid of these things becoming law because it is really difficult to go back home and explain your “no” vote on that, that you think only Americans can vote in American elections.

But the Democrats would rather fight ghosts than facts. The Democrats claim this bill targets Democrat voters. That is a lie, the most revealing one of all. This bill targets only fraudulent and illegal voters, noncitizens who have no right to our ballot and cheaters who refuse even the most basic safeguards of lawful voting.

If my Democrat colleagues want to stand here and suggest that requiring citizenship and voter ID somehow threatens their political coalition, they are free to make that argument, but maybe you are protesting just a little bit too much. But the American people are listening.

The Democrats claim that voters will have to show up to the polls carrying proof of citizenship. That is false. That is not what the bill says. This bill allows any individual to make an attestation at the polling place, if it is questioned about his or her citizenship. If you are registered to vote, you remain registered to vote. So, no, the bill doesn't require American citizens to drag a file folder of citizenship papers to the polls.

They call it Jim Crow 2.0. It is worth remembering that it was the Democrat Party that withheld the franchise from Black Americans. It was the Democrat Party that waged a civil war to keep people oppressed because of their race.

These claims are total nonsense. What this bill does require is far more modest and far more reasonable, that the Americans at least attest—you have to attest that you are a citizen.

People believe that citizens should vote. Noncitizens don't get to vote.

I know my Democrat colleagues wanted 15 million people here illegally to count in the census and mess with reapportionment because they lost the argument with the American people, but that is not what this bill does. It says that only Americans can vote in our elections.

Let me say that again. My Democrat colleagues have pulled a five-alarm fire because this bill asks people to simply attest that they are U.S. citizens when they newly register to vote here.

That is not suppression. That is not disenfranchisement. That is the bare minimum of seriousness in a self-governing Republic. American elections are for Americans. And spoiler alert for my Democrat colleagues: Federal law already requires applicants to attest that they are citizens when they register to vote.

Mr. President, 52 USC section 20508(b)(2) requires the Federal voter registration form to include a statement that includes citizenship. All we are doing here is taking that from a box-check exercise to something that an election authority can actually verify in an individual assessment.

That provision, by the way, was introduced by a Democrat Congressman,

passed by a Democrat-led Senate, and signed into law by a Democrat President. Oh, how times have changed. I have seen a clip recently of the minority leader begging for fraud protections, begging that photo ID be presented when people vote. But something has happened.

The Democrat Party has been completely radicalized and believes that illegal immigrants should be able to come here, never have to leave, and now vote in our elections.

But, today, that same commonsense idea that I just mentioned is slandered as “Jim Crow.”

The Democrats claim that the bill text disenfranchises married women with name changes. That is also false. The text of the bill makes plain as day that married women are not going to have to reregister to vote. All they have to do is attest that they are an American citizen.

And they are afraid of these facts because they know that people are aware of the facts.

This remains an 80–20 issue, a 90–10 issue; and it makes it really hard for them to explain their “no” vote. It couldn't be any easier. This is common sense. It is actually insane and ridiculous that we have to debate this.

So their talking points are wrong. It is reckless and an attempt to frighten the American people. They claim it abolishes absentee voting. That is also false.

It ends the COVID-era experiment of mass mail-in voting by default—the same disorder that weakened the chain of custody, blurred deadlines, and undermined public confidence when the leftist lawyers streamed all across this country in 2020 trying to undermine voter integrity laws.

When I was attorney general in Missouri, we stood up, we fought back, and we won all three cases. We didn't settle those cases and allow some ridiculous election process where ballots are just sent out, whether people requested them or not; with random drop boxes all over; no way to verify the votes; and deadlines didn't matter.

This bill actually does preserve absentee voting for Americans with real needs: our military members, the disabled, caregivers, and verified hardship cases—those who are sick, those who are traveling, and others.

They claim that it triggers mass purges of lawful citizens. That is false. They know it.

In other words, the pattern here is simple. They don't want to debate what is actually in the bill. They want to terrify people with things that are not actually in the bill because the truth is that this amendment—this substitute amendment that I have offered—is built on three propositions that normal Americans understand immediately: Citizenship matters, biological reality matters, and protecting children matters.

This Senate was not sent here to traffic in slogans or manage decline. As

America approaches her 250th birthday, the least we can do is prove that self-government still means something; that a nation still has the right to define membership; that elections still deserve rules; that women and girls still deserve protection; that children still deserve adults willing to defend them.

Read the text. Debate the text. Then have the courage to vote for it. The time for excuses is over. The time to govern and to defend our Republic has arrived. Pass the SAVE America Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHMITT). The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, with me today is Mr. Matt Turner, one of my colleagues from my office.

S. 1383

Mr. President, I would like to talk for a few minutes about the SAVE Act. I am a cosponsor. I support it unconditionally.

The SAVE Act, as you well know, is really pretty simple. It is about our sanctity of voting in America. It says, if you want to register to vote in America, you have to prove that you are a citizen of America. And once you are registered, it says, when you are voting in a Federal election, in all instances, you have to prove you are who you say you are in order to vote—very simple.

Now, there are other provisions that may or may not be added by amendment, but those are the guts of the SAVE Act.

Many—I hope not all, but many—of my Democratic friends in the Senate are opposed to the SAVE Act. They say that we are setting our time on fire here in the Senate; we are just wasting the Senate's time; we are wasting precious floor time.

Many of my Democratic friends say that we should read the law, that the law provides very clearly—and has since God was a baby—that, in order to vote in America, you have to be a citizen of America.

My friends on the other side of the aisle have come up with this deep and weird theory that somehow this legislation punishes women in America because some women—not all, but some women—take their spouse's name when they get married, and that somehow will—as if the women of America are not smart enough to figure it out—that that somehow will impede their ability to register to vote and vote. I don't get that part, but I hear my colleagues.

My Democratic friends say that this bill is unnecessary, but it is also going to cost money, and that what we are doing in proposing it is taking—we are wasting taxpayer money; we are taking a Great Dane-sized whiz down the leg of every taxpayer in America. And I could go on. I hear them.

My Democratic friends have no claim to a high horse—let me just say that. We wouldn't be here today, passing this legislation, if some of my Democratic friends had stood up to the Biden administration.

But I want to make it clear: I hear my colleagues. I think they are wrong, but they are entitled to their opinion.

Now, let me explain what this bill is really all about. I am not going to talk about the details of the bill. I think enough people have done that and much more eloquently than I probably could.

I want to tell you what this bill is about. It is about people trusting elections in America, and it is about immigration.

#### IMMIGRATION

Now, I happen to believe—and I think most Americans agree—that the United States of America is star-spangled awesome. I think this country is the greatest country in all of human history. I think the whole world knows it.

When did you last hear of somebody trying to sneak into China? The whole world wants to come to America. I consider that to be a compliment. And we have a way of welcoming them to America. It is called legal immigration.

Is our legal immigration system a model of efficiency? No. We need to make some changes. And maybe, hopefully, someday, we will. But it works, and I will tell you why it works. Over a million of our world's neighbors every year become American citizens—Nigerian doctors, Romanian plumbers—over a million Americans. More than any other country, we welcome them to become American citizens.

Now, the opposite of legal immigration is illegal immigration. Illegal immigration is illegal—duh. We have laws against it. If you don't like them, you should change them.

Our immigration statutes are not some second-tier laws that you can violate without consequence. They are the law, and I support their enforcement, and so do the vast majority of Americans.

Now, how you enforce them matters. Our immigration laws should be enforced respecting human dignity. Our immigration laws should be enforced in accordance with due process. Our immigration laws should be enforced in accordance with equal protection and with the standards of reasonable suspicion clearly set forth in—I think it was 1969—a Supreme Court case called *Terry v. Ohio*.

We should follow the law in enforcing our immigration law. You have the right to protest. You don't have the right to protest violently. In fact, as I have said before, violence undermines the morality that the protesters say their movement is based upon. That is not an original idea. Dr. King knew that. Gandhi knew that. Mandela knew that.

Violence is also dangerous. You can get hurt, and it has been my experience that most cops—and members of ICE are cops—most cops will leave you alone unless you do illegal stuff. Their job is to enforce the law. So protest all you want to, but don't do it violently. It is not going to end well.

Now, some have suggested that the American people are xenophobic and that they are racist when it comes to immigration. These people suggest that vetting people at the border is racist.

I think it is prudent, and I think most Americans think it is prudent. Let me see if I can explain why.

I read this somewhere once. Most Americans look at the southern border like they look at the front door of their home. Most Americans lock their front door at night. Why do they do that? They don't lock their front door at night because they hate everybody on the outside. They lock their front door at night because they love the people on the inside. They lock their front door because they want to know who is coming into and out of their home.

That is the way people look at the southern border. They don't hate everybody that wants to come into America. In fact, we welcome a million of them. But they want to know who they are. They want folks properly vetted. That is why we have immigration laws.

(Mr. MORENO assumed the Chair.)

Now, you remember a few minutes ago I said my Democratic colleagues had no claim to a high horse. Let me explain why. When President Biden was President—and, by the way, I wish him well in retirement. I hope he is doing well. He has had some illnesses—cancer. I wish him well in his retirement and in his health.

But when President Biden was President, either he or some of his advisers who had authority on his behalf admitted into our country millions of folks illegally, from all over the world. We don't know how many—8 million, 12 million. Some people say 30 million. I don't know how many. But President Biden—it was like the "Price Is Right": Come on down. You don't have to follow our immigration laws; just come on in.

Now, I don't really know who was running President Biden's immigration program; I really don't. But I know this. They were one or two things. They were either so incompetent you wouldn't put them in charge of a ham sandwich or they believed in open borders. I think they believed in open borders. And many of my Democratic colleagues who knew better, they did not say a word. And as a result, we have millions of people in our country. We don't know who they are, but we know they are in our country illegally.

