

## ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senators CASSIDY, WELCH, WHITEHOUSE, PADILLA, and LEE.

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

The Senator from Louisiana.

## REMEMBERING WILLIAM EARL HILTON

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a good friend Sheriff William Hilton, who was tragically killed Monday. Sheriff Hilton was a sheriff in every positive meaningful sense of the word.

He was steady. He was committed. He was there to answer the call when the community needed him. That kind of service is more than just a job, it was his life's calling, and he lived that calling every day.

He was a devoted husband to his wife Billie, a loving father to Shane and Kristy, and a proud grandfather to Slade.

But behind a man with such heavy responsibility is always a strong family, and, indeed, his family loved him, supported him, and stood by him through long, difficult, often 7-day workweeks. A true servant, a man others leaned on.

As Sheriff Wood his deputy and mentee said, "I talked to him almost every day. If I had any questions, who else [could I ask but him]?"

It tells you what you need to know about Sheriff Hilton. He just had lots of wisdom. He retired in 2008. He could have lived a comfortable life fishing. His community asked him to come back as sheriff, and he served two more terms.

By the time he retired for good in 2020, he had served in law enforcement for 50 years. Again, he could have lived comfortably in retirement, but he came back because of his sense of duty.

We rode together once. There was a police ambush in 2016 in Baton Rouge, and a gunman killed four officers. Sheriff Hilton and I rode down to the ceremony for one of them, a lawman paying tribute to a fellow lawman. I always appreciated that.

And there is something to be said about a lawman's realism. Sheriff Hilton certainly had it. He once told me: When you are fighting crime, it is like mowing the grass. You never stop. You just keep on going.

There wasn't any anger. There wasn't any bitterness, just a realism. And it was the task before him, and it was a task he was going to do.

There is a quote about losing a friend that says: The melody he played upon the lives of those around him will never be played quite the same way again.

So while the melody may not be played quite the same way, it will be

echoed by his family, by his community, and by all of us.

I ask that we take just a moment of silence to honor the life of Sheriff William Earl Hilton.

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

(Moment of silence.)

## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, someone asked me today: Since Senate Democrats keep moving the goalpost on DHS funding, what kind of frustration is there among Republicans?

I replied: Ask the American people how frustrated they are.

Americans are being hurt for some political gain that some Senate Democrats seem to enjoy.

This is the New Orleans Airport. These are the lines. At one point, it was out of the building and into the parking garage. That is on the second floor. They had to come through the parking garage, through the second floor, and down to the mezzanine level in order to get into this line.

It was a 5-hour wait for people to be able to go through the TSA checkpoint. At that point, people had missed their flights. You came to the airport 3 hours early, and you missed your flight after standing in that line.

Now, I am just asking the folks at the airport who came to visit New Orleans—maybe a destination wedding, something for their family, and then they return to whatever State they are from, having a great time—call up the Senate Democrats who are opposing ending the shutdown.

By the way, the rate of callouts from TSA staff exceeded 40 percent over the weekend. You know, they have bills to pay. I am not quite sure what they are doing. It could be that they are driving for Uber or they are driving for Lyft. They are trying to pay their bills. That is the issue here.

By the way, it is not just TSA agents. It is the FEMA agents, the people who help process the claims to rebuild communities after natural disasters. It is the Coast Guard, the people that rescue you when your boat breaks down, the people who are in the boats protecting our naval ships—protecting our naval ships right now on deployment outside of Iran. It is the people protecting us from cyber attacks—the cyber attacks that are coming right now from Iran.

Now every time an offer is made, Democrats say: Nope. It is not quite there yet.

As someone said, they are now rejecting deals which are better than their first offer.

Now, put this in context. Republicans and Democrats negotiated a funding bill for the Department of Homeland Security months ago. At some point, that deal was broken. They said: No, this is not good enough.

Then, 6 weeks ago, they refused to fund the Department of Homeland Security, at which point folks like TSA agents stopped getting paid and FEMA and Cybersecurity and Coast Guard, et cetera.

So Republicans have leaned forward and offered, for example, body cameras. They said they wanted body cameras. I think they wanted \$20 million. I am told the White House has offered over \$100 million for body cameras.

No, now we want something different.

I will just say that at some point, you have to be willing to make an agreement. At some point, you have to decide that a line this long, inconveniencing that many Americans, and not paying TSA agents, FEMA, Coast Guard, and others, is wrong, and you have to accept a deal.

