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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O Lord, our Redeemer, abide with our Senators through the passing hours of another day. Give them an optimism, unity, and purpose so that they will not forget how You enabled them to surmount obstacles in the past. Lord, strengthen them to stand firm for those good and eternal values that keep a nation strong. Remind them that You are the pilot of their lives who can guide them to a desired destination.

Let discretion, understanding, and wisdom protect them from the forces of evil. Save them from becoming legends in their own minds as You keep them humble enough to see their need of You.

We pray in Your righteous Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BUDD). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2026—Motion to Proceed

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 302, H.R. 7148.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows: Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 302, H.R. 7148, a bill making further consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2026, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

TAX FILING SEASON

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, yesterday marked the start of the 2026 tax filing season. This year, taxpayers can expect to see some of the largest tax refunds in history. That, of course, is thanks to our enactment of the legislation called the Working Families Tax Cut Act. That act prevented the largest tax increase in the Nation's history. These tax cuts paved the way for economic growth and will deliver substantial savings to hard-working families.

Congress made several provisions from the 2017 tax law permanent. This includes keeping lower individual marginal tax rates, upholding the 20-percent deduction for qualified business income, and restoring full expensing for research and development and capital expenditures. It also maintains the expanded standard deduction and the doubling of the child tax credit from \$1,000 to \$2,000.

The tax bill also includes new tax relief measures. This includes an additional \$200 boost for the child tax credit, along with indexing that tax credit for inflation. Seniors benefit from an additional \$6,000 deduction per qualified individual. Moreover, hard-work-

ing middle-class Americans can deduct their overtime pay and tips for the very first time, leaving more money in their pockets.

So I come to the floor to state these facts but, more importantly, to encourage Iowans to file their tax returns sooner rather than later to see the impact on their family's economic status that the Working Families Tax Cut has for them.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

SHOOTING OF ALEX PRETTI

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the Senate gavels into session with the conscience of this Nation shaken to its core. Last Saturday, in the Eat Street district of Minneapolis, 37-year-old Alex Pretti was shot and killed by a Border Patrol agent after he was trying to help a woman thrown to the ground by Federal officers.

The many videos of Alex's death circulating online are grisly. They are horrifying. They appear to show Alex was shot 10 times in less than 5 seconds. They show he held nothing more than a cell phone in his hand. If we trust our own eyes and ears, instead of Trump administration propaganda, it is pretty clear that Alex was murdered in broad daylight.

The grief and anger his parents must feel right now must be staggering. He was a decent young man, an intensive care nurse at the VA, who dedicated his life to helping others.

In fact, the morning after Alex Pretti was killed, I was at a doctor's appointment, and, as it turned out, my doctor's assistant was from Minneapolis. She knew Alex Pretti. She said he was just the kindest, gentlest soul you would ever meet, not a bad bone in his body.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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Alex Pretti did not deserve to die; nor did Renee Good deserve to die 2 weeks ago, shot in her own car, mere minutes after dropping her kid off at school.

Enough is enough, and that is what America is saying from one end of this country to the other.

What ICE and CBP are doing in Minneapolis and other cities around the country is not border security and certainly not law and order. What ICE is doing is lawless disorder. What ICE is doing is state-sanctioned thuggery, and it must be stopped.

ICE must leave Minnesota today—not tomorrow, not next week, but today.

There were reports that the President is thinking about a reduction in force. A reduction isn't good enough. President Trump should act now to completely withdraw ICE and immediately turn down the temperature.

Americans support law enforcement. Americans support commonsense border security. But America does not support ICE terrorizing our communities.

Look at this picture. This is the kind of picture we are seeing more and more in American cities when ICE descends upon them: Federal agents shooting at and threatening protesters, black ICE SUVs roaming the streets, and agents barging into homes without warrants; ICE encircling schools with riot gear and using kids as bait and terrorizing our communities to the point that people are afraid to go to work, to church, to shop for groceries.

This madness, this terror must stop. The American people—Democrat, Republican, Independent—demand that the chaos and lawlessness of ICE be severely reined in. This week, the Senate will step into the breach.

In a few days, the Senate will consider a package of six funding bills sent to us recently by the House, and five of those bills are ready to go and should quickly pass. I will say more about that in a moment.

But in the wake of ICE's abuses and the administration's recklessness, the Senate must not pass the DHS budget as currently written, and it must be reworked to rein in and overhaul ICE to ensure the public's safety.

The fix should come from Congress. The public can't trust the administration to do the right thing on its own, and Republicans and Democrats must work together to make that happen.

In the meantime, I will vote no on any legislation that funds ICE until it is reined in and overhauled, and Senate Democrats are overwhelmingly united on this issue.

