Mr. WYDEN. Fortunately, for—let me say to Senator MURRAY that I so appreciate your presentation, and particularly talking about the algorithms. And, also, the fact is that under what you have described very clearly, the big winner under this flawed experiment is a bunch of middlemen who are trying to profit off denials, and not the people who really desperately need care.

So I very much appreciate it, and Oregon is proud to be a partner with Washington State in leading the country to get rid of this very flawed idea. And I thank you for your remarks.

Mrs. MURRAY. Thank you. Thank you.

Mr. WYDEN. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I would ask consent to start the 1:30 vote now.

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

VOTE ON MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The yeas and nays were previously ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL), and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 46, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 199 Leg.]

YEAS—46

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

NAYS—50

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

NOT VOTING—4

Hagerty	Murphy
McConnell	Wicker

The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ARMSTRONG). The majority leader.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 775.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Benjamin M. Flowers, of Ohio, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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 nomination of Executive Calendar No. 775, Benjamin M. Flowers, of Ohio, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

John Thune, Tim Sheehy, John Barrasso, Ashley B. Moody, James Lankford, Todd Young, Ted Budd, Pete Ricketts, Jon Husted, Mike Crapo, Mike Rounds, Tim Scott of South Carolina, Bernie Moreno, John Cornyn, Chuck Grassley, James C. Justice, Eric Schmitt.

Mr. THUNE. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

WORKING FAMILIES TAX CUT ACT

Mrs. MOODY. Mr. President, I rise today to share some good news with the United States of America. We just celebrated not only the birthday of this Nation—250 years—but we also celebrated the anniversary of the Working Families Tax Cut Act being signed into law.

As my State's newest Senator, this was an important piece of legislation for many reasons, and I will share what it has meant for hard-working Floridians. But I championed this package, and I am so excited to say that we were able to deliver major wins through this legislation.

It is the largest tax cut in the history of our Nation, and I believe, on the birthday of the United States of America, it was important to recognize that the people most wisely know how to spend their money.

And we have seen such positive results already for Floridians and Americans alike. I just traveled around the State of Florida last week, as all of our colleagues did, when we went back to our States and met with our constituents. And I can tell you people were excited, and they were excited because they were just coming off of having to file their taxes. And they are already seeing what this is going to mean for their families.

We got together with law enforcement officers—hundreds of them—where we highlighted no tax on overtime. A lot of people don't think about how no tax on overtime helps those that wear a badge and pick up extra shifts and put their lives on the line to protect us. Now they get to keep more of that money when they do so.

We celebrated no tax on tips at a restaurant called Beth's Burger Bar, and so many of their waiters and waitresses were excited about keeping more of their money.

We talked to parents about child-owned investment accounts over at a local school in St. Cloud.

Floridians are just excited, and they have a right to be. We can proudly boast that we now have the highest average tax refund of any State in the Nation, and that is great news for Floridians.

But it is not just Floridians. Millions of Americans have taken advantage of these new tax cuts. Over 7.5 million individuals claimed no tax on tips, and 29 million Americans have claimed no tax on overtime.

For a waitress working late shifts or a hotel worker that drives Florida's tourism economy, that means they are keeping more of that money. For the nurse or, as we discussed, for the law enforcement officer picking up extra shifts, the linemen that so often have to come in and restore power in Florida after storms—when they are putting in extra hours—factory workers putting in extra hours to support their families, that no tax on overtime rewards hard work instead of taxing it.

And these tax cuts weren't just for workers. They were also for seniors, and in Florida—''the senior State''—this was incredibly meaningful. In Florida, we are home to the largest senior—one of the largest senior—populations in the Nation, with more than 5 million seniors. That is more seniors than many of the populations in the entirety of some of my sister States around the Nation.

And so I argued very hard for the provisions that eliminated taxes on Social Security benefits and provided additional relief through the enhanced deductions for seniors. So there were two ways we were trying to make it easier on our seniors. More than 35 million seniors have already claimed the enhanced deduction, and that helps them keep more of that retirement income.

So after a lifetime of work, seniors deserve to keep more of what they earned working, not send it back up here to Washington, where we keep showing—time after time after time these days—that so much of it has gone to fraud.

And so making sure we are keeping money in the pockets of hard-working Americans is incredibly important. So I just want to underscore what that meant—that Working Families Tax Cut Act—just this past filing season.

Mr. President, 97 percent of all filers in the Nation—97 percent—received a tax cut. American families and workers claimed $82 billion in individual relief directly from the act, and Americans received $325 billion in total tax refunds—$325 billion in total tax refunds.

And as I said before, Floridians can brag that they brought home the largest average Federal tax refund in the country. Our State filers brought home an average refund of $4,500, compared to the national average of $3,300.

Just as important as delivering tax relief and beefing up some of those deductions were for Americans and our seniors, we also made sure that that act invested in our next generation, our children. Through the package, we thought outside the box. We did something that has never been done before, and we created child-owned investment accounts for every American child born, which was designed to give our next generation a real jump start on the American dream.