Now, maybe you don't. Clearly you don't. But at some point, you should consider the pain that you are exacting upon fellow Americans, upon people who are not getting paid for 6 weeks even though they have bills to pay.

I want to compliment right now the people who are able to work, whether it is TSA, FEMA, Coast Guard, or Cybersecurity. Let us just thank them. Let us just thank them for doing what they are able to do to protect us even though they have not been paid for 6 weeks.

I will point out that the Department of Homeland Security covers FEMA. I would like the FEMA agents to be paid. Hurricane season starts in 10 weeks. In my State, in the gulf coast, the Atlantic coast, we know what that means. Planning should be taking place now in case a hurricane hits in 10 weeks. That planning is not taking place because people cannot go to work if their Department is shut down.

So if you start to wonder how frustrated Republicans are, ask these people how frustrated they are, and ask the people who are at the end, right where they would be getting checked in, how frustrated they are.

I ask my Democratic colleagues in the Senate to accept "yes" for an answer. If we have actually come to where you were, and you move back, and we have come forward still yet, and you move back once more, maybe at some point, you must examine your priorities. Is it to serve the American people? Is it to make sure that hard-working public servants are paid? Or is it to gain a political objective? I ask you, please, to put the American people first.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

## SAVE AMERICA ACT

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, I am going to speak about two topics—the SAVE Act and the war in Iraq—I would like to start with the SAVE Act.

We are debating the SAVE Act, the SAVE America Act. In my view, that

will actually undermine our elections and sow distrust in the elections. But I want to present letters and calls I have received from Vermonters, including our town clerks and their experience and their judgment about what this will do.

We are very proud in Vermont that we have a very high voter participation rate and no fraud, and that is a point of pride that is shared among Republicans, among Independents, and among Democrats.

These are the words of a town clerk in Vermont:

I have serious concerns regarding the SAVE Act, specifically the barrier it creates for voters and the unnecessary administrative and infrastructure burden it will place on election officials.

If the SAVE Act is enacted, it will put a disproportionate burden on women, low-income families, and anyone who has changed their name since birth. Requiring the documentation to prove a name change can be difficult. It can be expensive.

Many women do not have just one name change, and they may have several due to multiple marriages or divorces, each requiring additional documentation to create a paper trail. Even if the government were to provide a free ID, the underlying documents needed to obtain that ID are rarely free.

Consider the practical reality. What if a voter loses their documentation in a house fire or a flood?

By the way, we had three floods 3 years in a row on July 14.

They lack the time or resources to replace these documents in time to cast their vote.

By the way, that matters to Vermonters of all political persuasions.

Furthermore, if a voter is struggling to put food on their table and does not have a copy of their birth certificate, they should not be forced to choose between feeding their children and exercising their right to vote.

Would voters be forced to use provisional ballots, and if so, how much more time would my office—

This is the clerk's office—

need to spend processing those after the polls close?

Recently, I had an 85-year-old woman come into my office, deeply distressed. She doesn't have a driver's license, a passport, or any other documents that are required under the SAVE America Act. Yet she has voted in every election her entire life. She is terrified that her right to vote will be stripped away.

In a small community like ours, we know our neighbors. Requiring her to produce a birth certificate she hasn't seen in decades ignores the reality of local governance.

And as an election official, I also have significant concerns regarding the logistical challenges this creates. How are we to verify the authenticity of various out-of-state documents? What system will I be provided—

This is the clerk—

to ensure these documents are legitimate?

Federal databases are not always updated in real time. If the act requires verification against the federal database, any lag in the system would wrongly flag eligible citizens as ineligible.

Managing the nuances of local, primary, and federal elections is already a complex task, even for the most seasoned officials. This act represents yet another unfunded mandate.

Our taxpayers are demanding lower taxes, and how can we implement this massive ad-

ministrative shift without raising taxes or diverting funds for other essential services?

Elections are the heartbeat of our community, and as an election official, my priority is ensuring that every eligible neighbor can cast their vote without undue hardship.

The SAVE America Act threatens to turn a straightforward civic duty into a costly, bureaucratic nightmare for our town and its residents. We must ensure that our laws protect the right to vote for all citizens, regardless of their age, sex, income, or life circumstances, rather than creating an unfunded mandate that our taxpayers cannot afford.