ICE should meet the same basic standards of accountability and due process that any law enforcement Agency is asked to meet.

Now, separately, to finish the appropriations process, Leader THUNE should split the funding bills and move forward with the five that already have broad support from both parties. If

Leader THUNE agrees to split the bills, just as Speaker JOHNSON split them in the House, and puts the five on the floor, I am confident they will sail—sail—through the Chamber, and we will have funded 96 percent of the Federal Government.

But if Leader THUNE insists on holding a vote on DHS legislation that he knows will not pass, then he will guarantee another unnecessary government shutdown this Friday, and the shutdown will be on Leader THUNE's shoulders.

Leader THUNE's choice is very simple: Move the five bills that are ready and fund 96 percent of the government, while we work to improve the DHS bill—the Homeland Security bill—or THUNE can trigger a shutdown by forcing a vote on a bill everyone knows cannot pass at this moment, the combined bill that contains DHS. The ball is in Leader THUNE's court. He must quickly move to prevent a shutdown.

Now, in the meantime—in the meantime—the heads of ICE, CBP, and USCIS should all testify before the Senate as soon as possible. We must not wait for hearings weeks from now. The American people demand truth and accountability right now. I am glad that Republicans like Senator PAUL have said likewise.

But we must also be candid: It is bone-chilling that, in the aftermath of the killings in Minneapolis, some of the Trump administration's top officials have chosen to blatantly lie to the American people, like full-fledged authoritarians.

Stephen Miller raced to Twitter to call Alex Pretti a "would-be assassin" who "tried to murder federal law enforcement." If you watched footage of the killing, you would know this is an outlandish, shocking, and totally dishonest and despicable thing to say.

Meanwhile, Gregory Bovino, Donald Trump's top Border Patrol officer, also claimed, without a shred of evidence, that Pretti "wanted to do maximum damage and massacre law enforcement."

And then, of course, there is Kristi Noem. Merely hours after Pretti's death, Noem claimed—again, without so much as a morsel of evidence—that he had committed "an act of domestic terrorism" and wanted to "perpetuate violence."

Do you know what the reaction of these Trump officials—too many of them—seems to be when something terrible happens? To lie about it—that is their immediate reaction—not to find the truth, not to express any sympathy to those who are dead, but to lie, lie, lie. It is despicable. It is so un-American. It is so different than what we have seen in so many previous administrations. Lies, all of it, just blatant, sickening lies—and that is what these administration officials almost automatically turn to when there is difficulty and there is trouble.

Kristi Noem is a liar. She is vicious. She is also incompetent. Donald Trump

must fire her at once before another American is killed under her watch.

So I will say it again: It is bone-chilling that Donald Trump's goons will so eagerly and almost lazily lie right to the public's face—right to the public's face.

And where is the accountability from Donald Trump? He said nothing to call out the nastiness and lies from Noem and Miller. It seems he almost prefers to have serial liars in his administration than honest people.

The kind of dishonesty we see from Kristi Noem and Stephen Miller is the bread and butter of authoritarian regimes, and it is dangerous, dangerous territory for our country. When a government tells its people, "Ignore what your eyes see, and forget what your ears hear; just listen to us instead," then, for all practical purposes, it is not trying to act like a government in a democracy. This is how dictatorships operate, and we are seeing the signs right in front of us, here in America.

The right answer, of course, is to meet the lies with truth. Here in the Senate, the American people deserve to hear that truth under oath when Kristi Noem and other administration officials testify as soon as possible.

And across America, the people must keep defending the truth. They should keep showing up lawfully and documenting abuses by ICE. They must continue to protest peacefully and non-violently, to exercise their rights to free speech and free assembly, to protect their communities from the abuses of this thuggish government.

It may feel to many like the flame of democracy is flickering into extinction before our eyes, and there is no way to fight back. That is wrong. The good people of Minneapolis—and of so many cities around the country—have shown the answer to authoritarianism: Hold firm, tell the truth, look out for one another, organize, protest. And when the time comes, exercise your greatest power of all: Go to the ballot box and vote. Vote, and vote out the liars.

I yield the floor.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum call with respect to the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 300, S. 3627.

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

MINNESOTA

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, before I begin, I want to take a moment to talk about the situation in Minnesota.

The death of Alex Pretti was a tragedy, and there should be a full and impartial investigation into the shooting. I am glad that the President is sending Tom Homan to Minnesota, and I hope that his arrival will help restore order to the situation.