And a lot of Americans are opposed to that. It is one of the reasons, I think, that Vice President Harris lost the election. Why do Americans—most Americans—oppose that? Well, first, as I told you, most Americans believe in the rule of law. They understand that illegal immigration is illegal. Most Americans think it is prudent—not racist, it is prudent—to vet people at the border. Most Americans understand that if you want to come to our country legally, we have a process and that it is unfair to people who have been

waiting patiently in the line to be properly vetted to allow anybody who can get across the border to jump the line. Most people in America understand that viscerally.

And many Americans—let's just put it on the table. Let's just put it down here where the goats can get it. Most Americans—nope. Strike that. Many Americans believe that this was a plot and that it was intentional by President Biden and some of my friends to admit people illegally into America so that perhaps at some point these folks would be indebted to the Democrats and would vote for them.

I am not saying that is true, but you have been smoking a doobie if you don't think that a lot of Americans don't believe that. They believe this was intentional. Again, I am not saying it is true.

And when we point it out, many members of the press go catatonic and foam at the mouth and say: You can't say that. But they are living in la-la land. A lot of Americans believe that. And a lot of Americans believe, whether it is accurate or not, that these folks vote—today—and that they undermine the sanctity of our elections.

So that is what the SAVE Act is about. It is about trying to get the American people to trust our elections every year in light of the fact that President Biden and his team, with the concurrence of many of my colleagues in this Chamber, admitted millions and millions and millions and millions of people into our country illegally.

I am not saying they were all bad people. I think many of the folks who came into our country were economic migrants; they just wanted a better life. That is why we have legal immigration. Not all of them were Cinderella. There were a lot of criminals. There were a lot of murderers. There were a lot of sex traffickers. There were a lot of drug dealers. There were. We are trying to catch them now.

But I guess the larger point is, we don't know who the hell they were because, once again, "Price Is Right": Come on down. And so that is what this bill is meant to do. It is meant to say to the American people: Look, we in Congress hear you. We want you to trust our elections.

My personal feeling about getting people to trust our elections—I think if we did two things—I am supporting this bill, but I think we ought to do two things: No. 1, have a rule that says you have to prove you are who you say you are in order to vote. And I guess I would add to that, in order to register to vote. And No. 2, we need to go back to having an election day, not an election month—because when it takes longer than just an election day, people think the worst.

But the SAVE Act would help as well to restoring trust in the American system because, you know what, our democracy can't stand if people don't believe in the sanctity of folks that we

put in charge to administer that democracy.

Now, let me say one last thing. I am in the minority on this. The majority of my colleagues on the Republican side—and, I feel very confident, on my Democratic side—the majority of my colleagues don't agree with me on this, but sometimes—not always, but sometimes the majority just means all the fools are on the same side. Sometimes someone in the minority can be right. That is why we have a Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights is not for the high school quarterback or the prom queen. The Bill of Rights is for the people who see the world a different way, and they have the right to do that.

So I am in the minority on this. I don't know how this bill is going to turn out. I can't predict the future. I have to wait for it like everybody else. But if the SAVE Act doesn't pass—and we are serious about passing it, and I think we are; I know the Presiding Officer is—we need to try to pass this legislation through reconciliation.

Now, the Presiding Officer knows how reconciliation works. It means we can pass this bill with 50 Republican votes and the Vice President to break the tie. That is how we passed the One Big Beautiful Bill. I would hope to get some of my Democratic friends to support us, but we don't have to have them. It is harder than I describe because, as the Presiding Officer knows, there are parameters on reconciliation. Anything you propose through reconciliation has to be paid for. We can find the money to pay for it. And anything you pass through reconciliation has to conform with the contours of the Budget Control Act. We call that giving a provision a Byrd bath. And our Parliamentarian decides what passes muster under the Budget Control Act and what doesn't.

Now, we have a lot of smart lawyers in the U.S. Senate. Every single one of them thinks they are "Oliver Wendell Scalia." But we have a lot of other smart lawyers in America. Here is what I am getting at. We have yet to try going to these smart lawyers—some in the Senate and some, believe it or not, not in the Senate—and saying: Craft us a SAVE Act that will pass muster under the Budget Control Act and can be blessed by the Parliamentarian.

And some of my colleagues—those "Oliver Wendell Scalia" types—they say: KENNEDY, you will never be able to do that. They don't know. I have been here 10 years. I have seen things pass muster, survive a Byrd bath, that I didn't think had a hope in hell; and I have seen provisions pass the Parliamentarian's judgment under a Byrd bath that I thought—I mean, I have seen them not pass that I thought were slam dunks. You don't know until you try, and we haven't tried.

And if this bill is as important as everybody says it is—and I think it is because we are not just talking about voting; we are talking about the con-

fidence, the trust of the American people in our elections. If this bill is as important as we say it is, we should try it through reconciliation.

I haven't convinced Senator THUNE of that. I haven't convinced all of my colleagues on either side of the aisle. But I plan on continuing to chase them like they stole Thanksgiving and Christmas put together.

I appreciate the Presiding Officer listening to my explanation of what the SAVE Act—did I mention I support the SAVE Act? Did I mention I am a co-sponsor of the SAVE Act? I just wanted to clear that up—and the real reason that we are here today. I am done.

I suggest the absence of a quorum. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I came to the floor this afternoon in opposition to the SAVE Act. And I must admit, listening to some of the proponents of the act talk, it doesn't sound to me like they are talking about the same piece of legislation that I understand we are going to be voting on. But I will get to that in a minute.

The fact is that I don't understand the timing on voting on this bill because, right now, what the families in New Hampshire are worried about is paying their grocery bills, being able to afford their rent or their mortgage, being able to heat their homes, being able to pay for childcare. They are worried about the rising costs of healthcare premiums. And we are here debating a bill that is going to have the Federal Government intervening in how States operate elections in ways that make it harder for people to vote.

I don't have any objection to my colleagues here who were talking about that they support the SAVE Act because they believe only American citizens should vote. That is the law. Only American citizens can vote in American elections. We are not—nobody is trying to change that.

What this law is trying to do is make it harder for American citizens to vote. And I know from personal experience because New Hampshire passed a similar law, house bill 1569, in 2024, and then-Governor Sununu signed that law making some of the most sweeping changes in generations in how people in the Granite State vote.

We have seen the results now. We have had two municipal elections. We had the elections in 2025 where our cities voted, and we have seen the town meeting elections in 2026. That law was in effect, and what we saw is that voters showed up with driver's licenses as an ID, and they were told that wasn't enough; that didn't match the requirements of the law, just like the SAVE Act says it is not enough.

Women showed up with birth certificates, and they were told it didn't match their legal names, so that wasn't enough. They couldn't vote. First-time voters showed up expecting to register, and they were told they needed a passport.

Each of these voters came prepared with an ID. In New Hampshire, we require photo IDs. Each of them had photo IDs, and each of them was told they didn't have what they needed.

That is what this debate is about. It is about whether people who have photo IDs who are registered to vote can actually vote.

At our polling places in New Hampshire, in townhalls and high school cafeterias and public libraries and churches and fire stations, when an eligible voter is told they don't have what they need, in many cases, they are not told anything more—not what documents are missing, not how to fix it, not whether they can still vote that day. They are just told, no, they can't vote. If they can't come back because they have work or childcare or transportation, then they don't get to vote even though they are eligible.

That is what should concern all of us, Democrats and Republicans, unaffiliated voters.

As I said, only American citizens should vote in American elections. Nobody is trying to change that. That is the law. It should be enforced. The question before us is straightforward: Does this SAVE Act make it easier for eligible Americans to vote or harder? Does it disenfranchise voters or ensure that people who are legitimate voters who want to vote are able to go to the polls and do that?

So to answer that question, I think we need to look at the problem this bill is meant to solve. When you look at the data, noncitizen voting is exceedingly rare—I mean, like so rare, it is less than one-hundredth of 1 percent. Even organizations that have gone looking for noncitizen voters have found fewer than 100 cases over more than two decades—over more than 20 years.

Now, what the SAVE Act says you have to do in order to register to vote is that you have to have proof of citizenship that is a passport or a birth certificate. We know that 146 million Americans—almost half of all Americans—lack a valid passport.

Some of my colleagues said this was not going to affect women. Well, I am sorry, but it is going to affect women because if women are married, like me, and took their husband's name, like I did—my birth certificate doesn't have my married name on my birth certificate. Not only that, I didn't have easy access—when I applied for a passport, and I was an adult by the time I got a passport, I had to send away to Missouri because that is where I was born. It took me weeks to get my birth certificate.

We know that about 69 million married women have taken their husband's

name, and they don't have birth certificates that match their current legal name.

So in New Hampshire, our secretary of state, who has refused to comply when this administration—this Justice Department said: Send us your voter rolls.

He said and the State of New Hampshire said: We are not going to do that because the State conducts our elections. We are doing this appropriately, and you don't need the voter rolls.

But he said that instances of voter fraud are "minuscule"—and he is a Republican.

I think if this were a widespread problem, we would expect a bipartisan effort to address it, but what we are considering is a very partisan bill that blocks eligible voters.

More than 21 million Americans don't have easy access to documents that prove citizenship. Many don't have documents that reflect their current legal name. As I said, my birth certificate doesn't have my current legal name on it. In some cases, that means that voters have to leave and return multiple times because their documents don't match.

After we passed this voter ID law in New Hampshire, I went to vote in Madbury, where I had been registered since I moved to Madbury in 1979 when we built our home there. I have run for office—about 10 times my name has been on the ballot. Everybody in the town of Madbury who is part of the voting process knows exactly who I am.

I got into the polling place, and they said: Nope. You can't vote. We know who you are, but you have to go get your voter ID.

Well, fortunately, I left it in the car, so I went out and got it and brought it back. But for a lot of people, if they have to go home and get the documents they need, often they are not able to get back because the polling hours in some polling places like Madbury don't go all day long. They start at 11 in the morning and they are over at 7 at night in Madbury.

