

WAIVING THE JONES ACT

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, the Jones Act is a law that we have had for over a hundred years, enacted by Congress, and it simply says that cargo moving between two points in the United States should move on an American-built, American-owned, and American-crewed ship. It supports American workers, American shipyards, and American national security.

The Presiding Officer represents the State of Alabama. Mobile has some very good shipyards; Louisiana, some tremendous shipyards. But they are scattered around our Nation. It could be in Florida, Mississippi, Washington State—I am sure California—Maine.

And the places that build those things that go into the ships, into the boats, could be maritime manufacturing in Illinois, software in San Diego.

This supports American industry.

In my State, Louisiana ports, shipyards, energy producers, and maritime workers are a large portion of the State's economy. I could list you the towns: Houma, Lockport. Thousands of people in Louisiana depend on this industry for jobs that actually support the families.

Now, companies employ Louisiana's skilled workers, and they build vessels for the oil industry, for NOAA, for the Marines, for portions of ships that go to the Navy. And why do we have this workforce and these companies that can build these boats? Because of the Jones Act.

When we waive the Jones Act, like the administration just did and now is doing for another 90 days, we are saying that foreign-built vessels by foreign workers with foreign components—not from San Diego or Illinois or Mobile or Lockport or Houma but someplace else—can put together a vessel that moves goods between one point of the United States and another.

Now, the rationale for waiving the Jones Act was that we need to lower energy prices for California, and when gasoline and diesel go from the gulf coast to California, we are going to magically decrease the price paid at the pump in Los Angeles.

But although waiving the Jones Act can export our jobs to China and to Korea and to India, when you waive the Jones Act, it does not, by any—any—significant amount, lower the prices at the pump in California. Why? California pays \$6 a gallon for gasoline because they have shut down refineries. They will not allow them to be expanded. They require a special mix of gasoline.

You could never get a pipeline built from Louisiana to California. It would never have been permitted under the Obama or Biden administrations.

They have taxes upon taxes, deliberately trying to make gasoline more expensive in California, in order to encourage people to buy electric vehicles.

So that is on top of the fact that, because of the hostility in Iran, the international price of oil is much higher.

Put it all together. The high prices of the oil, regulations, lack of refineries in California, no pipeline—that is the reason they are paying over \$6 a gallon for gasoline.

To do something cosmetic like waive the Jones Act, to say that you are doing something, actually is more of an excuse to waive the Jones Act than it is to actually lower the price of gasoline in California.

And while you are doing this kind of philosophical “we don't like the Jones Act,” it hurts Louisiana workers. It costs Louisiana jobs, and jobs in Mobile, jobs in Illinois, jobs in San Diego. I could keep going down the list. It hurts the American worker for a kind of “it ain't going to happen” decrease of gasoline prices in California.

I will point out that the administration is making a big push to restore shipbuilding to the United States. Now, there is a difference between a boat and a ship. A boat is something below a certain size, but it can be really big, and a ship is like what the Navy uses. If you want more shipbuilding in the United States, you don't start doing that by hurting boatbuilding in the United States because the same workers who build boats build ships, the same technology that supports building boats supports building ships, and in some cases, components of that bigger Navy ship are built in a boatyard.

So in our policy of trying to support the American worker, we are actually trying to do things that are important to national security; that support our ability to make a Navy—a blue-water Navy—using American workers and not having to buy an aircraft carrier from Korea with all the kind of “Are we sure we are getting what we want to get?”

My concern is that the original rationale for the waiver just doesn't make sense to me; it is just not logical. But now it has been extended. So it tells me that there is something motivating that waiver beyond the imagination that it is going to significantly lower gas prices in California. It is somebody who doesn't like the Jones Act, who doesn't like the support that Congress deliberately gave to the workers in our boatyards, the people who are building the engines in Illinois that go into those boats or in any of the other places that are scattered around the country, in our heartland or on the coastline, that support our workers. Somebody philosophically doesn't like it, and they are using this as an excuse in order to kill the Jones Act.