I also hope that recent tragedies have inspired some soul-searching among those who have participated in or encouraged abuse toward ICE officers and other law enforcement officers. It is deeply disturbing that we have had public officials essentially encouraging harassment of officers simply trying to do their duty.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. President, funding for a substantial portion of the government runs out this week. We are on the clock to pass the remaining fiscal year 2026 appropriations bills. Productive talks are ongoing, and I urge my Democrat colleagues to continue their engagement and find a path forward that will avoid a needless shutdown and not jeopardize full funding for key Agencies like FEMA and the Coast Guard. We need to fund these and other essential Agencies and finish our 2026 appropriations work now.

MARCH FOR LIFE

Mr. President, on Friday, tens of thousands of individuals filled the streets of DC and marched up to the Capitol Building. They came from every background and from every corner of the country—high school students, college students, church groups, individuals, families—united by one mission: to testify to the truth that every human being, no matter how small or vulnerable, is of infinite value, created in the image and likeness of God, and endowed by the Creator with certain inalienable rights—chief among them, the right to life.

Abortion statistics are grim—roughly a million babies being killed by abortion every year. So many lives lost. So much love lost. But the March for Life is an occasion for hope. It is a powerful reminder that life has many defenders and that in every place in this country, there are men and women and young people standing up for moms and new babies.

Of course, the March for Life, as big and important as it is, is just one small facet of the pro-life movement, which works every day to offer help and hope to moms in need. In 2024, for example, pregnancy resource centers around the country provided more than \$452 million in total medical care, support and education services, and material goods to moms and their families.

Here in Congress, it is vital that we do our part to support moms and protect babies. I am very proud that with the Working Families Tax Cut, Congress enacted the first pro-life law in decades. Thanks to Republicans' landmark legislation, this year, some of the Nation's largest abortion providers, including Planned Parenthood, are prohibited from receiving Federal Medicaid funding. Organizations that have

turned the killing of babies into a business are cut off.

Later this afternoon, we will be taking up legislation to ensure that pregnant college students are aware of and able to access the support they need to carry their babies and parent while continuing their education.

The Pregnant Students' Rights Act, introduced by Senator ASHLEY MOODY, requires colleges and universities to ensure that all students are informed of the protections and accommodations available to them should they become pregnant—such as modified class schedules, excused absences, physical accommodations, and more. No student should ever have to feel that she needs to choose between keeping her baby or completing her education.

The legislation will help ensure pregnant college students are aware that support is available to them in their local communities and on their campuses, both while they are pregnant and after giving birth.

I would like to think that this bill would get 100 votes here in the U.S. Senate. The pro-abortion movement and the Democrat Party have long claimed to be for choice. Well, what better way to ensure that women actually have a choice than by making sure that they are aware of the resources available to them. This bill does nothing to restrict abortion. It doesn't even mention abortion. It simply ensures that women know about the support and accommodations available to them and that they have information about how to file a title IX complaint should they face discrimination.

This bill should have unanimous support. Yet we fully expect that, by and large, the Democrat Party will oppose this legislation. That is right. The Democrat Party will vote against legislation designed to do nothing more than inform women of the resources available to them and of their rights under title IX.

Why? Well, that is a good question.

Why does the Democrat Party oppose making sure women are informed about the support available to them? For that matter, why has the Democrat Party opposed legislation to ensure that babies born alive during an abortion are protected or why did they remove safety requirements around chemical abortions—requirements designed to ensure that at least the mother, if not the baby, was protected?

Well, it is because they are afraid. They are afraid, if they support even the tiniest, most commonsense measure to ensure safety around abortion or protect babies or even just ensure pregnant college students know of the resources available to them, that they will somehow, inadvertently, point to the truth that they are so desperate to hide—the fact that an unborn child is just as much a human being as you or I because, after all, Democrats are fighting an uphill battle.

We know science. We have ultrasounds. We know very, very well

that that unborn child waving her hands or sucking her thumb on the sonogram screen is a human being, and every one of us knows, at the core of our being, that human beings deserve to be protected. Abortion requires us to suppress our natural instincts. It requires us to close our eyes, stick our fingers in our ears, and pretend that the human being we see on the ultrasound, moving her fingers and kicking her feet, is nothing more than a clump of cells that we can sacrifice at will.

So I understand the Democrats are scared, and they should be scared because, when it comes to abortion, they have built their house upon sand, and sooner or later, that sand will crumble. Sooner or later, the truth will win. Life will win.

I want to thank everyone who marched for life here in DC on Friday, and I unite my work and my prayers to theirs in that the day may soon come when every baby born and unborn is guaranteed the right to life and the full protection of our laws.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. 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 remarks of Mrs. HYDE-SMITH pertaining to the introduction of S. 3697 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

PREGNANT STUDENTS' RIGHTS ACT

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, today, we are also voting on another important effort to protect pregnant moms: Senator MOODY's Pregnant Students' Rights Act. This bill would empower young women in college by ensuring that they are supported throughout pregnancy to continue their higher education.