As I said, in the municipal elections, what nonpartisan observers found was that at least 244 voters were turned away. In some communities, it was as many as 1 in 10 same-day registrants who couldn't complete the process. Women were turned away because their documents didn't match their current legal name. In March of 2025, New Hampshire Public Radio reported that Brooke Yonge of Derry had to make multiple trips to the polls because her documents didn't match her married name.

This wasn't limited just to new voters or the people unfamiliar with the system; it included people who had participated in our elections for years—people like me.

This bill prevents Americans from voting, and that is not acceptable.

I think we can enforce the law. We can ensure that eligible Americans are able to vote.

Today, voters already confirm they are eligible under penalty of perjury. Election officials already have tools to verify that information.

In States like New Hampshire, before house bill 1569, we had a system that allowed voters to register and yet still required documentation to be provided.

For years, voters who didn't have documentation could sign a sworn affidavit and provide it after the fact. That gives local officials clear, workable standards.

Right now, under the SAVE America Act, the affidavit that is required doesn't provide guidelines for voter registration officials to understand what is required for proof of citizenship. It creates this new bureaucratic process, but then it doesn't give State officials the details on what they need to do.

This bill moves us in the direction of replacing a system that has worked in practice with one that risks turning eligible Americans away.

One of my favorite examples—because it is so outrageous—of what happened in the municipal elections in New Hampshire is that we had a former Republican executive councilor—in New Hampshire, we have this position called the executive council that is a carryover from colonial days. It is a five-member elective body that approves all State contracts and all of the Governor's nominees.

We had a very prominent former executive councilor—Republican—who was turned away at the polls because he didn't have the required documentation, not because he was ineligible. He had changed wards from one ward to another, and because he had changed wards, he had been purged from the voter rolls.

So he went back and got the proof of where he was living, and they said: Oh, no, because you have been purged, we need proof of citizenship.

Again, this is somebody who had run for elected office multiple times in New Hampshire, who was well known to election officials in the Republican Party—was well known. He was asked to go back and get proof of his citizenship. Unfortunately, he couldn't produce that proof of citizenship in the time required before the polls closed, and so because he didn't have it, he wasn't allowed to vote.

That is what happens under this law. That is the consequence of this approach. And it doesn't just affect new voters, voters unfamiliar with the process; it affects people who know the process well. It doesn't strengthen our election system; it weakens it.

At a time when my constituents in New Hampshire are paying more to heat their homes, when fuel prices are spiking, when gasoline prices are spiking, the fact that we are here debating this instead of debating how to help people address the rising costs of living, how to make their lives more affordable—instead, we are debating how to make it harder for them to vote. That makes no sense.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill, and let's get on to addressing what our constituents are really concerned about, which is how to make their lives better, how to ensure they can afford to feed their families, make sure they can afford to pay their rent, buy their gasoline, and pay their bills.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

IRAN

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I am grateful for the recognition.

I think we should set the scene very clearly. During the last 2 weeks since we voted on the War Powers Resolution, led in a bipartisan manner by Senators Kaine and Paul, the Trump administration's unconstitutional war with Iran has evolved tremendously.

In the span of just 2 weeks, 13 U.S. servicemembers have been killed and at least 200 of our American men and women have been injured. U.S. diplomatic posts and military facilities in the Middle East are under constant attack. The war has expanded, now impacting at least 15 different countries, from the bases of our European allies to our allies in the region.

American citizens are still, 2 weeks in, stranded in the region trying to get home. Civilian casualties are increasing, and here at home, we are seeing the skyrocketing costs of basic goods, the skyrocketing costs of energy, and the skyrocketing costs we are seeing at the pumps at our gas stations.

We now know the Trump administration is spending over a billion dollars a day on this unauthorized war, while Americans are struggling to make ends meet here at home, and this President is throwing millions of people off of their healthcare.

And this administration, amidst all of this, has failed to come before the U.S. Senate and the American people for public hearings to make its case on the biggest military war engagement since the war in Afghanistan.

Now, all of us—all 100—swore an oath to the Constitution of the United States of America. Well, fealty to that oath is clear because the Constitution is clear. Congress has the authority to declare war and authorize the use of military force. But in this case, Congress and the U.S. Senate, in particular, has done nothing.

The Senate has a solemn responsibility to assert itself along the constitutional mandate in matters of war and peace. This is why I urge my colleagues soon to support the motion to discharge S.J. Res. 118. I ask for that because of what is at stake: billions of American taxpayer dollars, hundreds of American lives.

What is at stake is the Constitution of the United States of America. We swore an oath. We have an obligation. This is the moment now. This is not left or right; this is a moral moment and a solemn, sacred patriotic duty to uphold the Constitution, especially when the President of the United

States of America is so willfully violating it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. President, I thank Senator BOOKER for his extraordinary leadership on this War Powers Resolution.

Some of my colleagues may not know this, but I was raised in a divided household. My father was a lifelong Democrat. My mother a Republican. And there were any number of Republican elected officials who appealed to both of my parents, who embodied the spirit of America and the promise of this great Republic.

One of them was Dwight D. Eisenhower. Yes, some in my family liked him so much they helped campaign for him, like my grandfather Harry Glovsky. I have a photograph in my office of my Pa Harry—who was a Republican County chair—walking side by side with Ike at a campaign rally.

It makes me wonder what Eisenhower, the Supreme Allied Commander during World War II and the man who brought peace to Europe, would have to say right now, to see our military might, our military personnel, used in a war of choice against a country with a terrible regime but which was not attacking us and posed no imminent threat to the American people; to see a President like we have today, unwilling, even when asked, to comment on those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of this country; a President who ignores or worse, belittles, a reporter who asks about them or whether more troops are going to be deployed to the region.

What would he think of a Congress, empowered by our Framers to have the sole power to make war or refuse to do so, relegated to an afterthought in conflict after conflict after conflict?

Eisenhower was a singular voice in our Nation. He was a military leader who advocated strongly against the use of military power when it was not needed, when there were alternatives, someone who acknowledged the enormous cost and the lost opportunity to the country that comes with excessive spending on armaments.

He is famous in his farewell address for a warning of the encroaching influence of the military industrial complex, and we should turn to that speech now to remind ourselves of where we are in this moment as we find ourselves at war once again.

Eisenhower said:

Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed.

This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children.

The cost of one modern heavy bomber is this: a modern brick school in more than 30 cities. It is two electric power plants, each serving a town of 60,000 population. It is two

fine, fully equipped hospitals. It is some 50 miles of concrete highway.

We pay for a single fighter plane with a half million bushels of wheat. We pay for a single destroyer with new homes that could have housed more than 8,000 people.

This, I repeat, is the best way of life to be found on the road the world has been taking. This is not a way of life at all, in any true sense.

Under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron.

“A theft from those who hunger and are not fed,” that is what he said.

And I ask my colleagues 70 years later: Has anything changed? We have taken \$170 billion in food aid away from people who hunger and are not fed, and we are feeding that money into a military operation that is costing the country billions every week.

Are we not seeing the money for a hospital—or 10 hospitals—squandered halfway around the world rather than spent here at home?

President Eisenhower understood the basic tradeoffs that we face when we go to war. And here is the thing: The American people are not afraid of sacrifice. In a just cause, we can marshal the strength of our people to take on any challenge, overcome any threat, defend ourselves against any foe—in a just cause. But has the case been made that this was a just cause? a necessary cause?

Have we even had a debate on the subject or a public hearing or, God forbid, a vote? Have we said, on behalf of the schoolchildren who will go hungry, that we are comfortable taking their meals and spending them instead on missiles? Have we agreed, as we send our sons and daughters on ships to the Strait of Hormuz, that we are willing to risk their lives, that we are ready to pay the costs at the pump and on the grocery shelf, that this is a sacrifice we are ready to make for the greater good?

We have not. No, we have not agreed because we have ducked and dodged and bobbed and weaved our way around this terrible decision, not wanting to debate the war, not wanting to even call it war because when we do, we acknowledge our own failure as an institution as the Congress to take up the matter; as if bombs falling day after day for weeks on end could be labeled as anything else but “war”—a war whose risks, like closing the Strait of Hormuz or Iran’s attacks on its neighbors or the staying power of the clerical regime, were known and ignored by the President, a President whose hubris has now cost our Nation dearly.

What would Ike have thought? What would Ike have done? I suspect he would conclude this war was not worth its costs in casualties and lost opportunities.

But if he concluded otherwise, I suspect he would have leveled with the American people about the purpose, the goals, the risks, and sought to rally us to the cause. He would have asked for the support of Congress even as he rallied the support of the Nation had it

been a just cause, had it been a necessary fight, had our Nation been under attack or imminent threat of attack.

Today, we are in a war that the public has not backed, that the Congress has not approved, and for which the President has not made a case; a war of regime change in which the regime has not changed; a war to stop an imminent threat which did not exist; a war in which the President tells us we don’t need allies, then pleads for the help of those allies to open the Strait, and when they do not comply, tells us we don’t need them after all; a war in which we mistakenly bombed a girls’ school in Iran, in which our President told us Iran bombed its own school, and which the administration was forced to acknowledge that simply wasn’t true; a war in which the President calls for the people of Iran to rise up, that this is the best chance they will ever get, and then tells us they will be mowed down if they do.

The Congress does not exist to merely implement the President’s will in war or peace. It does not exist to serve as his echo chamber or dutifully stand and applaud when he addresses the joint session. The Framers did not draft such an exquisite framework in which ambition was made to counter ambition, in which the power to declare war and fund war was held in one branch so as to resist the bellicose interest and instincts of the head of another branch. They did not draft such a perfect Constitution with the idea that it would all be a nullity, that Congress should simply abdicate, surrender its constitutional responsibility.

The Founders had higher hopes for us. They had dreams for us to realize. They wagered their lives and sacred honor that we would rise to the occasion, that we possessed sufficient virtue to be self-governing, that we as a people did not need to be ruled by a despot.

Were they wrong? Were they wrong? At long last, were our Founders wrong? After weeks of war and billions spent and 13 servicemembers killed and 200 injured, is it still not too late to discharge our responsibility as our Founders intended, as the American people have every right to expect?

