

Chamber who shrug their shoulders and go along and support you.

Another nominee, Phillip Williams, the nominee for the Northern District of Alabama, has a dearth of criminal and Federal court experience and compared the prosecution of the January 6 insurrectionists to the Salem Witch Trials—the Salem Witch Trials. He also called abortion “nothing more than industrialized slaughter.”

For the Middle District of North Carolina, Trump nominated Dan Bishop, Russell Vought’s former top lieutenant at the OMB. He helped orchestrate the Trump administration’s crusade to cut crucial services to the American people. People hate Vought. They hate what he has done. Yet here we are, elevating one of the chief henchmen of Russell Vought. Bishop also said he disagreed with the Obergefell v. Hodges decision that legalized same-sex marriage and supported national abortion bans on multiple occasions as a legislator.

Finally, I want to say a word about Richard Kloster, nominated to serve on the Surface Transportation Board. Kloster has shown a troubling lack of basic understanding of what the Board does. He is, however, a die-hard MAGA loyalist—good enough in Trump’s eyes.

Kloster’s nomination comes as Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern are set to refile today their \$85 billion—\$85 billion—merger application with the Surface Transportation Board. If Kloster helps clear the deal, it will mean higher costs for the American people.

Hear that, Americans? Trump is putting people on the Board who are so, so obsequious to industry that he is going to raise your costs. The more the railroads merge, the less competition, the more the consumer—the more the American people—pays. And if Kloster is on the Board, we are kidding ourselves to think he would side with workers and consumers over the interests of Wall Street-backed railroad oligarchs.

I could go on and on, but Americans get the picture: Trump wants to stack the Boards of his administration with MAGA loyalists who are hell-bent on threatening our freedoms, our economy, and our democracy. And Republicans—even worse—don’t even want to put each of these up for a vote. They can lump them all together because they are embarrassed to vote for some of these people, I am sure.

#### DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. President, on DHS, in a very rare moment, I am asking Republicans to actually listen to Donald Trump on a particular issue. He is not right very much. He is wrong almost all the time. But on this issue, House Republicans should do what he says: Pass the Senate’s DHS bill.

Two days ago, Trump’s OMB issued a memorandum that basically admitted what Democrats have been saying all along: It is because of House Republicans that the Secret Service, FEMA, Coast Guard, TSA, and CISA remain

unfunded. Thirty-five days. It has been 35 days since the Senate unanimously passed DHS funding. Every single Democrat supported it not once but twice.

Democrats are not the holdup, and frankly, in this case, Senate Republicans are not the holdup. Speaker JOHNSON and radical House Republicans are the holdup, and everyone knows it. Even the White House knows it, so they said something yesterday.

Republicans, stop dithering. Get your act together. Pass this legislation today before you leave for a week, and send it to the President’s desk so he can sign it tonight.

I yield the floor.

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

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

#### WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum call with respect to the cloture vote on S. Res. 690.

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

#### STRATEGIC SUBSEA CABLES ACT

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today—and you certainly know this as a Navy SEAL, that life would be very different without the internet. It raises an important question: How does the internet get into our homes? For most users around the world, the internet travels to them from the ocean floor. More specifically, it travels through fragile, largely unprotected fiber optic cables that sit on the ocean floor. They are called undersea cables, and hundreds of these cables crisscross the world’s seabed. On average, they rest about 8,000 feet below sea level. They are essential, and they are exposed.

Stretched end to end, these cables would reach nearly 1 million miles. That is far greater than the distance the Artemis II traveled from the Earth to the Moon and back again.

Here on Earth, the undersea cables are important for a variety of reasons. They carry 99 percent of the world’s internet traffic. They also support \$10 trillion in financial transactions each and every day. Undersea cables are essential for our economy, our military, our communications, and our daily lives.

I am a doctor, and a map of these undersea cables reminds me of an anatomy textbook when you look at this thing, Mr. President, and you see all of these cables all around the globe. A map of these undersea cables reminds me specifically of my time in medical school and the nervous system.