Earning a degree is just one of the many ways a mother can prepare herself to be a strong role model for her children, and any mother would tell you that few things are more motivating than learning that you are about to become one. We should remove every obstacle that stands in the way of that motivation, and the Pregnant Students' Rights Act aims to help clear the path to success.

I look forward to standing with my pro-life colleagues to send a clear message to expectant mothers across the country: We support you at every stage of life, and you are deeply admired for your drive to become the best role models for your children.

I yield the floor.

MARCH FOR LIFE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mrs. BRITT. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate life. Last week, our Nation's Capital saw thousands who traveled here to march in the 53rd annual March for Life. My team was

proud to host many Alabamians who were here and thank them for their dedication to the life movement.

The theme—“Life is a Gift”—reminded me about how valuable our advocacy is in protecting our most vulnerable and supporting families. You see, for me, second to the salvation provided to me through my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, being a wife and a mom is the most important thing in my life. You can’t quite explain it. There is something about being a parent: the first cry, the first step, then being able to help them navigate big decisions.

And while it is so crucial and having a strong father and strong families helps us have strong individuals, there is something special about being a momma—feeling that first kick; realizing that you have a human, made in God’s image, that you are humbled to get to help bring into this world. That is something that I hope for every woman, and it is a reason that I am so dedicated to making sure that we protect women and children along that journey.

Supporting moms is important because, as beautiful a blessing that it is, there are times it can be challenging. So making sure women have the support in prenatal, postpartum, and early childhood development ages, and supporting families along the way are critically important to making sure that every child is able to live their American dream. That is why I was so proud to introduce the MOMS Act and continue to look for ways to build consensus around it and actually get it across the finish line. It stands for “More Opportunities for Moms to Succeed.”

I think we have to remember how valuable life is, both inside and outside of the womb. We have to do everything that we can to create a culture of life, to make sure that the most vulnerable among us are fought for, and that we provide a voice to the voiceless. As we look for that culture of life and the values that allow us to achieve that, I would hope that we could stand together today in strengthening families and be able to reflect the very best of who we are as a country.

So as we continue to bring attention to this—not just today but every day throughout the year—let’s all be able to coalesce on how important life is. I certainly know what an impact it has had on me.

I yield the floor.

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

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, last Friday, thousands of Americans and many Iowans braved nearly freezing temperatures to join this year’s March for Life. I stand united with them in a simple truth: Life is a gift worth protecting.

This isn’t just a political belief for me; it is deeply personal. When I first became a mother and more recently a grandmother, holding my daughter and my grandson in my arms and watching

them grow will always be cherished moments for me.

I want to protect and preserve this same experience for young mothers everywhere, which is why I am thankful for the folks who gather year after year at the March for Life to call for action on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves—the unborn.

For years, I worked alongside their mission and called on the Supreme Court to protect the constitutional right to life. On June 24, 2022, the Supreme Court answered, returning these decisions to voters on a State-by-State basis.

Several States, including my home State of Iowa, led by Governor Reynolds, took a strong stance and protected babies from the moment doctors detect a fetal heartbeat.

Unfortunately, the number of abortions across the country has generally increased since 2022. Another sad truth is that I must use the word “generally.” There is not a single, complete set of abortion data publicly reported for all 50 States. No one is keeping count. The sanctity of life in our Nation deserves better. My Ensuring Accurate and Complete Abortion Data Reporting Act will require all 50 States to be transparent about the number of abortions. This way, we can ensure no life is ever ignored, hidden, or forgotten.

On this solemn note, one thing is clear: Our work on behalf of the unborn is far from over. As I continue to protect and preserve the life-changing experience of becoming a mother, I want mothers and families to know they are supported in pregnancy and beyond, no matter their situation. For these families and the folks who help them grow, I am doing my part in the Senate by increasing access to affordable, high-quality childcare so working parents can rest assured their little ones are well cared for.

As I continue to fight for the most vulnerable, I am proud to support the Life at Conception Act to explicitly recognize and protect an unborn child’s right to life. Each and every one of us was given this incredible gift. When we honor the dignity of every human being, we give them the chance to become loving sons and daughters, neighbors and leaders.

As we work toward a nation where every life is protected, every family is supported, and we can all say with confidence that life is a gift worth protecting, I hope that every American will join me in the fight for the inalienable right to life.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, this past Friday, thousands of Americans, young and old, marched peacefully to call attention to the sanctity and inherent value of each life. Their advocacy and passion drive our work on Capitol Hill to protect women and unborn children.