This resolution gives us a chance to do that. Let us take it.

I urge an “aye” vote on the War Powers Resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, it wasn’t too long ago that Donald Trump won the 2024 election, in large part, due to his promise to get our Nation out of foreign wars and bring prices down for Americans across this great Nation.

Well, 18 days into his war of choice in Iran that is costing taxpayers over a billion dollars each day, the American people can see with their own eyes that he has broken and continues to break those promises.

Gas, food, housing, basic everyday necessities, costs are skyrocketing, not falling.

Wars? Thirteen servicemembers are dead, over 200 have been wounded, and thousands more Americans are located in the Middle East with a target on their backs because of his choice to start a war with Iran, a choice he simply had no right to make unilaterally, but that did not stop him.

Thirteen American lives and at least 1 billion taxpayer dollars a day are far too high a price to pay for an unauthorized and needless war that Trump himself cannot articulate a coherent or consistent justification for.

So I am here today to support the Senator from New Jersey's War Powers Resolution that would reassert the American people's constitutional say over decisions of war and peace through their elected representatives and put an end to this unjustified, illegal war.

And I join Senator BOOKER in demanding that the majority leader immediately hold public hearings that bring members of the Trump administration under oath and force them to justify why they are sending our sons and daughters into harm's way halfway around the world and tell us their plan for keeping Americans safe.

The truth is, I wish I didn't have to be here doing this, and I am angry that it is not even the first time this month that I have had to come here to beg my Republican colleagues to do their jobs and stop shirking their constitutional duty to the American people and our troops and hold a public hearing on the immediate risks, ongoing objectives, and plan to end Trump's illegal war of choice.

Look, our troops will always do their jobs to the best of their ability just as they have since Operation Epic Fury began. We all agree that they are doing an incredible job in very dangerous circumstances, but they deserve leaders in Washington who will do our jobs and actually ensure that their mission is justified, actually feasible, and worthy of the sacrifices we are asking them and their families to make. They don't deserve a Commander in Chief who hides his draft-dodging incompetence behind their valor by acting as if criticizing his bad and even illegal decision is the same thing as criticizing our troops—because it is not.

My Republican colleagues know as well as I do that the Constitution gave the American people the authority to send our troops to war through their elected representatives in Congress. We in these Chambers are the ones tasked with deciding when and how Americans are sent into combat. We are the ones charged with that most solemn duty. Yet, Trump is acting as if article I simply doesn't exist, as if obeying the Constitution is optional, as if our founding document is just a yellowing, crumpled piece of paper he can crumple up at will.

Refusing to allow him to get away with this should not and must not be a partisan issue. I ran for Congress so that when the drums of war started

beating beneath this Capitol dome, I would be in a position to make sure that our elected officials fully considered the true cost of war, not just in dollars and cents, but in human lives as well.

Look, I am no dove. I know there are certain solemn, urgent times when our military must be called upon to defend our Nation. There are certain moments when the threat in question is significant and imminent, when military force is the most effective tool at hand, when using it is necessary to protect America and her interests, and when using military force will not backfire and create more threats than it eliminates.

Trump has shown no evidence that this is one of those times. He has had weeks. While his administration avoids accountability to the public, American heroes keep dying. American diplomats have been targeted and displaced, and American families who have been stranded in the region are fearful of their safety. Here at home, American farmers who are heading into the planting season are facing skyrocketing costs of fertilizer and diesel fuel trapped in the Strait of Hormuz, a challenge that will result in many of them losing their family farms.

If they actually believe that this war is justified, then the administration needs to come to Congress and do their jobs, to explain their case and give the American people a say through their elected representatives. They need to respect the American people enough to actually tell them why they are being forced to bear the cost of this conflict. They need to prove that they have thought this through enough that they can tell us what their plan is to stop the war and get to an end state in Iran that would make us safer, not more threatened.

Then, when the case has been made and when Congress' debate is done, we must vote. It is our burden. It is our responsibility. It is the least we can do for those who are willing to sacrifice everything to safeguard our democracy; but until and unless they do that, we here need to do everything we can to force the administration to do their part. We can start by passing this the War Powers Resolution offered by Senator BOOKER.

So, to my Republican colleagues, please, join us in finally reining in this unjustified war and in demanding that the administration come before the American people and publicly attempt to convince us that the mission is worthy of the sacrifices it requires. Then, after we have had that debate, we can show a fraction of the courage of our warriors and cast the tough vote.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I am humbled to follow my colleague from Illinois. No one is more articulate on the question of the cost of war than Senator DUCKWORTH, and I agree with

everything that she said about the importance of this moment.

Listen, maybe the most sacred clause in the Constitution is the warmaking clause. Our Founding Fathers gave a lot of thought about the danger of allowing one individual to send this country into foreign conflict, to send our young men and women overseas to face harm and potential death. Our Founding Fathers decided that that had to be a question answered by the American public, and that is why the decision to go to war was vested not in an Executive or a Monarch or a King but in the Congress—in the people's House and in the Senate.

I think this is probably the most significant military engagement of many of our lifetimes that has gone without a debate and a vote on the Senate floor. It is extraordinary not just that we have not had a vote, as is required by the Constitution, not just that the President persists in this action without an authorization by Congress, but that there hasn't even been a single public hearing in the Foreign Relations Committee or in the Armed Services Committee to require the administration to explain to the American people and to the U.S. Senate why we are in this war, what the goals are, and what the endgame will be.

I think it is extraordinary and heart-breaking and outrageous that the Senate is not doing its duty under the Constitution to require the administration to ask permission to go to war and to explain itself before Congress, but I guess I understand why. This is an attempt to hide the incompetence—the growing incompetence—of this war.

The President said, the other day, he was really surprised when Iran started bombing its neighbors. Like, the first page of the briefing book that a President would get on the consequences of a major military strike on Iran would be that missiles and drones would start to be sent to American bases, American forces, and our partner forces in the region.

Reports are that the President just kind of guessed that they wouldn't gum up the Strait of Hormuz even though the second page of that briefing book would have told you—you know what?—the first thing Iran will do if you assassinate the Shia religious leader in the middle of the holy month and bomb them relentlessly day after day and hour after hour is they will close the Strait of Hormuz.

There is no plan to protect our partners in the region. Our partners are running out of interceptors as we speak. The region is on fire. There is no plan to reopen the Strait of Hormuz. It is closed today. It will be closed tomorrow. It will be closed the day after. Prices are going to go up for everybody in this country. The billionaires—the people who show up to have dinner with Donald Trump at Mar-a-Lago in the middle of the war—will be able to afford it, but regular people who live in Ohio and Connecticut and Illinois, they

won't be able to afford these high gas prices.

Every day, there is a new revelation of the incompetence. Here is one from the last 24 hours. Apparently, President Trump decommissioned a bunch of our minesweepers. There was a really competent British minesweeper in the region that left days before the invasion began. We literally gave away our capability to clear the strait of mines right before we took military action that would knowingly cause the strait to be closed and mined. You can't make this up.

The reason we are bringing this vote tonight, the reason that Senator KAINE did the same thing earlier, and the reason that we will continue to bring these votes is that we have an obligation to have a debate, to have votes on the question of war, especially on the question of this incompetent war.

I have sat in classified briefing after classified briefing, and I still have gotten no answer on how this war ends. I actually don't think any of my Republican colleagues could explain how this war ends. Apparently, a worse regime that is more provocative to the region and more adversarial to the United States' interests will remain in charge of Iran when we decide to stop bombing. Estimates are that they will be able to rebuild their missile and drone capability in months after we declare an end to the hostilities. The nuclear program will still be there because you can't bomb out of existence either knowledge or the fissile material that is buried deep under the earth.

So, at the end of this, we are going to have raised prices for everybody here. We are going to have cost a lot of American lives. We are going to have set on fire the region. By the way, a new war already having killed 1,000 people is breaking out between Israel and Lebanon, and Iran is going to be more dangerous, not less dangerous at the end.

We need to debate this in our committees and on the Senate floor, so I am glad to stand here with Senator BOOKER. I don't think this will be the last time that we will have this debate.

What are we doing this week?

We are talking about voter fraud that doesn't exist when there is a war happening that is illegal and when prices are going through the roof. This is what we should be debating right now. This is why the Senate exists, to stand here and debate the most important questions. And what is more important than war and peace and 13 Americans dead overseas and the cost of war being borne by poor families here at home? This is what we should be debating this week.

So we will use our opportunity under the statute and under the rules to make sure that we have the opportunity—at least for an hour, at least for an hour each day—to be able to talk about this incompetent, illegal, unconstitutional war with no plan to end it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I am glad to join my colleagues on the floor in support of Senator BOOKER's War Powers Resolution.

For those who wonder what a War Powers Resolution is, it is pretty simple. It is a very short resolution saying no war without a vote of Congress. We should not be at war with Iran without a vote of Congress.

Traditionally, when a President wants to go to war, the President will give an authorization to Congress, and there will be a debate and a vote in this body on that authorization. President Trump has decided to end-run the Constitution and end-run Congress by starting this war on his own without consulting with Congress, without consulting with allies—without consulting with virtually anyone—and ignoring a lot of advice he got about why he shouldn't get us into this war.

Now, many of you here know that we had a vote on a War Powers Resolution that I introduced a few days after the war began and that we fell short of the number of votes that were needed. At the time, Congress voted: Don't bother us. We may be at war—and, yes, the President is end-running Congress—but please don't bother us. Don't make us have a debate about whether this war should be authorized or not.

So what is different today than when we voted on my War Powers Resolution 10 days to 2 weeks ago? I will tell you what is different: 13 American troops have died, their futures cut off, families bereft and grieving. We learned yesterday that the number of Americans injured in this war—seriously injured in this war—now tops 200. Their lives are potentially forever altered by this illegal and unnecessary war.

