

The red is their courage, the blood they gave,
 The white is for honor, the strong and the brave,
 The blue holds stars for each soul who serves,
 Protecting our freedom and all it preserves.
 My grandpa in Vietnam, my dad in Iraq,
 My brother in the Army, they've all had our back,
 I look at our flag and I proudly say,
 God bless the USA.

Mary Elouise from Waukee, Iowa, contest winning poem submission (titled, "People Behind the Flag") to the Iowa America 250 Student Contest:

America is turning 250 years old,
 That's a really, really long time.
 My mom says it all started with courage,
 And that courage runs through my family line.

A long time ago, in the Revolutionary War,
 Someone in my family stood up brave.
 They fought so we could be free today,
 So kids like me could laugh and wave.
 Then my Great-Grandpas went to World War Two,

So far away from everyone.
 They missed their homes and wished for hugs,

Until the hard days all were done.
 They helped the world when it was scared,
 They helped make things right again.
 Because of them, the flag still flies,
 For children now and children then.

My Grandpa served in Vietnam,
 A place so far I cannot see.
 He carried courage in his heart,
 And brought it back to my family.
 My Dad went to Iraq to serve,
 Before I was even here.
 He helped protect tomorrow,
 So my today would have no fear.
 Now my big brother wears the uniform,
 And stands up tall and strong.
 Sometimes I worry, sometimes I pray,
 And I count the days he's gone.

America is 250 years old,
 I'm only 10, but this I know:
 Freedom doesn't just happen—it's protected
 By families who love it so.
 When I see the flag wave in the sky,
 I don't just see red, white, and blue.
 I see Great-Grandpas, Grandpa, Dad, and brother,

And a promise I will always honor too.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, now another short statement on something that is going on that is very important to the American people: the price of prescription drugs—something I hear quite frequently in my 99-county meetings that I hold around the State every year.

Prescription drug prices come up, and they want Congress to do something about it. So last year, the Senate Judiciary Committee marked up and passed out of committee six bipartisan bills that address the high cost of prescription drugs and the abusive practices that keep prices high for too many American families. The bills simply put a stop to anti-competitive tactics. Why? So cheaper drugs can enter the market.

These bills also increase transparency and accountability for the prescription drug supply chain. With these bills, we strengthen Agency collaboration and the patent process. We curb the use of sham citizen petitions to the FDA so it is easier for generics to ob-

tain approval and get generics to the market quicker. We end the pay-for-delay deals to keep brand-name drug companies from paying generic companies to keep cheaper options off the market so they keep the price of the patented drug higher for a longer period of time. Lastly, we require the Federal Trade Commission, FTC, to finish the work it started in studying the impact of pharmacy benefit managers.

These bills will help make prescription drugs more affordable for patients who need them.

The Congressional Budget Office has reported that these bills collectively would save over \$2 billion.

We need the Senate to act on these bills, and I will continue pushing to fix a broken system and lower drug costs. 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. 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 majority leader is recognized.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2027

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, last week, a U.S. Army Apache helicopter went down off the coast of Iran. Within 2 hours, a rescue boat located the pilots. This was not an ordinary rescue boat. For the first time ever, an unmanned sea drone was sent to pick up the pilots and bring them to safety.

From the battlefields of Ukraine to the conflict with Iran, drones and other unmanned systems have become the weapon of choice. Yet the U.S. military has been dangerously behind in drone and counter-drone capabilities.

We have made considerable progress in just the last year, as evidenced by the rescue last week, but we still have more work to do.

That is where the National Defense Authorization Act comes in. I often say that if we don't get national security right, the rest is just conversation. And this annual defense bill is one of the most important bills we consider each year because it is where we make the policies that help ensure we do get national security right.

We pass this bill every year so that these policies are up to date—so that we are giving our men and women in uniform the very best equipment capabilities to do the job we ask them to do.

Last week, the Armed Services Committee reported out the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2027, and I am proud to say that this bill authorizes important investments to improve readiness and to provide the capabilities that we need to keep America safe today and into the future. That includes a heavy focus on unmanned systems.