I am a doctor, and I learned in medical school that a child’s life begins in the womb. Abortion ends that life.

Medically, morally, there is no difference in the value of a child, whether she is in her mother’s arm or her mother’s womb. And as a doctor, I learned the first rule is to do no harm. Chemical abortion drugs are designed to do harm, to eliminate the life of the unborn child, and, at times, to do harm to the child’s mother.

That is why as chair of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, I focused our first hearing of 2026 on the dangers of the chemical abortion drug mifepristone. Women, families, and unborn children deserve that we do so. I thank Louisiana attorney general Liz Murrill and Dr. Monique Wubbenhorst for sharing the real-life impact abortion drugs have on women and their unborn children. Their testimonies confirm the need to restore the previous in-person dosing requirements that the Biden administration recklessly removed.

Chemical abortion drugs are not safe, run-of-the-mill drugs. You shouldn’t be able to order them without undergoing a proper medical examination and screening—screening—not just to see the stage of the pregnancy but to make sure that the person who is going to receive the drug is not being coerced to take the drug.

Let’s first speak about potential side effects. One study showed that 9 in 10 women who take a chemical abortion drug describe their pain as moderate to severe. Half say it was worse than expected. Another study found that 1 in 10 women undergoing mifepristone abortions experience serious adverse events, including hemorrhage, adverse bleeding, sepsis, or infection. Now, that sounds so medical, but this is not about statistics or about how doctors speak; it is about women with real stories.

Without the in-person dispensing requirement, pregnant women across the country, including my State of Louisiana, are at risk of being coerced into having an abortion against their will.

Attorney General Murrill testified about a 16-year-old girl from Louisiana who was planning to have a gender reveal party, and instead her mother forced her to take the abortion pill. And instead of a gender reveal party, she ended up in the emergency room with complications from taking the medicine.

The pill she took was prescribed by a doctor in New York. Now, it violates Louisiana’s law that would not have allowed the doctor from New York to prescribe this, but the doctor in New York did not know the age of the fetus within the woman’s womb.

And she certainly didn’t have the opportunity to ask her: Do you really want to take this? If she had asked the young girl, the young lady: Do you really want to take this, she would have found out that she didn’t; that it was her mother getting the pill for her,

and her mother was coercing her to take the medicine.

Now, pregnant women in Louisiana and across the country, again, receive these drugs through the mail, often from somebody out of their State who never does an ultrasound to see the stage of the pregnancy. And this is reckless. The medicine is only approved to be taken within the first 10 weeks of pregnancy. One reason why—I am not an obstetrician—one reason why though is that as the fetus grows inside the womb, at some point the fetus is too large to pass safely through the opening of the womb.

The FDA has not reviewed the safety risk of taking it after 10 weeks. Women now are taking it, in the testimony we had, at week 20. This becomes a safety risk for the mother if she cannot pass the fetus, the child stays in her womb, and she is at risk of infection, at risk of, again, going to the emergency room and finding out that she is otherwise sick.

By the way, I am a gastroenterologist, but my colleague Dr. MARSHALL, who is an obstetrician, is also on the HELP Committee. And he pointed out that many women are inaccurately describing how far along their pregnancy is. If you ask a woman, when was your last menstrual cycle, that should date how many weeks she is pregnant. But Dr. MARSHALL, an obstetrician with decades of clinical practice, will say that it is inexact, and the standard of care is to calculate the gestational age of the child by doing an ultrasound. When the woman knows that the child is further along, she will find out that the child actually has a heartbeat and could live outside the womb, and some will reconsider, on their own volition, whether or not they want to have the abortion. This is why the in-person visit to the doctor is so important.

Now, in some cases, these drugs are being mailed from outside of the United States. We don't know what is in them. They are not labeled in compliance with FDA guidelines, and, again, there is no patient-doctor relationship where the pregnant woman can seek needed followup care for the serious adverse events.

So let's be clear, if the chemical abortion drug were any other medicine, coming from an unknown country with unknown ingredients, being prescribed by an out-of-state doctor who does not see the patient—it is being taken off label, not in line with FDA guidelines, and sometimes the patient, well-documented, is being coerced into taking it—there should be bipartisan outrage. So why is this drug, this condition any different?

How did we get here to the point where abortion pills can be ordered online, mailed, taken with no medical supervision or safeguards with coercion? Think of the girls, the women in abusive relationships, or those who are being trafficked whose voices have been silenced.

Now, I was just in an airplane bathroom and, you know, noticing things in the bathroom, and I noticed the sign there: "Call this number if you are being trafficked."