And a lot of people still do not know this. It shocked me, as I was traveling around Florida last week. And these were folks who had just had babies, and they did not know that their child that they were holding was already eligible for $1,000 into an investment account.

For every baby born, from 2025 through 2028, whose parents open up one of these accounts—and it is so easy to do, incredibly easy to do—the U.S. Treasury will invest $1,000. If the child doesn't touch it—and you can add to it too. But if you don't touch that original investment, by the time they are 18 and they are on their own, you can use it for a vacation, for a downpayment on a house. There are ways that you can use that. It is almost $8,000. If they don't touch it at all, it is projected it could be hundreds of thousands of dollars upon retirement—close to a million dollars, if not more.

This is incredible news. So when you are hearing about all of the fraud that we keep uncovering or where we sent millions of dollars to some foreign country to help some crazy program for foreign nationals, today, Americans can go to irs.gov/trumpaccounts and sign up and get $1,000 for their kids.

And the lens through which we viewed this and the lens through which we approached this and argued for this historic act was: How do we reorient? How do we course-correct and start making decisions on behalf of this country to invest in Americans, American children, and American industries first?

More than 5.5 million child-owned investment accounts have been opened nationwide so far, and 1.4 million are eligible for the $1,000 pilot program contribution.

So in addition to these accounts, 40 million families have taken advantage of the enhanced child tax credit that we permanently doubled and expanded through the Working Families Tax Cut Act. So not only do we have the investment accounts for these children, we also now have given a double—permanently—child tax credit on your taxes.

So, of course, preparing our next generation for success will require more than just financial security, but this was such a great start toward that end.

And if I can get one thing through to American parents right now, it is easy to sign up. There is money waiting for your children right now from the U.S. Treasury because we want to set them up for success.

But we didn't stop at financial investment. Education is also important. And through this Working Families Tax Cut Act, of which we are now celebrating the 1-year anniversary—and many of the provisions that we all fought hard for, over on this side of the aisle, are now just going into effect—we also made sure that there was a Federal tax credit scholarship that could help millions of students across the Nation get education of their parents' choice.

Two decades ago, we did this in Florida. We had a low graduation rate. I want to say it was in the sixties. We started with our first school-choice statute. Two decades later, we are out now at over 92 percent graduation rate.

It shows you that not every child learns the same, and parents know what their children need. And educational needs should not be based on the ZIP Code in which they are born.

Florida has figured that out. We figured that out some time ago. And now I am here as Florida's newest U.S. Senator, announcing a great piece of legislation that will expand this approach to children across our Nation. But even for States where you have universal school choice—and there are a few of us like Florida, but others have started with school-choice statutes—understanding that each child learns differently, you can still take advantage of the Working Families Tax Cut Act because it allows for the deduction of education expenses for tutoring, for technology, and for so many of those supplemental education expenses that come along with education that parents choose.

So Floridians are still winning, even though we already have school choice. When parents have more choices, we know—and we have seen the data show—that students are more likely to find the educational path that fits their unique talents and goals.

And that, ultimately—for this country, for our Nation's forward success—will mean a stronger workforce. It will mean more innovation and a stronger economy, not just for the State of Florida—for which I champion every day—but for our entire Nation.

At the end of the day, families and small businesses know how to spend their money far better than some of these bureaucrats that are making decisions in the bowels of some of these Agencies. And we are uncovering, day in and day out—and we will continue to do so—exposing where some of those choices went awry and where some of those choices led to corruption and crime.

But we are here today to celebrate what we have been doing right and how we have been course-correcting with our intent to focus on bettering the lives of American families, American workers, and this Nation moving forward.

So I believe that less taxes will mean more opportunity, more growth, more freedom for hard-working Americans, and I am incredibly excited to be standing here today as one of the newest U.S Senators that helped deliver this win last year.

And as we are watching it go into effect and see the success and the effect it is having on our constituents, it is certainly something to celebrate, and I appreciate your giving me the opportunity to do so today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

MERIT ACT

Ms. SLOTKIN. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the MERIT Act, the Minimum Experience Requirements for Intelligence Transition Act—a lot of words, but the bill is simple. It requires anyone serving as the Director of National Intelligence—even in a temporary capacity—to have extensive national security experience.

It is common sense. You don't hand the keys to America's intelligence community to someone who has no experience, regardless of party or political loyalty.

The Director of National Intelligence is a powerful job, and I know because I was there at the creation. I was one of the first people at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, when it was stood up. I was seconded there as a CIA officer. I helped stand it up after Congress created it so that we never again miss a terrorist attack, like we did on 9/11.

The Office uses powerful tools to gather secrets from our foreign adversaries, like China and Russia, from terrorist networks, and from threats to our homeland. But it is that power in the wrong hands that I want to talk about today.

America's national intelligence community can be used to gather information not just from our foreign adversaries but, if turned against us, against the American people, it can be used to monitor Americans, to target political opponents, to dig through records, to punish critics, to help any President relitigate an election.

Right now, that is where we are.