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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.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.

Eternal God, who transforms common days into transfiguring and redemptive moments, hallowed be Your Name.

Lord, make our lawmakers great enough for these momentous and challenging times. May they seek to live worthy of Your great Name. May Your precepts keep them from life's pitfalls, guiding them through the darkness to a safe haven.

Lord, cleanse the fountains of their hearts from all that defiles so that they may be fit vessels to be used for Your glory.

Let Your peace be within them, as You inspire them through Your Spirit to glorify You in their thoughts, words, and actions.

And, Lord, for us all, let there be peace on Earth, and let it begin with us.

We pray in Your marvelous 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 PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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 (Mr. SHEEHY). The Senator from Iowa.

PROTECTING AMERICAN TAXPAYERS ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, Iowans are fed up with their taxpayers' dollars being lost every year to waste, fraud, and abuse. As a watchdog for those taxpayers, I have helped lead the charge to stop brazen criminals from stealing Americans' hard-earned dollars.

So that is why I am proud to be a cosponsor of my colleague from Iowa Senator ERNST's bill. That bill is entitled the "Protecting American Taxpayers Act." I thank Senator ERNST so much for her hard work putting this piece of legislation together, and I also thank her for her hard work chairing the Small Business Committee of the Senate.

Now to the purpose of this legislation: According to the Government Accountability Office—GAO for short—the Federal Government loses annually anywhere between \$233 billion to \$521 billion to fraud. This comprehensive legislation cracks down on the fraudsters, protects the taxpayers' dollars, and curbs wasteful spending.

The bill includes 16 bipartisan initiatives. And I think when you talk about 16 bipartisan initiatives, that ought to tell some of our constituents that think Republicans never talk to Democrats and vice versa that that is the wrong information permeating our great country.

So the 16 bipartisan initiatives, 1 of them is my bill that I entitled "Expanding Whistleblower Protection for Contractors Act," which then expands whistleblower protections for government contractors and grantees—just like we give whistleblower protection to people that are employees of the Federal Government.

It is obvious we need all eyes and ears within the Federal bureaucracy to stay wide open and remove the muzzle that Federal agencies use to intimidate patriotic whistleblowers from reporting wrongdoing.

The bill that I am sponsoring—1 of these 16 bipartisan initiatives—is in there to solve that problem. The U.S. Treasury is not a piggy bank for fraudsters to exploit and drain public assistance programs for their own profit. This anti-fraud package will stop fraud and return money to the taxpayers.

Thanks again to Senator ERNST.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill 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.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2027—Motion to Proceed

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 436, S. 4784.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 436, S. 4784, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the

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



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Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

SMALLTOWN SOUTH DAKOTA

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, over the weekend, I headed back to Jones County, South Dakota, for my high school reunion. It has been a few years since high school—just a few—but it is amazing how the years roll away when you head back and see some of the people who shaped your high school years.

Some of them are missing now, of course: teachers; coaches; my parents—my dad, who was a teacher at my high school, a coach at my high school, and the busdriver at my high school; and my mom, who served as the school librarian.

Needless to say, we Thune kids didn't get away with much in our high school years.

My high school reunion this year happened to coincide with the 120th anniversary of the town of Murdo, where I grew up—current population, roughly, 500.

And being back in Jones County and in Murdo really got me to reminisce about growing up in smalltown South Dakota, about how blessed I was to grow up in a small town in South Dakota.

People discuss the loss of community today that can result from the circumstances of modern life. That was never something we had to worry about in Murdo. In Murdo, you knew you were part of a community.

Rural South Dakotans are sturdy, independent people, but they also know from experience that you can't get by in a small town on the prairie without the support of your neighbors. And when someone was in need in Murdo, the whole town rallied around to help, whether it was an unexpected death in the family or the collapse of a barn roof.

We celebrated with each other, too, whether it was the harvest, the Fourth of July, or pheasant season. And the whole town swelled with pride at one of its kids' achievements.

I carry the sense of community and belonging I had growing up in Murdo with me to this day, and I carry those smalltown South Dakotans with me in a special way in my work here in Washington. When we look at a government regulation, I think about what impact it will have on smalltown South Dakota, on the people in our State, like the ones that I grew up with. Is it going to lighten their burden, or is it going to add new challenges on top of those they already face?

Agriculture is the life blood of our State. It was the life blood of Murdo as well. Farmers and ranchers have a tough job: backbreaking work in all weathers—work that can be destroyed in an instant by a storm or a flood.