Well, Louisiana cannot afford for this to happen and neither should the country. Once waivers become routine, companies stop investing, workers leave the industry, and America becomes more dependent on foreign operators, and it becomes less prosperous for our Nation's workers.

I agree with the administration in that we should be doing everything we can to lower gas prices—oh, my gosh; families back home are feeling the

price at the pump—but let's focus on solutions that work, that provide real relief and protect an industry that Louisiana, the gulf coast, and many in our country rely on.

With that, I yield the floor.

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

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

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mrs. BRITT. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the men and women who risk their lives every day when they leave their homes so that we can return to the safety of ours—these incredible, hard-working men and women in law enforcement.

This National Police Week, I am reminded of those men and women, but I am also reminded of the ones that never returned home. There are several Alabamians who made the ultimate sacrifice this year while protecting our communities, and I would like to take a moment to recognize them: Conservation Enforcement Officer Shawn Nixon, Police Officer Dallas Hinton, Corporal David Hathcock, and Lieutenant Mark Meadows. All recently lost their lives while serving their communities valiantly.

Shawn Nixon was always known as a “man on a mission.” This was evident through his incredible performance in the field, which was rightfully recognized, so much so that he was nominated for an unprecedented 14 “Officer of the Year” awards. He was ultimately honored with the Shikar-Safari “Officer of the Year” award just 2 years ago.

Shawn wasn't just an incredible officer, though. He was a loving father and a loyal friend. He was remembered by all who knew him—his two children, countless friends, and the entire Alabama police community—as a man whose mission will continue to live on, and they will carry his memory with them.

I would also like to recognize Dallas Hinton. In the greatest Nation in the world, young people are fortunate to have what seems like endless paths they can take in life. Dallas chose one of the most noble paths possible by enlisting in the U.S. Marine Corps.

After his time in the Marines came to an end, Dallas became a police officer with the Thomasville Police Department, just 2 years ago. Dallas served the Thomasville community with the same strength, courage, and valor that he displayed during his time in the Marines.

And at just 25 years old, when he had his whole life ahead of him, his life, unfortunately, was cut short. I am confident it would have been a bright one.

He leaves behind a loving fiancée, a mother, a father, as well as two brothers and two sisters.

It is my hope that we can all lead our lives with the same courage that Dallas did.

He will not be forgotten, and his spirit of service will live on across Alabama with the many lives that he touched.

Only a couple of months ago, the Montgomery community mourned the loss of David Hathcock, a 20-year veteran of the Montgomery Police Department.

Being a part of any community for that long—much less protecting it every single day—you are bound to make a lasting impact. That is exactly what Corporal Hathcock did. He was considered a leader by those around him, even those who were more senior than him in the department. But, especially, young officers looked to him as they rose through the ranks for guidance and as an incredible example. David led with excellence, pride, and courage, which trickled down throughout the entire department.

His memory will live on through his wife and two daughters, as well as countless colleagues and Montgomery residents whose lives he touched.

And, finally, I would like to recognize Lieutenant Mark Meadows. An Army Ranger veteran, Lieutenant Meadows was no stranger to service.

After beginning his career as a police officer in Mountain Brook, in 1992, Mark found his home in Irondale, AL. He became a fixture of that community, serving the Irondale Police Department for over 30 years.

Outside of work, he was a helping hand to all who needed it, helping to coordinate traffic security or the security at his home church. He did that for more than a decade.

Mark was the real deal and will always be remembered as leaning in and helping those who needed it most.

I want to encourage everyone across our Nation this week to thank a police officer. The stories I just told were those of Alabamians who loved their community, their State, and their country. They displayed that every single day. And as we all know, when police officers leave the safety of their home so we can return to ours, we owe them a debt of gratitude.

These men that we just honored didn't have the opportunity to return home. So don't wait until it is too late. Don't wait until after their service. When you see an officer, let them know how much you appreciate it. Let them know how much you appreciate their sacrifice and service. Whether it is here in this building, which we are so grateful for, whether it is back home, whether it is on the street corner, we appreciate the law and order they bring and making sure our communities are safe and sound.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, this Chamber has before it a very important

question: Will Congress embrace and exercise its constitutional responsibility to decide, as Madison put it, the question of war?