It understood that a young person being taken to a Super Bowl—because oftentimes young people being trafficked are brought to a big event like a Super Bowl—it is happening right now—are going to be on an airplane, and it tells them speak to the flight attendant or call this number if you are being trafficked.

And it struck me that we will put a sign in an airplane bathroom—and thank goodness for Southwest Airlines doing that—we will put a sign in a bathroom to inform the young lady of the risk of being trafficked and how to get out of it. But at the same time, we don't do anything about the pimp who might be getting the pill, forcing her to take it to end a pregnancy that resulted from her being trafficked. Shouldn't we tell her the truth of a chemical abortion?

Now, as chairman of the HELP Committee, I strongly urge Secretary Robert Kennedy and Commissioner Makary to complete the review of mifepristone that they both promised that they would complete during their confirmation hearings.

They both said they would complete it. It has not been completed. Many other things of much less seriousness and much less priority have been completed but not this. And when we are asked, we are told it is in the by-and-by. This should be completed now, not as being prescribed as the FDA said it is being prescribed or should be prescribed, but it is being prescribed in real life, after week 10, long after the FDA has approved for its use.

Republican members of my committee and many other Senators expect an answer. At an absolute minimum, the previous in-person safeguards should be restored immediately by the Trump administration. We should go back to the way it was in Trump 1 where, if you are going to get this medication, you must see a doctor and allow that evaluation to occur.

And by the way, this is not just Republicans saying this. A recent poll found that 71 percent of Americans, including 67 percent who self-identify as pro-choice, support requiring a doctor's visit for the chemical abortion drug to be prescribed.

We should be supporting women with the resources they need to have a happy, healthy pregnancy, and we need to be informing them of the complications that they can have from taking this medicine. And the least we should do is require an in-person visit so that the patient can be evaluated by her doctor so that the doctor can determine that, one, it is safe for the pregnancy, even if you are pro-choice, safe for the woman to take the drug, even if it is not safe for the child, and that the woman is not being coerced to take it. That should be the stance of a pro-life administration.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

PREGNANT STUDENTS' RIGHTS ACT

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I rise today in opposition to S. 3627, the so-called Pregnant Students' Rights Act.

But before I begin, I want to take a moment to honor Alex Pretti and Renee Good, who were horrifically killed by DHS officers in a tragic demonstration of the lawlessness of this regime.

While my Republican colleagues refuse to address this regime's rampant lawlessness in so many instances, they still find the time to propose yet another ideologically driven bill, this bill, that belies the bill's title.

Let me be clear, pregnant and parenting students deserve real support and real protections during a challenging time in their lives. Democrats have long supported policies to provide that kind of support.

This bill does not, meaningfully, help pregnant students nor does it protect their rights. It is yet another step in a broader war on reproductive rights and reproductive freedoms, this time, by threatening funding loss for colleges and universities that do not comply. This bill would require colleges and universities to distribute information to all students about carrying a pregnancy to term and caring for a child after birth, but it intentionally excludes information about the full range of reproductive healthcare options, including contraception and abortion, even where those options are legal.

That is not protecting pregnant students' rights; that is government-mandated bias. Pregnant students who are legal adults do not need politicians deciding which facts they are allowed to know. They need accurate, medically sound information so they can make informed decisions about what is best for their bodies, their families, and their futures.

While Republicans claim that this bill is about protecting students, the reality is that this bill does nothing to actually expand protections for students. This bill creates no new rights beyond what is already provided under title IX. It offers no guarantees of medical leave, flexible course work, lactation accommodations, childcare assistance, housing support, or financial aid protections.

In other words, this bill does nothing to address the real barriers pregnant and parenting students face every day. We know those barriers are real and serious. More than 4 million college students in this country are parents. Many are working full time while enrolled. Many face food insecurity, housing insecurity, homelessness.

Student parents, particularly women, single parents, students of color, and LGBTQ+ students are less likely to graduate—not because of a lack of ability but because they don't have access to the support they need. At the same time that the Republicans bring this

bill—this hollow bill—to the floor, they are gutting the Department of Education, slashing staff at the Office of Civil Rights, and weakening enforcement of title IX, the law that already protects pregnant and parenting students from discrimination.

As written, this bill would threaten the funding the universities rely on, funds that have been under attack by this regime.

Already the Trump regime has withheld or canceled billions—billions—in grants or other funds for colleges and universities, and now with this bill, they are threatening the further loss of funds for our colleges and universities.

You know, when does this all stop?

So they are doing this because they want incomplete information to be given to all students attending the universities and colleges by not providing the students the entire range of reproductive options, and that is because this isn't actually about protecting students; it is about advancing Republicans' war on reproductive rights.