I want to ensure that Washington isn't making their life even tougher than it is already. That is why I fought for things like the elimination of the death tax, so that the farmers and

ranchers can hand down the family enterprise to their kids and don't have to spend time and money on costly estate planning. It is also why I fought to ensure that Federal farm programs are actually serving farmers, that they take into account the realities of farm life and keep pace with changes.

You can bet that I had smalltown South Dakota in mind when I fought to pass tax relief for hard-working Americans in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, and then when we made that new tax relief permanent in the Working Families Tax Cut just last year.

I think a lot of my political beliefs have their roots in growing up in Murdo: from the belief that government ought to be limited—and if a matter can be handled at the State or local level, it should be—to my understanding of the importance of freedom, and the individual responsibility that comes with the freedoms we enjoy.

I am grateful every day, Mr. President, for the blessings of growing up in a small town, in smalltown South Dakota, and I am proud to be a son of Murdo.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill 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.

WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the hole Donald Trump is digging himself into in Iran has turned into a crater.

Somehow Trump has convinced himself that the American people are cheering him on on this blunder rather than crying out for him to bring our troops home.

Today, Democrats are going to force another vote on our War Powers Resolution to end this war; to get our troops out of harm's way; and to force Trump to face the reality of this catastrophe.

Will our Republican colleagues join us, or are they just going to keep their heads in the sand?

They know how bad this is. They are hearing it from one end of the country to another, but they are so afraid of speaking truth to power—of telling Donald Trump he is wrong—that they almost time after time—the vast majority of them—vote to go along with this war that is not achieving any goals and is raising our gas prices now to above \$4.

Yesterday, Trump said of the American people “they're not against the war.”

Trump, wake up. No one wants this war but you and your cronies and the supine Republican Senators and Congressmen who go along.

The American people are against this war. They are against seeing our men

and women in uniform get killed and wounded for a war that seems to have no direction or purpose. They are against hearing Trump and Hegseth lie about casualties, and they are definitely against paying over 4 bucks for a gallon of gas. In fact, this morning, oil, once again, hit \$100 a barrel as the war continues to spiral.

Just this week, we saw polling that the war in Iran is America's least popular war since polling began. Let me say that again so Donald Trump and my Republican colleagues can hear it. Just this week, we saw polling that the Iran war is America's least popular war since polling began.

So, when Donald Trump says the American people are not against the war, he has got his head deep, deep, deep in the sand. Even Trump's MAGA supporters are starting to sour on the war. No one—no one—wants to watch Donald Trump keep pouring gasoline on a fire he claims to have put out weeks ago.

Donald Trump's war is ramping up, not winding down. If Donald Trump won't listen to the American people and end this war, then Congress must. Bipartisan majorities in both Chambers of Congress have already passed legislation to end Trump's aimless, illegal, ruinous war. We will keep demanding Donald Trump end this war with another vote today. We are going to keep the pressure on our Republican colleagues, and that is what we are supposed to be doing here because it is Congress that has the power to bring war; so it is perfectly appropriate and right and part of our obligation as the opposition party to force our Republican colleagues to vote again and again and again until they see the light.

Senate Republicans need to stop indulging the President's foreign policy of fantasy and support our War Powers Resolution to bring our troops home.

When are Senate Republicans going to stand up? When will they say “enough”?

The American people are watching. Senate Republicans will lose credibility with the American people with every vote they take against ending Trump's war.

TARIFFS

Mr. President, on tariffs, as gas prices spike and families struggle with their grocery bills, Trump is tripling down on his chaotic tariff tax and pushing prices that Americans pay even higher.

Just this week, Trump announced a new round of 50-percent tariffs on Canada—our big enemy, Canada, Trump might say—but that is not all. Trump is about to slap new 10-percent tariffs on 60 countries, including all of our major trading partners. He is also threatening 100-percent tariffs on generic medicines. That is more money coming out of the American people's pockets for something they very much need—low-cost generic drugs. Trump has bled the American people dry with

these tariffs, and he is coming back for more.

And Canada? Doesn't he know that many of our countries on the Canadian border depend on commerce, whether it is Maine or New York or Michigan or Washington State or every State in between, and that his tariffs are helping to destroy the economies of those States in particular?

So what will American families get in return for shelling out thousands of dollars extra for basic necessities? Nothing good. Trump has bled the American people dry with these tariffs, and now he is coming back for more.

Trump claims a massive new wave of manufacturing, but the truth is we have lost 75,000 manufacturing jobs since Trump started his trade war. I repeat. Trump's tariffs have cost our country 75,000 manufacturing jobs. Once again, Trump lies. He just lies. He doesn't care what the facts are. If it suits his purposes, his big ego, his insatiable desire to pat himself on the back, he lies.