Here is how I see it: Imagine that the Earth is a human body and undersea cables are the nervous system of modern life. All of these connections make

the world more prosperous, and it is especially true as America develops innovative, new technology.

Yet there is a serious problem. The world’s undersea cable network is facing growing threats from our foes around the world. Specifically, the danger comes from Russia and China. Our adversaries seek to hold our connectivity hostage. They are trying to do so by mapping, by splicing, and by sabotaging our system of undersea cables. This can be done simply by dragging an anchor across the cables or having submarines attack them.

China has been especially aggressive, specifically regarding Taiwan. According to Taiwan’s own National Security Bureau, over the last 4 years, there have been over 30 subsea cable incidents. In one, Chinese vessels allegedly cut cables to the Matsu Islands. They are controlled by Taiwan. The islands are connected to the rest of the world by two tiny undersea cables. Both of the cables were cut. It took months—yes, months—to repair them and to restore connectivity to the rest of the world. Such operations disconnect and disrupt communications, and they undermine national defense and global security.

Not every instance of cable cutting is deliberate. We do know that cable-cutting incidents are becoming more frequent and increasingly more suspicious.

So what can we do to prevent them? For the past several years, NATO has responded with military patrols. These ongoing missions have been successful. Still, more needs to be done, and the next step is to target bad actors and do it economically.

Today, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations is—right at this moment—holding a hearing on recent attacks against critical infrastructure, and this includes undersea cables. It also includes energy pipelines.

I am a member of the committee, and Senator SHAHEEN and I have introduced legislation to address these vulnerabilities. It is called the Strategic Subsea Cables Act. It is a bipartisan bill. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee passed it in January by an overwhelming margin.

Our bill mandates tough penalties against individuals and vessels that attack these undersea cables. The penalties include blocking violators from our markets and revoking their U.S. visas. Our bill also has America deploy more resources to secure and repair undersea cables. At the same time, it requires a report to Congress in 6 months specifically on what Russia is doing and what China is doing in terms of sabotaging the undersea cables. These actions put our adversaries on notice that their actions are going to face stiff and severe consequences.

Private companies are already hardening cables where they can. Congress ought to act as a backstop in these defenses and make them more deliberate in terms of this aggression we are seeing from China and Russia. These are

nations whose goal is to harm America, to harm our allies, to undermine our national security.

As a doctor, what I know is that if there is damage to a single fragile nerve cell, it can cause serious disruption to the entire body. America depends on a fragile nervous system of subsea cables for our modern life, and protecting this system is crucial.

Our adversaries seek to turn the bottom of the ocean into a battlefield. The Strategic Subsea Cables Act will make America safer and more secure in our network under the waves.

I yield the floor.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 4444

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I call up S. 4444, a bill to extend the surveillance law known as section 702, for 3 weeks and to require the declassification of the FISA Court's recent ruling on section 702. That ruling found serious violations of Americans' constitutional rights in how the Trump administration has used section 702. The Congress should not vote—should not vote—to renew section 702 while Americans are left in the dark about these troubling abuses.

Today is the expiration date for section 702. Nonetheless, because of a court order, the government's surveillance can continue without interruption until March of 2027. Several Senators have made it clear to me that they are uncomfortable with section 702 expiring. I believe it will be easier to negotiate reforms to section 702 if the Congress passes a short-term extension. The bill that I seek to pass is straightforward: a 3-week extension.

Every day that section 702 is extended without meaningful reforms is a day that the program can continue to be abused. I am willing to allow a short-term extension so long as important information currently hidden from the public is declassified so that Congress can have a full public debate. A 3-week extension is more than reasonable. Senators from both parties introduced legislation months ago, and we have been prepared to negotiate.

Unfortunately, Senators willing to accept business as usual decided to wait. They wanted to just wait around until just before expiration to try to jam through whatever they wanted. That approach failed 2 weeks ago. Senators for business as usual decided they weren't going to use that extra time to do any negotiating.