Since the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, Republicans have worked tirelessly to deny people access to abortion care and spread fear and confusion and shame to those who seek reproductive care. By intentionally withholding medically accurate information from students at a moment when access is already under attack, this bill would only further undermine access to reproductive care.

If Republicans truly wanted to help students make informed decisions and prevent unintended pregnancies, they would support evidence-based policies that expand access to medically accurate information, not limit this kind of information.

Policies like the Real Education and Access for Healthy Youth Act, legislation that I introduced that would expand comprehensive, medically accurate sex education and ensure young people have the complete range of information needed to make responsible decisions about their health and their futures, are what real support looks like—not censorship, not gaslighting, not ideological mandates.

By withholding comprehensive, accurate information from students, my Republican colleagues' bill would deny students the dignity of making informed healthcare decisions for themselves, and it would force colleges to push biased, incomplete information to all of their students regardless of whether they want to or not.

So once again, this regime is extorting colleges to do what they—the regime—force them to do. This bill does nothing to protect the rights of students. It treats students as political pawns, endangering their health and well-being to advance Republicans' extreme, anti-abortion agenda; therefore, I urge my colleagues to vote no on advancing S. 3627 and instead join us in advancing the protections that pregnant and parenting students actually need to thrive.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mrs. MOODY. Mr. President, it is an honor to stand on the Senate floor today and speak in support of my Pregnant Students' Rights Act.

Today, I am proud to continue this important work to protect the most vulnerable among us and to support young mothers by urging my colleagues, both Democrat and Republican, to vote in favor of this important legislation.

Navigating college can be challenging for any young student but especially for pregnant women. Unfortunately, many feel pressured when they become pregnant to either end their pregnancies or risk academic failure.

No woman should ever have to choose between continuing classes or continuing her pregnancy. College and university young women who become pregnant should be informed of all of the resources available to them to help them carry their pregnancy to term, whether that is modified class schedules, excused absences, or other accommodations.

This is commonsense legislation that ensures young women know their rights as pregnant college students and have the support they need to stay in school and support their baby.

Far too often, young women are made to feel that having a baby as a student will be the end of their academic career. This is absolutely not true.

With this bill, we are sending the message that women are supported and set up to succeed in school and raise a healthy baby. Through this bill, universities will now have to inform pregnant students of their rights and protections. It also instructs universities to tell students how to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if there is a title IX violation.

No matter where you are politically—Republican or Democrat, pro-life or pro-choice—one thing I think we can all agree on is that the more information for women making life-changing decisions, the better.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote in favor of my Pregnant Students' Rights Act to support young mothers and protect life.

I yield the floor.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, today we consider S. 3627.

This legislation would limit the information students receive about their healthcare and family planning options. No one disagrees that pregnant and parenting students should have access to care and necessary accommodations.

But this legislation explicitly and intentionally excludes information on the entire range of healthcare available to students, including contraception and abortion care. Students should have access to information regarding all comprehensive healthcare

choices, including pregnancy and postpartum care, contraception, and abortion care, so they can make their own decisions.

This bill does not create any new rights or supports that students do not already have; it simply limits what information would be available to them. Instead of focusing on limiting healthcare options for the American people, Republicans should focus on providing real supports for families, like comprehensive maternity and postpartum care and access to affordable childcare.

Mrs. BRITT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the scheduled rollcall vote begin immediately.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 300, S. 3627, a bill to require institutions of higher education to disseminate information on the rights of, and accommodations and resources for, pregnant students, and for other purposes.

John Thune, Ashley B. Moody, John Barrasso, Mike Crapo, James Lankford, Jon A. Husted, James E. Risch, Pete Ricketts, Roger Marshall, John Hoeven, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Bernie Moreno, Shelley Moore Capito, Jim Justice, Rick Scott of Florida, John Boozman, Steve Daines.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 300, S. 3627, a bill to require institutions of higher education to disseminate information on the rights of, and accommodations and resources for, pregnant students, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. JUSTICE), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY), would have voted "Yea" and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) would have voted "Yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) and the Senator from

Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 47, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 12 Leg.]

YEAS—47

Banks	Fischer	Moreno
Barrasso	Graham	Mullin
Blackburn	Grassley	Murkowski
Boozman	Hawley	Paul
Britt	Hoeben	Ricketts
Budd	Husted	Rounds
Cassidy	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Collins	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lee	Sheehy
Cramer	Lummis	Sullivan
Crapo	Marshall	Thune
Cruz	McConnell	Tillis
Curtis	McCormick	Tuberville
Daines	Moody	Young
Ernst	Moran	

NAYS—45

Alsobrooks	Hickenlooper	Reed
Baldwin	Hirono	Rosen
Bennet	Kaine	Sanders
Blumenthal	Kelly	Schatz
Blunt Rochester	Kim	Schiff
Booker	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Coons	Luján	Slotkin
Cortez Masto	Markey	Smith
Duckworth	Merkley	Van Hollen
Durbin	Murphy	Warner
Gallago	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Welch
Hassan	Padilla	Whitehouse
Heinrich	Peters	Wyden

NOT VOTING—8

Capito	Justice	Warnock
Fetterman	Kennedy	Wicker
Hagerty	Risch	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 47, the nays are 45.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is not agreed to.