Trump, we have lost manufacturing jobs since your tariffs—75,000 of them.

Meanwhile, tariff rates mysteriously change, and new exemptions are announced every time Trump receives a gold watch, a diamond ring, or a phone call from one of his billionaire buddies. The story is always the same with this administration: Trump and his billionaire friends win; families lose.

Trump corrupts the Presidency to enrich himself. Then he turns around and raises costs on Americans at every turn, and Senate Republicans are more than happy to help Trump every step of the way.

ELECTION PROTECTION TASK FORCE

Now, Mr. President, on the Election Protection Task Force that we Democrats have put together, Trump tries to corrupt everything he touches, and our elections are next. President Trump knows he can't outrun the Republicans' awful record, so he is trying to rig the race in November. Trump and the GOP would rather silence Americans than answer to them.

We are going to make sure Republicans hear the American people loud and clear in November, which is why the Senate Democrats' Election Protection Task Force gathered again yesterday to war-game our response to Trump's all-out assault on our elections.

Our task force is planning for every eventuality and looking at every tool to stop Trump from stealing the midterm election. It doesn't matter what Trump tries to throw at us. Exercises like the one we held yesterday will ensure we will be ready to respond. We are anticipating the trouble he might create—the evil he might do—and what our response should be in advance.

Trump ignored Americans when they told him to lower his costs. Trump ignored Americans when they told him to end his wars. Now Trump wants to ignore Americans when they tell him they want Republicans gone.

Trump may not want to listen to the American people, but he is going to have to face the music in November whether he likes it or not.

ANNIVERSARY OF 1998 CAPITOL POLICE SHOOTING

Finally, Mr. President, on a sad note, it is the anniversary of the 1998 Capitol Police shooting.

Tomorrow—tomorrow—will mark 28 years when Detective John Gibson and Officer Jacob Chestnut of the U.S. Capitol Police gave their lives while defending our Capitol. They showed tremendous heroism that day—one I remember all too well. They faced grave danger with courage and made the ultimate sacrifice to protect our Capitol, the people within, and the democracy this building represents.

For that, they will always have—always have—our gratitude, and so will all of our Capitol Police officers, who work so hard to keep us safe.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

IMMIGRATION

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, when it comes to elections in America, only American citizens should be allowed to vote. In big cities and blue States, illegal immigrants are registering to vote and are casting ballots. This week, the State of New Jersey admitted that 6,600 noncitizens made it onto their voting rolls. Every single one of them—every single one—was registered to vote during the final years of the Biden administration—6,600—while 400 of them actually voted, and those are the ones that we know about.

Here is how it happened: For 4 years, Joe Biden and Kamala Harris flung open our southern border, and 10 million illegal immigrants flooded into our country.

Among them were criminals, members of cartels, drug dealers, gang members, and terror suspects. Sanctuary States and cities welcomed these illegal immigrants, and the State of New Jersey, where all of this happened, is one of them. New Jersey hands out driver's licenses to illegal immigrants. Its department of motor vehicles turns driver's licenses directly into voter registration. It is automatic. And in this case, the State of New Jersey, it registered 6,600 of these illegal immigrants to vote.

It happened in the State of New Jersey, and they admit they did it. The liberal Governor of New Jersey blames it all on a computer glitch. The real blame belongs to the Democrats and their sanctuary city and State policies.

Democrats can't throw open the borders, hand illegal immigrants driver's licenses, and then pretend to be shocked—shocked—the Democrats

claim to be when these illegal immigrants end up voting.

Illegal immigrants must not be allowed to vote in American elections. States need to clean up their voter rolls aggressively and do it immediately.

The National Voter Registration Act requires States to make "reasonable efforts" to maintain accurate voter rolls. Many Democrat States refuse to follow the law. Senator SCHUMER said last week on this floor that elections belong to the American people. Just moments ago, right before he left the floor, he talked about so-called "Democrats election integrity task force"—I wrote it down as he said it—"Democrats election integrity task force." You talk about an oxymoron—like jumbo shrimp, like pretty ugly, like deafening silence.

To me, deafening silence is what is happening from the Democrats, and it is time for them to start actually acting. Democrats need to stop opposing every effort we make on this Senate floor to secure our border and to enforce our immigration laws.

Election security begins with border security. Today's Democrats want neither border security nor election security. And they sure don't want voter ID. They don't want to have it guaranteed that only citizens vote.

The modern Democrat Party is being driven today by extremists, and these extremists all around the country are winning Democrat primary elections.

In New York, a Democrat nominee for Congress has vowed to abolish the Immigrations and Customs Enforcement.