If the House and Senate are given the opportunity to vote on a long-term extension with meaningful reforms to protect the privacy rights of Americans, it is going to pass. Three weeks is

more than enough time to negotiate a reform bill; that is, if Members are serious about negotiating.

My legislation requires the government to declassify the FISA Court's March 17 ruling on section 702. The government is already required by law to declassify this court ruling. This is an important part of the debate. Let me repeat that. Declassification is already required by law. All that my bill requires is that the opinion be declassified now—now—before Congress votes on renewing section 702.

The law requiring declassification and public release of the court's rulings isn't even remotely controversial. Each year, the FISA Court issues a ruling approving the program, and every year the government follows the law and comes around to declassifying the ruling. These declassified rulings inform Congress and the public about how the administration and the FISA Court interpret the law. It sheds light on past abuses. These opinions are critical to congressional oversight and to the public.

So what might be different this year? First, the March 17 ruling describes serious abuses of section 702 and violations of Americans' constitutional rights. The Congress is debating section 702 reauthorization right now. So maybe there are some who would rather have Congress just go out and vote in the dark—vote in the dark before the public hears about the Trump administration's latest violation of Americans' constitutional rights.

So I am going to wrap up by addressing the arguments of some of our opponents. First, what about protecting what is called sources and methods? My bill allows the executive branch to make redactions to protect sources and methods, just as they have done for all previous section 702 FISA rulings that have been released to the public.

Second, you may hear there is not enough time to do this. The Trump administration has known for over a month that they are legally required to declassify the opinion that I am seeking. My bill would give them 2 more weeks to do it. That is more than enough time to carefully redact a single document. Believe me, when the government wants to declassify something, they sure as hell move fast.

To sum up, my bill gives Congress more than enough time to negotiate a section 702 reauthorization bill with meaningful reforms, and it requires the declassification of information that, in my view, is critical to the debate and the public's understanding of what is being voted on.

So, Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 4444, which is at the desk; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, reserving the right to object—and I will object—first, let me just set the context here. The Senator from Oregon has always expressed hard-core ideological opposition to section 702, which a large majority of the Senate and the House, under Democratic and Republican hands, across Democratic and Republican administrations, has always deemed a vital national security tool. In fact, to the best of my knowledge, the Senator from Oregon has never once voted to extend section 702.

Every few years, we come down here and we have this debate. So let me just express how important it is. The President has said that section 702, which I would remind everyone here is about foreigners on foreign territory—not American citizens—people who do not have Fourth Amendment rights. It is not just about catching jihadists, uncovering terrorist plots. The President, the Commander in Chief, has said this is vital for the Maduro raid, for Operation Epic Fury, for the rescue of missing troops. I think we should respect his position as the Commander in Chief, the consumer of this intelligence, and the one who employs it—a very similar call to what President Biden and President Obama made before as well.

Unfortunately, it does expire tonight. And as even the Senator from Oregon, a hard-core ideological opponent of section 702, has granted in requesting a 3-week extension, we shouldn't let it go dark tonight.

So how did we get here? Yesterday, the House passed a 3-year extension. That is what the President asked for, a 3-year extension. Now, he wanted it to be a clean extension. The House adopted various reforms. About 90 percent of House Republicans voted for that bill. More than 40 House Democrats voted for that bill. If we were to vote on that bill today, the vast majority of Senate Republicans would vote for it. But there are enough Senate Democrats to block its passage today, which I recognize.

We, therefore, need more time for negotiations. These negotiations are highly complex and technical. They have been constructive, but they must continue, and they must involve not only Senators but also Members of the House, the Speaker, the minority leader, the chairman and the vice chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, the chairman and the ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee.

I believe we are moving forward. I believe that we can get a bill passed that both preserves the operational viability of this program while addressing concerns of those who are not yet ready to vote for a 3-year extension. Therefore, we have proposed, say, a 3-month extension, which would take us to the end of July and the August recess. The Senator from Oregon thinks that is too long. A 2-month extension, which would take us roughly to the