We learned that a missile strike on an elementary school in Iran that killed 175 little kids was actually a strike by an American missile. President Trump said it was an Iranian missile, but we now know from the Pentagon's own evidence that the strike on the school that killed these innocent schoolchildren was an American missile.

Since we had the vote on the floor on my resolution, we have seen gas prices in the United States go up by, on average, about 60 cents a gallon. Virginians buy 8 million gallons of gas a day. The cost to Virginians daily, just in the gas increase, is nearly \$5 million. Virginians are paying every day \$5 million more for gas because of this war. I talked to a prominent American airline. They are paying \$25 million a day more in fuel costs than they were before the war because of the war, and they passed that on to passengers who were traveling.

The economic dislocation is massive. We have seen the deaths of innocent civilians, the deaths of our own troops, injuries to our own troops, and the consequences are getting larger and larger

and larger. Yet, as my colleague Senator MURPHY says, we are still unable to get the Senate majority and the administration to agree to any public hearings where they have to answer public questions that the American public has.

My public in Virginia is chock-full of parents of military members, chock-full of spouses of military members; and they have questions about their loved ones currently deployed or who may be deployed. But the administration is afraid to have public hearings.

I am going to conclude and say this: Today, I learned the reason why we are not having public hearings in one of the key committees, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. We had a closed-door hearing, and Senator MURPHY asked the chair, our colleague from Idaho, who is nothing if not a straight shooter—he will always give you a straight answer: Why are we not having public hearings about this war in the committees of jurisdiction, the Foreign Relations Committee and the Armed Services Committee? And the chair of the Foreign Relations Committee explained that he thought it would be counterproductive for the administration officials to be examined by Senators in public about their decisions.

It would be counterproductive to have to answer why you view this as worthy of sending our kids to their possible death or injury? It would be counterproductive to have to answer in public why is this worth nearly a billion dollars a day of American taxpayer money? It would be counterproductive to answer questions about didn't you think this would cause massive economic problems for everyday American citizens?

This war is being hidden in classified because the administration does not have the confidence in its own position sufficient to be willing to answer the basic questions that we all have.

If our young people are being asked to risk their lives in this war, then we shouldn't be afraid to put the facts of the war before the American public, where they can make a judgment about whether it is in the best interest of this Nation. And that is why I am so glad to have cosponsored this resolution.

I will be voting for it, and we are not going to stop putting this issue before the body until the Senate does what the Senate is supposed to do and only engage in warmaking when it has been determined by Congress that it is in the best interest of the country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. JUSTICE). The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I rise today on behalf of the majority of Americans who oppose President Trump's war in Iran. I also rise on behalf of the families who just want him to fulfill his promises to lower costs and end foreign wars. Sadly, that is not what we are getting.

So much of what we have seen over the last 3 weeks reminds me of our war

in Iraq. We have the Trump administration claiming that Iran was weeks away from a nuclear weapon, even though last year he said we had obliterated their nuclear program. We have Donald Trump saying that he wants to liberate the Iranian people from a regime, all while Iran has installed an equally as extreme leader. We have civilians, including children, being killed by American bombs. And we have servicemembers dying overseas for a cause that Americans do not understand.

Americans are watching the start of another open-ended military conflict in the Middle East, just the kind President Trump said he would end, not start.

There is one major difference, however, between this war and the Iraq war. This time around, the Trump administration hasn't even bothered to make their case to the American people. Back then, we had an open and public debate about the cost of war, the cost to the American taxpayer, the cost to our military and their families. We voted on it, and Congress held public hearings preceding that vote.

Look, I voted against it, and my fears were sadly proven right. But at least the American people back then had a say in it.

President Trump clearly has no interest in following the law or our Constitution or letting the American people have a say in this war. So far, my Republican colleagues have shown no interest in forcing him to do so.

So we are using the tools at our disposal to try to bring some sunlight and force a debate on this illegal war of choice, because the more people learn about this war, the less they like it, and the quicker we can end it. It is past time for this administration to come before Congress and the American people to explain why we are at war and how they plan to get us out of it.

If my Republican colleagues refuse to join us, I am prepared to keep forcing votes on this war. Congress, the people's branch, is a check and balance on any President, and right now, this President needs a serious check.

Donald Trump is breaking laws, and he is breaking his promises to the American people. The President is showing us what his priorities are: starting wars and not focusing on the everyday needs of hard-working families.

This war is not what the American people signed up for, and it is our job to stop it and get our country back on track. Today, we will show our constituents who is and who isn't on the side of the American people, and I urge my colleagues to vote yes on this resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

S. 1383

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, one of the most despicable pieces of legislation, an attack on our sacred right to

vote, a voter suppression bill—these are just some of the hysterical things that Democrats have said lately about the SAVE America Act.

I disagree, and so do most Americans. In fact, 64 percent of adults say that the SAVE America Act is a good idea and will help ensure that only eligible citizens can vote in our elections. After all, only Americans should have a say in who runs our country.

Voting in our elections is a privilege and a right of American citizens, not of millions of illegal aliens who have flooded into our country under Joe Biden.

Again, you don't have to take my word for it. Sixty-two percent of Americans support requiring proof of citizenship to vote. The SAVE America Act will ensure that every voter in our elections is an American citizen.

Because the bill allows numerous forms of documentation to serve as proof of citizenship, every American will be able to cast a ballot.

Most Americans also agree that every voter should have a valid ID. Polls consistently show that more than 80 percent of voters support voter ID requirements. And I have got some bad news for my Democratic colleagues: These polls also show that 71 percent of Democrats support voter ID.

But instead of listening to their own voters, Democrats in Washington claim that the SAVE America Act is, yes, "Jim Crow 2.0." Apparently, asking voters to confirm that they are who they say they are is racist.

That is laughable. Just think about all the different places you have been asked to show your ID lately.

Last weekend, I took a flight, had to show an ID. I rented a car, had to show an ID. I checked into a hotel, had to show an ID. I bought medicine—over-the-counter medicine, mind you—and, yes, I had to show an ID.

I am very confident that Delta, Enterprise, Marriott, and Walmart don't ask me for ID because they are racist. I know they need to confirm my identity for security purposes.

Buy beer at a bar? You get asked for an ID.

Buy a pack of smokes at the gas station? You get asked for an ID.

Open a bank account? You get asked for an ID.

Oh, but the Democrats say voting is different. Voting is a constitutional right.

Fair enough. Guess what. Want to exercise your Second Amendment right to buy a gun? You get asked for an ID.

Want to exercise your First Amendment right to petition the government for a redress of grievances in this very building?

Sorry to report you have to show an ID if you have an appointment in the Capitol.

In fact, the only reason that I can imagine Democrats would oppose the SAVE America Act is to make it easier to cheat in our elections.

As the polling data shows, Democrats are yet again on the wrong side of an

80-20 issue. It is no wonder they want to ignore Americans and tilt the odds in their favor.

So to the excitable Democrats who claim the SAVE America Act will destroy our democracy, I say the opposite is true. No nation can have a healthy democracy without secure elections.

For these reasons, I urge all Senators to vote for the SAVE America Act.

IRAN

Mr. President, I would like to take a moment up front to recognize the American heroes who have lost their lives in the line of duty as part of Operation Epic Fury. I extend my deepest condolences and offer my prayers to their families and loved ones.

I also said, with absolute confidence, these American heroes will not have given their lives in vain.

For 47 years, Iran's outlaw regime has waged a war of death, destruction, and terror on the United States, our friends, our allies, and, indeed, the civilized world. And now, after 47 years of indecision and timidity, America has finally put our foot down. President Trump has sent a clear message that Iran will never have a nuclear weapon, and they will never be able to threaten the rest of the world again.

It is difficult—in fact, impossible—to overstate just how imminent the threat from Iran was before we took action. The Democrats are now trying to twist this around by claiming the threat we faced wasn't actually imminent at all. However, our top intelligence officials disagree.

Earlier today, I chaired the Intelligence Committee's annual worldwide threats assessment hearing. Director of National Intelligence Gabbard testified that Iran was working to rebuild its nuclear program before Operation Epic Fury. According to her, Iran was trying to recover from the severe damage to its nuclear infrastructure sustained by the 12-day war and continued to refuse to comply with its nuclear obligations with the IAEA.

But that wasn't the only threat of a nuclear program that hung over our heads. Less than 1 month ago, Iran had thousands of missiles armed and ready to hit our bases and kill Americans as far flung as Western Europe and the Indian Ocean. Thanks to communist China's help, Iran developed a vast missile arsenal that far exceeded the combined missile defenses of the United States, Israel, and our Arab friends, and it got much worse every single month.

According to CIA Director Ratcliffe's testimony during today's hearing, if left unchecked, they would have the ability to range missiles to the continental United States.

Given these facts on the ground, we were left with no choice. Iran had already loaded and cocked the gun. What were we supposed to do? Wait until they pulled the trigger? Of course not.

Iran has been an imminent threat to Americans for 47 years. Let's take a look at the record. Was the threat imminent in 1979, in the days before Iran

took over our Embassy and held dozens of Americans hostage for more than a year? Did Iran pose an imminent threat to more than 200 marines before they bombed our barracks in Beirut in 1983? And did thousands of our troops who were murdered and maimed by Iran's deadly roadside bombs in Iraq and Afghanistan face an imminent threat from the regime? I would say so, as I think any reasonable American would. The threat to Americans was as imminent then as it was before we launched Operation Epic Fury.

From a legal perspective, Operation Epic Fury was well within the President's constitutional authority and duty as the Commander in Chief to defend Americans.

President Trump's objectives are clear. First, destroy Iran's vast missile arsenal and make sure Iran can't rebuild it. It is a lot easier to kill the archer on the ground than to shoot his arrows out of the sky.

Second, strike at the pillars of a regime that have been propping up terrorist organizations like Hamas and Hezbollah and rebels in Yemen for decades. We are no longer chopping off the various heads of the snake so it can grow seven more in its place; we are just going to kill the snake itself.