This bill would create a new combatant command overseeing these technologies. It authorizes \$1 billion in unmanned maritime systems, supports drone and counter-drone capabilities at military bases and at America's borders, and will ensure that we are able to produce and procure enough munitions for all of these systems as well.

Drones are just the beginning. There is a lot more in this year's NDAA to strengthen America's military, improve readiness, and keep our armed services on the cutting edge.

One of things is shipbuilding. The bill reported out of committee authorizes investment in a number of new ships, including accelerating procurement of amphibious warfare ships and supporting domestic shipbuilding and repair capabilities.

As for our airpower, this year's bill will help ensure we maintain a force of at least 1,800 fighters. It supports the new B-21 long-range strategic bomber, which is expected to land at Ellsworth Air Force Base, in my home State, sometime next year. And it allows for multiyear procurement for fighter planes, which will allow the Pentagon to do business more efficiently, with greater predictability, and save taxpayer money.

This year's bill builds on the significant reforms to defense acquisition we enacted in last year's NDAA in a number of ways. As I mentioned, it allows for multiyear procurement contracts for fighter aircraft, as well as for munitions and vehicles. And it accelerates the process for new software to come online, removing unnecessary redtape that delays getting new technology into the hands of the American soldiers.

And speaking of our men and women in uniform, I am pleased to be able to say that this bill authorizes a 3.6-percent pay raise for our military members. It also supports a number of quality-of-life improvements, including investments in education, healthcare, and childcare for servicemembers and their families.

As I have already said, this is an important bill, and drafting a bill of this size is not a simple task. I appreciate the hard work by our colleagues on the Armed Services Committee.

Thanks to the leadership of Chairman WICKER and Ranking Member REED, we have, for the 66th year now in a row, a bipartisan National Defense Authorization Act. That, too, is no small feat.

When it comes to military capabilities, we just can't play catchup. We need to be the leader in the capabilities that will define the future—capabilities that will keep Americans safe by making our enemies think twice before crossing us. That is peace through strength, but you can't get there with a strong budget one year and a weak budget the next.

We ask members of the Armed Forces to be ready whenever we need them, wherever we need them, and for whatever we need them to do.

And we here have an obligation to make sure that when that call comes, they have what they need to answer it.

We need to make every concerted effort—every—to strengthen our military. There is never a time when we can afford to put this on the back burner. Try as we might, we simply don't know what is coming over the horizon, and we will eventually pay the price for failing to invest in a strong national defense today.

Mr. President, 251 years ago this week the Continental Congress created the Continental Army and appointed George Washington its Commander in Chief. For 251 years, Americans have bravely gone to fight our Nation's battles, and for 251 years, it has been Congress' job to stand behind them and provide what they need to execute the mission.

The face of the battle has changed, but the fundamental duty—theirs and ours—has not. As Washington himself said:

If we desire to avoid insult, we must be able to repel it; if we desire to secure peace . . . it must be known that we are at all times ready for war.

We have to get national security right. I am glad this year's National Defense Authorization Act is up to the task, and I look forward to bringing it to the floor very soon.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SURVEILLANCE ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, Trump's actions last night make it crystal clear that he is the one standing in the way of FISA.

It was already clear that Trump was the one blocking FISA, but the fact that he withdrew Jay Clayton should erase anyone's doubts. Trump wants FISA to stay expired. Trump is twisting himself up in knots and jumping through hoops to make it impossible to reauthorize FISA right now, and he is embarrassing his Republican colleagues in the process.

Trump can blame Democrats all he wants, but no one is going to believe him. Trump just got caught redhanded undermining America's national security.

Withdrawing Clayton even shocked Trump's closest Republican allies. Trump also reasserted his demand to tie FISA to his radical SAVE Act, which would strip millions of Americans of their voting rights and resurrect the ghost of the Jim Crow south.

Trump is just so, so off base and should get it out of his mind that he can save SAVE by attaching it to

FISA. It ain't happening; it ain't passing.