The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 302, H.R. 7148, a bill making further consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2026, and for other purposes.

John Thune, Chuck Grassley, Ted Budd, Tom Cotton, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Katie Boyd Britt, John R. Curtis, John Cornyn, Bernie Moreno, Tommy Tuberville, Roger Marshall, David McCormick, Jerry Moran, Markwayne Mullin, Tim Scott of South Carolina, Tim Sheehy, Susan M. Collins.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO RUBY CALVERT

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a leader grounded in the traditions of the American West from my home State of Wyoming. Ruby Calvert has dedicated a lifetime of service to public broadcasting, most recently serving as the chair of the Board for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. As the Corporation for Public Broadcasting prepares to conclude its work following 58 years of service to the American people, I wish to recognize her accomplishments and commend her service to the people of Wyoming.

Ruby Calvert's education reflects the strong Wyoming roots that have guided her career in public service. Ruby's mother Dessie Bebout, a legendary World War II veteran and longtime postmaster in Shoshone, instilled in Ruby a love of serving others at an early age. She earned a bachelor of arts in English and secondary education from the University of Wyoming, where she developed the communication skills and instructional grounding that would later define her work in public media. She also completed postgraduate coursework in public administration and broadcasting, further preparing her for leadership roles that required discipline and a clear understanding of public service.

Ruby devoted more than three decades to Wyoming PBS, beginning at the station's founding in 1983. Over the years, she served as director of programming, general manager, and president of the Wyoming PBS Foundation. In those roles, she strengthened local production, expanded educational programming, and ensured that our State had a credible public media voice.

Her work underscored the fundamental Western belief in local decision-making, that governance should be closest to the people. Ruby understood that public broadcasting works best when it respects local communities, local values, and local accountability. She championed programming that told local stories and served viewers who are often overlooked by national media markets.

Ruby has held a long record of public and civic service at the national, State, and local levels. She served two terms on the national PBS Board from 2008 to 2014, where she also worked on the station services, interconnection, national policy advisory, and station diversity committees. Governor Jim Geringer appointed her to the Wyoming State Board of Education, where she served from 2000 to 2006 and chaired the board for 2 years.

Earlier in her career, she served on and chaired the Riverton Memorial Hospital Board from 1996 to 2000 and was an officer of the Riverton Rotary for 6 years. Ruby has also served as a trustee of the Buffalo Bill Center of the

West and currently sits on the museum's education and interpretation advisory committee. In addition, she is vice president of the Wind River Cultural Centers Foundation, established 3 years ago to support 3 Fremont County museums. Her dedicated service also includes time on the board of directors for America's Public Television Stations and on former Senator Mike Enzi's academy appointment committee.

That same dedication carried over to her national service. First confirmed by the U.S. Senate in 2018 and reconfirmed on a bipartisan basis in 2022, Ruby brought practical experience and fiscal discipline to the CPB Board. Elected chair in 2024, she led during a consequential period for public broadcasting. Guided by respect for taxpayers and a clear understanding of CPB's statutory mission, Ruby demonstrated principled leadership.

Ruby and her late husband Edward have three children Chad, Kara, and Chris. I am proud to know Ruby, her family, and to call her a friend. I thank Ruby for her decades of dedication to Wyoming. She served as a national voice for Wyoming's values. Her legacy will endure in the communities she served and in the standard she set for responsible public service. I wish her and her family the very best in the years ahead.

TRIBUTE TO MCKINLEY KEYSER

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to McKinley for her hard work as an intern in my Washington, DC, office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

A native of Maryland, McKinley was raised in Washington, DC. She is currently a junior at the Madeira School in McLean, VA. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank McKinley for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her journey.

REMEMBERING DAVID EMERSON MITCHELL

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, on January 2, 2026, after a 15-year battle with multiple myeloma, David Mitchell passed away at the age of 75.

After being diagnosed with cancer and experiencing firsthand the exorbitant price of lifesaving medications in the United States, David founded Patients for Affordable Drugs, a national advocacy organization with the goal of lifting up patient voices in the fight to lower prescription drug prices.