And, third, we are going to make sure that Iran never gets a nuclear weapon. We will not stop until Iran's hopes for that nuclear weapon are obliterated alongside its nuclear facilities.

Now, some critics claim that the President has abandoned his principles and promises to put America first. I disagree. President Trump has been consistent in his position that Iran can't have a nuclear weapon. He said this publicly as early as 2014, years before he threw his hat in the ring for President and years before the ayatollahs tried to assassinate him.

Naysayers allege that we are getting involved in another forever war, but let's get something straight: Iran is not Afghanistan, and Iran is not Iraq. While no one has a crystal ball to predict how long the military operations might last, President Trump has an exceptional track record of using targeted and discriminate military force to achieve concrete and defined missions.

Other critics have said that Israel forced the United States to take military action against Iran. This is a lie, and it is contemptible. First off, I would say no one dragged Donald Trump anywhere. And, second, Prime Minister Netanyahu himself knows this well and said as much in an interview with Sean Hannity, who has known the President for decades. In fact, the President himself said he may have forced Israel's hand.

#### WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

Mr. President, for argument's sake, let's set all this aside, though, and examine the War Powers Resolution before us today.

Senator BOOKER's resolution calls for the President to remove the United

States Armed Forces from hostilities within or against Iran. This resolution would require the President to end highly successful strikes against Iran before our military objectives are fully achieved.

Moreover, it would abandon our Israeli friends and leave them in the skies above Iran alone. In short, this resolution does more than simply attempt to score political points by condemning President Trump's actions. Its passage would handcuff our military force, leaving our troops in a sitting duck, defensive posture while Iran attempts to rain down terror across the region.

At this very moment, Iranian military capabilities are being destroyed. I would suggest it is the height of folly to stop now and give our enemy time to regroup.

For these reasons, I strongly urge my colleagues to reject the War Powers Resolution and instead support Trump's resolute actions against the Ayatollah's regime.

May God bless the President, may He protect our troops, watch over their families, and may He continue to bless the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

#### IRAN

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, you are entitled to your opinion. This is a free country. Whether you like President Trump or not is up to you. Your view of the war is up to you. But you are not entitled to your facts. You are entitled to the facts. And here are the facts. To my Democratic colleagues, I challenge you today to prove that I am wrong.

During the negotiations to find a peaceful solution to the Iranian nuclear problem, President Trump sent Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner to negotiate with the Iranians. They say all they want is peaceful nuclear power—the Iranians. They have been saying that—and they should be entitled to enrich like other countries, like us, a bunch of nations—enrich uranium for peaceful purposes, and they claim: Why not us? Because you cheat.

The IAEA—not me, not LINDSEY GRAHAM—you have had a history of not living up to what you say about your ambitions, that your enrichment facilities are not designed to produce peaceful power, but a weapon.

So during the negotiations, Witkoff and Kushner offered the Iranians: Listen, if you will give us your highly enriched uranium, we will guarantee you a lifetime fuel supply for free, that you can have all the spent fuel you need to operate a peaceful power program you don't need to enrich, and if you want to enrich for medical purposes, very limited, fine, but you can't have an enrichment program that would lead to making bomb-grade material because you are not reliable.

And I would go a step further. It would be like letting Hitler have anything. See, the difference between me

and, I think, a lot of people here—maybe most of my Democratic colleagues—I think these guys are religious Nazis. Hitler wanted a master race. He wrote a book. Nobody believed him. He literally wanted to kill all the Jews, and nobody believed him. The Ayatollah is the same. The regime is built around the cult of death. They want three things to purify Islam. They are Shiites. Their No. 1 enemy is Sunni Arabs. They think they have got the faith wrong—that they are traitors to the faith. They hate Sunnis because they are not true to the faith, and Saudi Arabia believes it.

So they want to purify Islam, bend it to their will, make every Sunni reject their view of Islam and accept the Ayatollah's view. That is what they say, not me. I believe them.

No. 2, they want to kill all the Jews, and they openly say it. They are not hiding their disdain for Israel. They actually talk about it. They put "Death to Israel" on, like, milk cartons. These people are serious, and we should take them seriously.

Like in the thirties, people didn't want to believe that Hitler meant what he said because they were tired from World War I, and they said: Oh, he is just all talk. He wants this. He wants that. He wants more German-speaking territory. He is not completely crazy. You know, he is sort of just doing the Hitler thing.

Well, he was completely crazy. Now, I don't know why he wanted to kill all the Jews. I don't know why Hitler thought the Aryan race is the only pure race on the planet, but a lot of people are dead because we got that wrong. Let's don't do that again.

We are playing like World War II never actually happened, and you are rewriting this regime's history. From 1979, what have they done until today to make you think they don't believe what they say? What behavior have they exhibited that they really do want to be normal?

So during those negotiations when they said no to every offer under the Sun, they said something that was a fatal mistake for them: Oh, by the way, we have 460 kilograms of uranium at 60 percent. Now, why did they tell us that? They were trying to intimidate us and letting us know that if we don't bend to their will, we will have a problem.

Now, what is the problem? The difference between 60 and 90 percent enrichment is weeks, not months or years. And when you get to 90, that is weapons-grade enrichment. That material can be turned into a nuclear weapon. Mr. President, 460 kilograms at 90 percent is enough to build 10 nuclear bombs. And I am talking weeks, not months, to go from 60 to 90, and they were threatening to do it.

What did President Trump do? Instead of begging them not to, instead of giving them a bunch of money bribing them not to, he blew up their enrichment facilities so they couldn't

get to 90 percent. It is called Midnight Hammer. Mr. President, I am glad you did, and it is clear to me nobody in the Democratic Party would have done that.

The question for my friends on the other side and critics within my own party: How could they have 60 percent enriched uranium at 460 kilograms without cheating? Everything you wanted to do to contain these people failed. The JCPOA—every agreement that has been offered to restrict Iran's nuclear program failed if, in fact, they do have 460 kilograms of uranium at 60 percent.

So here is my challenge: If you don't believe that is true, come to the floor and tell me why I am wrong. We know that the material at 60 percent is under all the rubble of their enrichment facilities, and we are worried that somehow somebody is going to get it before we do.

It is a fact that they had produced enough uranium at 60 percent. That means they were cheating because there is no commercial purpose for uranium to be enriched at 60 percent—none—zero. You don't need that to run a nuclear power program. You need nothing beyond 20. To go to 60 means you are a threshold nuclear nation. Why 60? It is just a small jump to 90, and they want to intimidate and blackmail the world.

When they told us that: We have got this much at 60, Trump said: Well, that is all you are going to do because I am going to take enrichment off the table. And thank God he did.

Their enrichment program has been obliterated, and they couldn't go to 90. I think they will come back at it one day if we don't deal with it now. So that is Midnight Hammer.

Epic Fury. What happened after we blew up the enrichment facilities? Within weeks, they were actually, the Iranians, trying to start over again, going deeper. What was the lesson they learned from Midnight Hammer? We are not deep enough in the ground.

And here is the most telling thing: They were trying to create a new enrichment capability that did not require an air shaft. Now, why is that important? The bombs that were used that were dropped on the enrichment facilities went through the air shaft—penetrated and blew up the facilities deep underground. That is a testament to our air power, that the air shaft opening was about the size of a refrigerator, and we dropped bombs through those air shafts to obliterate the enrichment facilities they had.

Instead of learning their lesson and "let's sit down and talk about peaceful nuclear power," they went the other way. I think that is a fact.

So Epic Fury. If you do not see this is an imminent threat, then you are blind for your hatred of Trump. There are people on the left and people in my own party that are more afraid of Trump being successful than the Ayatollah having nuclear weapons. That is sick. That is sick.

When Obama took out bin Laden, I clapped like a seal. Every time he wanted to go into Syria, I was there with him and John McCain. I have tried to be bipartisan on such things. I never have ever introduced a resolution against a Democratic President under the congressional War Powers Act to limit their ability to protect the Nation ever because I think it is unconstitutional. I have never done to a Democrat what you constantly are doing to this Republican President. And when a Republican tried to do that, I objected.

If you don't like what President Trump or any other President is doing in military matters, cut off the funding. We have the power of the purse. We could stop funding for these operations, and that would be constitutional. What we can't do, in my view, is become the Commander in Chief.

You can't have 535 people becoming the Commander in Chief, and that is what the War Powers Act does. After 60 days, if Congress doesn't approve, military action stops. Basically, under the Constitution, you can be Commander in Chief for only 60 days and Congress takes over. That is not what they had in mind.

Let me tell you what the Founders had in mind: a single person—the President—to be Commander in Chief and Congress to have the power of the purse and regulate the land and naval forces. That is the balance we have had all these years, and the War Powers Act is unconstitutional because it destroys that balance.

But it doesn't mean Congress is out of the game. Literally, if you had a resolution or an appropriation bill denying funding for Epic Fury, I wouldn't agree with you, but you would be on sound constitutional grounds.

Now, why do I oppose this? Not just because I think it is an infringement on the power of the President and an overstep by the Congress. I think it would be really, quite frankly, dangerous not to finish this thing out.

In 18 or 19 days, we have done a number on the ability of Iran to build ballistic missiles to hit us and our allies. And if you don't think they would, put yourself in the same category that miscalculated Hitler. What is it about the Iranians that you think they really don't mean what they say?

So we have destroyed that ability to build those missiles to come after us, and they were building 100 a month before we did this.

The second thing is, they have been funding Hezbollah, Hamas, the Houthis, proxies. Hezbollah has a lot of American blood on its hands. It killed 220 marines and sailors back in the 1980s when we were in Lebanon trying to help with that civil war. They attacked our barracks. They have a lot of American blood on their hands from Afghanistan, IEDs made in Iran. So these people have been at war with us since 1979. Finally, we are pushing back.

Instead of doing deals that don't work, we are trying to eliminate the threat in a responsible way.