The SAVE Act is perhaps the most vicious piece of anti-voting rights legislation Trump has ever come up with and has absolutely nothing—nothing—to do with FISA whatsoever.

So every time Republicans find a path to negotiate on FISA, Trump slams the door shut on them. Every time the Republicans find a path to negotiate FISA, Trump slams the door shut on them, and you can hear the howls.

Trump is taking America's national security hostage to serve his own personal interests. This is Trump's hostage note. Here is what he said:

I will not approve FISA . . .

He said:

We are cancelling the Senate hearing . . .

He said:

[Bill Pulte will remain as the acting Director of National Intelligence.

Trump should know national security is not a pawn. It is not a pawn, and yet it is clear that he is holding our national security hostage, and it is absolutely disgraceful.

Trump is gleeful about undermining national security and leaving America vulnerable, saying it is simply to add a "slight bit of intrigue" when Americans' safety is at stake in a dangerous world with dangerous countries? And he says he is adding a "slight bit of intrigue?" Are you kidding me? Intrigue when it comes to America's national security, intrigue when it comes to the safety of our people?

Trump ought to add a slight bit of common sense as he does this. But, again, just to repeat what he said, he said:

I will not approve FISA . . .

We are cancelling the Senate hearing . . .

[Bill Pulte will remain as the Acting Director of National Intelligence.

All three sentences show that Trump is making national security a pawn to his own political and off-base interests.

There can be no other explanation for the choices Trump is making and his insistence on having a political hack like Bill Pulte serve atop our Intelligence Committee, other than he plans to order Pulte to abuse his powers as Director of National Intelligence.

The question for oversight now is: What exactly will Trump ask Pulte to do? Expose intelligence sources? Alter analysis? Target political opponents? Mess with elections?

Pulte has shown that he knows no limits and will do whatever Trump asks, legal or not, ethical or not, in American people's interests or not. Make no mistake, all of the consequences that come from undercutting our national security will fall on Trump and any Republicans who go along with his dangerous, partisan games.

IRAN

Mr. President, there is a lot going on this morning, and I want to speak about Iran. We have been told dozens of

times that this war is over and dozens of times we have been disappointed. Three days after Trump announced his so-called understanding with Iran, the American people still have no understanding of what it actually is because Trump refuses to tell us.

Now, more than ever, the administration must come clean and let people actually know what is in the so-called understanding because when details start to leak in the press, it only adds to the confusion. The administration still hasn't released the text officially and continues to send mixed messages about what the so-called understanding in future negotiations entail.

One administration official told CNN: People shouldn't read too much into the language of the [memorandum of understanding].

Can you believe it? There is something out there, and they say don't believe it, but they won't tell us what it is. The American people have a right to know what it is. The Congress has a right to know what it is.

And they said—another administration official: "What's more important than the actual document," he said, "is the understandings we have with each other."

What are they? We need to know. It is just outrageous—outrageous—that the administration is saying that whatever is in the MOU is not the real agreement. This is foreign policy by clown car, except it is dangerous.

The Trump administration insists that this understanding will bring peace, but they refuse to release the text officially and then say we shouldn't give the memo too much weight because there are secret side negotiations that are more important.

How deceptive. How nasty. How dangerous for the American people.

I call on Trump to brief Congress, release the official text of the so-called understanding to the public, and disclose any secret deals to the American people immediately.

If there are secret side deals, we ought to know about them. The American people have a right to know about them in this dangerous world.

So why is the administration deliberately deceiving the American people by saying: Well, what is in this agreement or what at least is published in this agreement is not true.

The administration is deliberately deceiving the American people because they are afraid it will show that Trump has capitulated and been taken advantage of, that Iran has gotten the better of this deal because Trump didn't know what his goals were when he began it and kept going back and forth, back and forth, back and forth about what it should be, what it is, what is happening.

So I say to Donald Trump: Stop keeping the American people in the dark. Your actions, President Trump, leave Americans wondering, Are our troops safe? What are you promising to Iran? How much longer will gas prices continue to skyrocket?