That is a heavy responsibility. It is no small matter to decide whether or not the United States should go to war or to decide whether or not to end a war. It is a question of blood and treasure. The lives of thousands can hang in the balance—the lives of soldiers on both sides, the lives of civilians.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan resulted in the deaths of more than 5,000 American servicemembers and the deaths of approximately 250,000 civilians in Afghanistan and Iraq and they resulted in massive use of American treasure, some \$8 trillion.

It is tempting for Members of this Chamber to shirk this responsibility. The question weighs too heavily on us. "Let's let the President decide."

But if you took an oath to the Constitution, as every Member here did, then you know that letting the President decide is unconstitutional. The Constitution did not assign this weighty issue of war to the President. It assigned this weighty issue to all of us here in Congress.

As Madison summarized: The Constitution supposes what the history of all governments demonstrates, that the Executive is the branch of power most interested in war and most prone to it. The Constitution has accordingly, with studied care, vested the question of war in the legislative branch.

With studied care, the Founders said: No one person should decide the question of whether we go to war. The weight of the decision in blood and treasure is too great, so there needs to be debate. There needs to be viewpoints exchanged before such a significant action is taken. And that is why it is assigned to us.

Now the modern version of declaring war is to pass an authorization for the use of military force, or an AUMF. That is the system set up in the 1973 War Powers Act following Vietnam where there was no authorization ever granted, and yet a massive calamity for American servicemembers, some 50,000-plus who died and so many injured and so much treasure expended.

So Congress by law with the signature of the President said: Let's set up a system to take that constitutional provision where the question of war is assigned to Congress and create a format through which it can be considered. And that law—that 1973 law—says the power of war can only be exercised under three possibilities.

One, there is a declaration of war. Second, Congress passes a law and a President signs it into law to create an authorization for war.

And that, in fact, is what happened in the case of Afghanistan and Iraq. The President came to Congress and said: Here are the arguments. I want you to authorize war as required in the Constitution.

This Chamber and the House Chamber considered this question, and we passed an AUMF, an authorization for use of military force.

Those wars were entered into under a constitutional path. And whether or not any one individual agreed with the outcome, at least it was constitutional in that it was the result of studied debate here in this Chamber and down the Hall in the House of Representatives.

The War Powers Act creates a third option. Under a special condition—sometimes it is referred to as "the condition of imminent threat," that we are under attack or on the verge of being under attack. The specific language in the War Powers Act says that the power of war can be exercised if there is a national emergency created by an attack upon the United States, its territories, or its Armed Forces.

But it places a 60-day limit on that. Now many experts would say this option was never triggered in this case because there was not a national emergency created by an attack on the United States. But some Members of this body have said: close enough. The threat from Iran was close enough. We consider that a valid third option.

I would disagree, but others had a different opinion and then said: but when that 60 days are up, that is exhausted and the President must withdraw forces as required in the War Powers Act or must come to us with an authorization for the use of military force, which has not happened.

So if the President fails to withdraw forces and the President fails to come to us with an authorization for the use of military force, then it is incumbent on us to pass a War Powers Resolution that says: Mr. President, you are in violation of the Constitution, and you must end this war. If you want to continue it, come and ask for constitutional authorization. The 60 days are up.

Someone said: Well, the war is not as fierce as it was previously. There is kind of a paper version of a cease-fire in place, and maybe that suspends the clock on the 60 days, a clock that expired on May 1.

But, you know, the War Powers Act does not have a provision that says if the war becomes less fierce, it doesn't count against the 60 days. That is not in the law. That is not in the vision under which this was prepared and written for the exercise of our constitutional responsibility.

And everybody in the world knows that the war has continued. The Navy—our Navy—has continued a blockade of Iranian ports. That is an act of war.

Our Navy has fired on Iranian naval vessels. That is an act of war.

Our Navy has fired on Iranian oil tankers. That is an act of war.

And Iran, they also have continued the war. They have fired on United States naval ships, including the use of drones, missiles, and bullets; fired on