What happens next in Iran? I think the people will have a chance down the road to decide that—not me, not you. We are not going to invade Iran. We are not going to do the Iraq-Afghanistan thing. There is no reason to. What we want to do militarily is eliminate the threats: They can't fund proxies, they can't build nuclear weapons anymore, and they can't build missiles that would terrorize us in the region and Europe.

When we accomplish those three things, here is what I think will happen: We will build on what President Biden started, which is normalization between Saudi Arabia and Israel. Now, why is that big?

Senator BOOKER has been great on this. He has gone with me when Biden was President. I was a Republican trying to build on the Abraham Accords, see if we could get Saudi and Israel to normalize, which would be the end of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It would be the biggest change in thousands of years. And I would be willing to help President Biden—I was. And we had a bipartisan team. I was part of it.

Well, October 7 came along to stop that. Now, we were very close to having a breakthrough on normalization under President Biden, Tony Blinken, Jake Sullivan, and Brett McGurk. I went over there eight times, I think. We were close, but October 7 was designed to stop what we were trying to do.

It was a nightmare for the Iranians, I think, for the Arabs and the Israelis to make peace because it changes the region forever, leaving them behind. So October 7 was an attack by Hamas, but it couldn't happen without Iran stopping normalization. And it has worked to a great extent.

The tolerance for a two-state solution in Israel is pretty low after October 7, and the Arab world is pretty inflamed because of Gaza. But we can't let Iran win the day.

So here is what I hope we can do: keep this military campaign going—weeks, not months; continue to degrade the ability of the IRGC to terrorize their own people, to wreak havoc in the region. And we are going to take some blows. They still have a lot of drones, they still have missiles, but less every day.

Gas price is up—no small thing for somebody trying to raise a family on a limited income. But I believe with all my heart that you pay now or you pay later with this regime.

We were a couple of weeks away from the Ayatollah and his crowd having weapons-grade material for 10 bombs. You think things are bad now? I can only imagine what the world would look like if this madman and his regime actually had nuclear weapons. One, I think he would use it. If you don't believe he would kill all the Jews, that would be a mistake. Certainly the Jewish people believe that.

This idea that we were drug into the war by Israel—that is the oldest game, literally, in the book: If it weren't for the Jews, we would all be better off. It is the Jews that are always getting us in trouble.

What an offensive thing to say. Israel consulted with us. We do have common values, and we have a common enemy. They don't just chant "Death to Israel"; they chant "Death to America," the Iranian regime, and they have our blood on their hands, not just Israeli blood.

So the idea that somehow President Trump got hoodwinked by the Jews is like—enough already. If you know anything about President Trump, nothing could be further from the truth, and you are just giving life to the idea that has been around for like 2,000 years for the Jewish people. Enough.

So what I hope will happen: We will be steady. For the American people, there is going to be some pain.

The region: You are going to get hit again. We have lost soldiers. God bless them. God bless the wounded—a couple hundred. And casualties may increase.

But the only thing I can tell you about the military from my time being around it, which is most of my adult life: The worst thing you can do to a military unit is ask them to sacrifice and not finish the job. Do you want to help the military? Let them finish the job they believe in, that is necessary. And you get nothing for finishing second in a war with mad people, crazy people.

If you don't think the regime is built around a cult of death, then you missed a lot. They want a religious world that they run. They want a religious master race, not an Aryan-ethnic master race. They want to dominate the world through their faith, and that should scare you.

I don't intend to bend to their will. I don't think Sunni Arabs are. You know what. Most Iranians don't buy that, but they have been killed by the tens of thousands. They have had it too.

So I think we are close to weakening the regime to the point that we can start again with normalization talks between Saudi and Israel, which would be the end of the Arab-Israeli conflict—the biggest change in 2,000 years. If they can't do another October 7, then I think we may get there, building on what was done by the past administration.

So just think about it. We are not going to get a normalization deal that doesn't have a Palestinian component because MBS, the leader of Saudi Arabia, can't recognize Israel until he finds some dignified solution for the Palestinians that Israel can live with. And he wants a defense agreement with us because he wants to come our way—not Türkiye, not Pakistan. A mutual defense agreement.

Well, to my Democratic friends: Entertain the idea of helping us get there, but you should insist that there is something there for the Palestinians.

And we all have a chance here to make history.

In a few more weeks, not a few more months, we should be at the point, in my view, that we can start where we ended before, and Iran's efforts to deny real peace to the region will have failed.

Kharg Island. Seldom in the history of warfare has a country or a warring opponent had a single point of failure. All their money comes from oil and gas in Iran—the regime—and all the infrastructure virtually is on a single island. If you control that island, you control the destiny of the income to continue this war.

And remember what I said: I don't know what President Trump is going to do.

As to this resolution, I have a lot of admiration for Senator BOOKER. We are going to be friends, and we will work together where we can. I think this is the wrong signal at the wrong time. I never believed it was constitutional. I never did it with a Democratic President.

But we do not need to do this because if we stop now, then we are going to pay a heavy price later. The worst possible outcome is for those 32,000 people to go to the streets and die for nothing. The worst possible outcome is to suffer and not get it right. They have a pair of 2's, and we have a full house. It is not a card game, but we are in a good spot.

To those who have lost their lives and been injured: You died in the service of your country, making the world safer, and that is what military people sign up for.

To those who have been injured: You have been hurt trying to stop something that matters.

This is not a foolish endeavor. This is something that had to be done because they were going to break out if we didn't stop them. We were really a couple of weeks away from them having enough uranium at 90 percent to make 10 bombs, and the world would have changed in the blink of an eye.

So I am going to oppose this resolution. I am going to support President Trump's plan to continue to defang the regime. And I will join with my Democratic colleagues if they would like, and if Saudi Arabia and Israel want to talk about changing the Mideast forever, I would encourage you to do what I did. Let's all work together to bring about the biggest change in 2,000 years.

The reason we didn't get there in the last administration was because of October 7. It wasn't any fault of anybody else. This attack was designed to stop everything we tried before. And it would be a shame and a tremendous missed opportunity in history to let the Iranians deny the region something I think they really want: to move forward, not backward.

I will end with this. To the American people: I know it is tough. I know the economy, on the gas front, is hurting. But I do believe this with every ounce

of my being: If we had not done this, they would be on the path, the Iranian regime, to a nuclear capability, and they would use it. Eventually, they would use it or give it to somebody who would. They are no different than Hitler except this: Hitler wanted a master race to run this world, and he was denied—only after about 50 million people died. This regime wants a master religion to dominate this world. I don't know why, but I believe them. And we are so close to getting this right.

Since 1979, this regime has been built around a cult of death. A 16-year-old girl was killed last year for not having the headscarf on right—drug off the bus and beaten to death. The people have been in the streets, slaughtered by the tens of thousands.

Let's not let this moment pass. Let's, in a responsible way, keep weakening this regime, giving the people down the road a chance to have a new Iran, stand with our allies, finish the job. And if you do it right, a gateway to peace will open up.

The biggest thing you can say to those who sacrificed or were hurt and died: Because of what you did, you created an avenue for peace that is going to change the world.

So I will be voting no, but I am going to do more than vote no; I am going to support an outcome that will change the world. The day this regime no longer can wreak terror and havoc will be a good day, and we are close to that. The day when we can get back to the peace table between Saudi Arabia and Israel will be a wonderful day.

The center of Islam, Senator BOOKER, is Saudi Arabia. That is where the holy mosques of Mecca and Medina are. And this young man, MBS, has made a decision to go a different way. Now, I have had my problems with him, but I really do think he has made a decision to go a different way that will benefit the region and the world.

I hope the Israeli people understand: If you want true peace, lasting peace, you have to deal with your neighbors.

The Abraham Accords tells me they are willing to deal with their neighbors.

Let's don't let October 7 be the final chapter. Let's make sure we punch through what happened on October 7 and we punch through right now to get the conflict in a spot where we can truly have peace.

Last thought: You will never have peace in the Mideast and we will never know peace here at home until this madman regime, the Ayatollah and his henchmen, organized around a cult of death, can no longer hurt us.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President and fellow Senators, this is—I have lost count now—the fourth or fifth time I have come to the floor to once again defend America against these dangerous, obstructive resolutions that the Democrats have been putting out here.

What they are asking us to do is to put our tail between our legs and leave the battlefield and surrender the battlefield to the Iranians. We are not going to do that. Democrats are attempting to stop the administration from keeping Americans safe through these defensive actions against Iran.

They say that Donald Trump started this war or that America started this war. Neither of those is true or even close to it. This war started 47 years ago when this regime, the Iranian regime, broke into our Embassy in Tehran and took as hostage a great number of American diplomats and held them for 444 days. That is how long this has been going on.

If that is all they did—and it was bad—one might say that it didn't deserve this action.

The problem you have is, over these 47 years, the Iranians have again and again and again—when I say Iranians, I am talking about the administration that is there, the regime that is there, not the Iranian people—they have again and again killed Americans.

How many have they killed? They have killed in the thousands of Americans through IEDs and all kinds of other devices that they have used over these 47 years.

This is not right. It needs to come to a stop. It needs to come to an end. And the President did what he did because they were very close to having a nuclear weapon.

Can you imagine if we were having this debate out here, and the Iranians actually had a nuclear weapon? It would be a very different place.

The troops that we have in the Middle East are in danger as a result of this resolution. The resolution would put them further in danger if it passed.

According to the Constitution, it is the President's duty to protect and defend the United States, which he is doing, and he did what he did because it was necessary to defend America.

As I said, for 47 years, the Middle East has been progressing more and more toward peace and security. It is a very different Middle East than when I started this. All countries have moved toward the middle. All countries have moved toward a much more peaceful existence in the Middle East, with one exception, and that exception, of course, is Iran.

The Iranian terrorist regime aims to censor, threaten, murder anyone who questions its radical theology but especially Americans.

The Middle East has a bright future. I am more optimistic today than I have ever been about the Middle East because Iran now stands alone. There were days in the past when Iran did not stand alone, but they are standing alone now.