Another former town clerk wrote:

I am thoroughly horrified by the onerous requirements for registering to vote. As a former town clerk, I have always believed that a well-functioning democracy should do everything in its power to encourage people to vote, not throw up roadblocks that effectively block millions of people from doing so.

Though no one wants noncitizens to be allowed to vote in federal elections, multiple studies have demonstrated that this is an extremely rare event.

From a cost-benefit standpoint, the SAVE America Act makes no sense. I believe the risk of harm to millions of current and future voters vastly outweighs the risk of non-citizen voting, which is a relatively minimal issue.

Mr. President, that is what is called Vermont common sense.

If Congress and the public believe that showing a valid ID at the polling place is something that should be implemented across the country, this should be proposed in new legislation that will be delayed until at least 2028 so that everyone is given the opportunity to obtain a federal identification card, which can be used for the purposes of voting.

It is ironic that the Republicans, who have historically been opposed to a national ID card, are now the ones screaming the loudest for documentation.

There is absolutely no reason that the bill should specify that a valid driver's license or a REAL ID card should not qualify as sufficient documentation to establish one's eligibility to vote. I believe this is simply a callous attempt to disenfranchise millions of people of color and those of lower socioeconomic status, as well as women who have chosen to change their names upon marriage.

Another clerk writes:

As a former town clerk who managed many Federal elections over the course of my career, I always felt comfortable with the Vermont registration form that asked a number of questions of people who are required to sign an affidavit as to the accuracy of their residency and citizen status. The penalties for perjury are severe, and there is little to no incentive for a noncitizen to risk their status in the United States by illegally attempting to vote.

Many voter registrations take place through the Department of Motor Vehicles, and the creation of the so-called motor voter system has vastly improved the ability of officials to ensure that voter lists are accurate and up to date. Additionally, the Vermont election management system is an online registration system that requires either a Social Security number that can be cross-checked or a valid Vermont driver's license number. Both of these systems are fully functional in Vermont and offer convenience for residents as well as enhanced accuracy in the maintenance of voter lists in the conduct of elections.

The clerk continues:

I would venture to suggest that the SAVE Act, in its current form, would render those systems obsolete and create a huge problem for town clerks, members of the board of civil authority, and voters by disallowing driver's licenses and REAL ID cards as an acceptable form of identification. Both of these systems would be rendered unusable. Voters in my State, they have called, they have emailed, and they have written to me with their concerns.

Another Vermonter, a Vermonter from Stowe:

I am writing to voice my concern over the protection of my voting rights and the voting rights of millions of other married women.

I recently needed to renew my passport. I, fortunately, have my original birth certificate, but found out I no longer had an original copy of my marriage license. It took me significant time, effort, and money to obtain the original, and then to have the passport expedited in order to get it on time for my trip. We are talking months. I was fortunate that I had my birth certificate and, as I would imagine, that many people do not.

In her view, this bill is outrageous.

One Vermonter in Hinesburg said:

I am hearing rumblings that the Senate will be taking action on the SAVE Act that, unfortunately, passed in the House.

In this person's view, this is a voter suppression bill.

Personally, I have already purchased copies of my birth certificate and my marriage license, even though I have a passport, because I wanted to be damned sure I can vote. But, obviously, there are many people who won't be able to access their needed proof of eligibility. If this bill goes through, they will therefore be denied one of their basic rights as Americans.

"I am pretty sure you are going to vote no on this," she says to me. "I just wanted to let you know that I am against it too."

By the way, she is right. I want this Vermonter to know they are right.

Another voter in Winooski:

Please vote no to the SAVE Act. It's a solution in search of a problem because voting by undocumented people does not happen in any significant degree in this country.

It will disenfranchise millions of voters. It is essentially a poll tax on anyone who has changed their name at any point in their life, which means many women, amongst others, will be unable to vote.

We have watched SCOTUS erode the Voting Rights Act of 1965 by degrees.

The SAVE Act will be a death blow—

in the opinion of this writer—

to the work of so many to enable people to vote, that some even sacrifice their life for. And it is further endangered by the lies about this act.

I am listening to my constituents. We all need to listen to our constituents and our local leaders. We cannot advance a bill that will disenfranchise voters. We cannot block access to the ballot box. We cannot limit voices, nor can we stop, nor should we stop, nor should we impede people from voting. I cannot and will not support the SAVE Act.

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IRAN

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, I want to speak on the topic of the war in Iran.