I think people will look back at what has happened in the Middle East and see the Abraham Accords and see a point in which there was considerable inflection and at a time when things changed. Our Commander in Chief is

committed to see this through to the objectives that he has set out.

To our brave men and women who are on the battlefield in and near Iran, we support you. You are supporting Operation Epic Fury. We support you. We have your back here. Your sacrifice does not go unnoticed, and we will continue to have your back.

I have said this before, and I am going to say it again. To Iran, no one is coming to help you. There is no one on this planet—not the Chinese, not the Russians, not the North Koreans, not Venezuela, not Cuba, no one on this planet is coming to help you, except the 47 people that sit over here. They are trying to help you tonight.

They are not going to help you. We are not going to allow these people to help Iran. To our troops that are in the battlefield, I say to you: We have your back. We will see that these people do not do what they are trying to do. We are not going to turn tail. We are not going to leave. The President of the United States is going to continue this until the objectives are achieved.

Mr. President, fellow Senators, I urge you tonight to join me in defeating this resolution as we have done over and over again, as we will do again tonight, to stand by our troops in the Middle East.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I am grateful for the recognition of the Presiding Officer.

I have listened carefully to my colleagues who have come down to oppose this War Powers Resolution that I am bringing up right now. I have listened with an open heart because many of them I have worked with on Middle East issues assiduously to bring about peace in that region.

I share many of the beliefs that were expressed of the danger of Iran and their proxies, of the chaos and the harm and the lives they have taken, the instability in that region. We have worked side by side on bipartisan delegations, bipartisan work—as the Senate should function—to deal with the challenges in the threat matrix that affect the United States as well as our allies.

But here is the issue: We are bringing a War Powers Resolution to the floor to bring this to a vote and to a debate. My colleagues do not want a debate on this issue. Nothing has been scheduled—no floor debates, no hearings, no oversight, no checks and balances.

This resolution seems to almost offend my friend and chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; that how dare we bring this to the floor. Well, we have the power to bring such resolutions to the floor because of incredible sensitivity to the idea of war powers.

The idea that the power to go to war—unlike in times of despots and Presidents—in the United States of America, the power to go to war does not lie with one person, the President of the United States.

Now, at first, there were some people trying to deny—on the other side—that this was a war, but tonight they showed it clear. Multiple people talked about us being at war. We, as a nation, are at war, the largest military engagement we have had since the war in Iraq.

And in this war, in barely over 2 weeks, thousands of people have died. In this war, in barely 2 weeks, 200 Americans have been injured. In this war, 13 Americans have paid the ultimate price for a war that we have gone into on the decision made by one man.

And the American people at large are paying costs in the billions of dollars a week. They are seeing prices at the pump—energy, consumer goods—skyrocketing on top of already this President cutting their healthcare, cutting their food programs, cutting their veteran services. We are at war, and Americans are paying the price and our servicemen—too many—have paid the ultimate price.

And what is our constitutional obligation when the Nation is making billions of dollars of expense? What is our constitutional obligation when lives are being lost every single day? What are our obligations when our brave military men and women, carrying out their missions, some of them not coming home?

Well, the Constitution is clear on this. There is no debate even possible. The Constitution says that the war power belongs to Congress. And so I know the noble issues and ambitions of my colleagues that they mentioned—noble ideals like not letting Iran have a nuclear weapon, noble statements that they are making about trying to stop evil—those are important. That is a debate we should be having, but we are not having it.

It seems that my Republican colleagues, all they want to do is to try to pretend that this is business as usual, to try to ignore or even cover up all that is going on because as my colleague who just spoke on the floor said to a bunch of us today: I do not want open hearings. I do not want executive people of the administration, like the Secretary of State or the Secretary of Defense, to have to answer questions in open hearings.

They want to circumvent the Constitution. They want to go around public oversight. They want to avoid the glare, the questions of the American people.

Woe to a nation—our Founding Fathers believed—woe to a nation that makes it so easy to go to war. They developed this government with a check and a balance. They developed this government oversight. They developed this government with the dispersal of powers so that we could have an enduring democratic Republic.

But what the Republicans are saying is they want none of that—none of our constitutional obligations, no checks and balances, no oversight, no hearings, no accountability. We want to

rush to war, spending billions of taxpayer dollars, costing American lives and costing our constitutional fidelity.

It has been 2 weeks since we had a War Powers Resolution brought up by my colleague TIM KAINE. In 2 weeks, this war has expanded. In 2 weeks, more Americans have died. In 2 weeks, more countries have been attacked.

This is not just Iran being hit. It is now 11 countries have been attacked, and even some of our European allies have had their bases in the region attacked.

It has been 2 weeks, and we have seen the mistakes of war, like a school of girls being targeted and attacked, and the administration not feeling that they have to stand before Congress and be accountable for that; 2 weeks, and we have seen more soldiers perish; 2 weeks, and we now have a report that it is over 200 that have visible injuries and perhaps even more invisible injuries.

Today, in the Capitol, we had veterans come, veterans of foreign wars, veterans of Afghanistan and Iraq, veterans who came to this building today to remind people in the Capitol the true costs of war.

We cannot question their bravery. We cannot question their sacrifice. And they stood with us today to make the simple point: When will Congress do its job?

There is something inexcusable about people who will stand in this Chamber and swear an oath not to a President, swear an oath not to an authoritarian leader, swear an oath not to a political party; they swore an oath, all 100 of us, to the Constitution of the United States of America.

And if there is anything that is plain in that Constitution, it is that a President does not have the power to unilaterally bring a nation and its treasure—to bring a nation and its men and women into conflict without a say of Congress.

This is not a partisan issue. This is not a left or right issue. It is a right or wrong. Do you stand with the Constitution of the United States of America or do you stand with what our Founders rejected; that we should be a nation where all power, especially the power that sends our soldiers into making the ultimate sacrifice—do we stand with the ideal that that lies with the President and not with this body?

And so I am telling you right now, those who feel that this vote is an inconvenience to them, those that feel offended that we are having an hour—an hour—debate of what we are entitled to when we bring up a War Powers Resolution, I say to those who feel angry—how dare we try to force the Senate to try to focus on this war—I say to you: I don't care about your objection.

We have privileges as Senators, and I refuse to let business as usual go on in this body. I and my colleagues will bring up these resolutions again and again and again as more and more

Americans on both sides of the aisle see this war for what it is: one President's decision costing all Americans, costing us at our homes, around our kitchen tables, costing our budgets, and then costing the greatest cost of all, the lives of our men and women in service.

In a few moments, we will take a vote. I know what the outcome of that vote will be. But my dear friend TIM KAINE, who has brought these War Powers Resolutions—not just about this war, not just about our war that we declared with Venezuela or bombing ships in the Atlantic—he has called this question before, and he quoted a great faith leader. The outcome of this vote, I know what it will be, but he quoted that faith leader in saying simply: I was not called to be successful. I was called to be faithful.

That is the real issue before us right now. Are we faithful to the oath that we swore to uphold the Constitution? Are we faithful to the most sacrosanct ideals of this Republic? Are we faithful to the service men and women who also swore an oath to this Constitution and make greater sacrifices than any of the hundred of us are making today? Are we faithful to the ideals that this is not a monarchy, that we do not have a King, that we are a democratic Republic with a Constitution and no one is above the law.

This President cannot take us to war without coming through this body. He is not able to do that unless this body supplicates itself before that man and surrenders its responsibilities.

Today, I say no.

Today, we will vote, and whatever the outcome of that vote, we will come back here, again and again, with a simple demand that the world's most deliberative body must deliberate; that the branch of government that was supposed to hold the Executive to account demands some accountability; that the checks and balances designed by our Founders should operate, and we should check and balance his power; that what the American people want and what the American people deserve is to have a Congress that functions, and a President that seems so cocky and confident and is taking us to war should have to come before this body; that the members of his Cabinet sit here and justify both the provocation of why we went to war and what is the endgame—because it is clear to me now that we have seen this from Libya to Afghanistan, President after President taking us to war in the Middle East and leaving chaos, instability, and terrorism and subjugation behind.

This is a moral test for this body. It is not just a vote. This is a moral moment. Where do you stand? It is not whether you stand left or stand right, stand Republican or stand Democrat. The question is, Do you stand with the Constitution that you swore an oath to uphold?

This vote may fail, but this failure is not final because even after this vote,

there are many in this body that will continue to fight to uphold the Constitution and make the U.S. Senate do its job.

Business as usual is unacceptable. This fight will continue.

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

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

The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I want to thank Senator BOOKER for leading this important measure.

Thirteen U.S. servicemembers have been killed since the start of the Iran war. Another 200 have been injured. Thousands more across the Middle East have been killed or injured. We pray for all those killed and hurt. We pray for their families.

Meanwhile, the Strait of Hormuz traffic has crawled to a halt. The price of Brent crude has risen to \$110 a barrel. Americans are now paying an average of \$3.80 or more at the pump. And when Donald Trump was asked last week if we were toward the beginning of this war or toward the end, he said both. He said both.

Enough is enough. Trump's war in Iran is turning into a disaster, and there is no end in sight. We do not know Trump's goals. We do not know Trump's timeline. We do not know what victory even looks like in his eyes. Enough is enough.

A few weeks ago, Senator KAINE, Senator SCHIFF, Senator PAUL, and I brought a simple resolution to the floor affirming that Donald Trump cannot send our servicemembers into war without coming to Congress first. Republicans voted no.

Today, we are pushing another War Powers Resolution led by Senator BOOKER, and I want to thank him for his leadership.

To my Republican colleagues, the American people are watching. They oppose this war. They expect us to do our jobs.

No more senseless wars in the Middle East, no more gas prices shooting through the roof, no more U.S. servicemembers fighting and dying in endless wars—enough is enough. The Senate will put a stop to it tonight.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

DIRECTING THE REMOVAL OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES FROM HOSTILITIES WITHIN OR AGAINST THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN THAT HAVE NOT BEEN AUTHORIZED BY CONGRESS—Motion to Discharge

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, in an effort to uphold the Constitution and