In Colorado, another Democrat nominee who won a Democrat primary election in just the last couple of weeks said abolishing ICE "will not wait." They want to abolish Immigrations and Customs Enforcement in our Nation.

In Michigan, a leading Democrat candidate for this U.S. Senate has been fighting since 2018—we are talking 8 years—to abolish ICE. Eight years spent fighting our Nation's Immigration and Customs Enforcement. He recently said ICE "cannot be reformed. It can't be retrained. It must be abolished."

They want to open the borders, let anybody in, and let them stay forever. That is what the Democrat Party of today believes. They actually have a manifesto; that is the Democrat manifesto. It is a manifesto. They want mass amnesty for illegal immigrants, and that includes illegal immigrant criminals, even murderers. They want to release illegal immigrant criminals into our communities, into our neighborhoods.

Then the Democrats are demanding free healthcare for illegal immigrants paid for by American taxpayers. They are demanding illegal immigrants vote in our elections. That is what they really want.

They want to abolish the Senate. That is part of their manifesto. They

want to pack the Supreme Court. That is part of their manifesto. They want to abolish the electoral college. That is part of the manifesto that is being elected in Democrat primaries around the country. They want to tear up the Constitution and tear down the United States of America. That is their agenda. It is radical. It is extreme. It is dangerous. It is scary.

The American people ought to be scared about what is happening with the Democrat manifesto and what they are promoting for this country. The American people can't afford it, and they are certainly not going to accept it. It is not the America we know and love.

The Department of Homeland Security recently released new data about the number of illegal border crossings in the month of June. It is at a 50-year low. That is because of the work being done by this administration. For the past 14 months, zero illegal immigrants have been released into the country—absolutely zero—after millions and millions and millions under the Joe Biden catch-and-release disaster.

Republicans have secured the border, but this fight isn't over. After years of Democrat open border policies, millions of illegal immigrants remain in our country today. Either we remove them or extreme Democrats are going to do everything they can to make it possible for them to vote in our elections. We already saw it happen in New Jersey.

Republicans promised to deport illegal immigrant criminals, and it is time to continue on with that promise.

The contrast is clear: Republicans want our laws enforced; Democrats want our laws ignored.

The American people rejected open borders before and will reject them again. The American people want secure borders, safe communities, and only American citizens voting.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

JEWISH AMERICAN SECURITY ACT

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak once again about a crisis that demands the ongoing attention of the Senate: the disturbing rise in anti-Semitism in America.

Across our country, Jewish Americans are continuing to face unspeakable acts of hate, threats, violence, and discrimination that are happening at record levels. Unfortunately, this is not anything new. In fact, for more than a decade, anti-Semitism has been on the rise. It is setting record numbers year after year, particularly since the October 7 terrorist attack on Israel.

According to an ADL report, 2025 was the third highest year for anti-Semitic incidents since the ADL began collecting data, and physical assaults against Jews were higher in 2025 than ever before. So I want everyone to just think about that. Physical assaults against Jews were the highest since

ADL began tracking this data nearly 50 years ago.

FBI data—well, it has shown that Jewish Americans are the target of almost 70 percent of religiously motivated hate crimes in this country despite making up only 2 percent of the population. Think about that—70 percent of crime against 2 percent of the population.

Just this past year, a historic synagogue in Jackson, MS, was firebombed. Jewish congregations were defaced in Austin, TX; Albuquerque, NM; Hot Springs, AK; and Oak Park, MI. In West Bloomfield, MI, a man actually drove his car into a building housing a synagogue and a preschool and then opened fire.

Even beyond these specific incidents, we are witnessing worrying trends in how Americans are thinking about Jewish communities.

Last week, the Blue Square Alliance Against Hate released a poll that found that nearly one-third of people 18 to 44 viewed Jews as a “threat to the unity of American society”—2 percent of the population a “threat to the unity of American society.” Let that sink in.

The same poll found that one in eight young adults said Jewish people “cause problems in the world,” and around one in five younger Americans did not consider slurs against Jews to be harmful to Jewish people.

I really wish these findings were hard to believe, but for many around this country, they aren't surprising. For some, they will point to the war in the Middle East and U.S. policy in the region as a driver of these spikes in anti-Semitism. And, of course, we can and we must have frank, open discussions on how the United States should handle our foreign policy. But we cannot stand idly by and allow these disagreements to become excuses for turning a blind eye on attacks towards Jewish Americans.

When we return from the August State work period, it will be September and the High Holidays. High Holidays—well, they will be in full swing. From Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur, this is the holiest time of the Jewish year, and many Jews, including those who may not go to synagogue any other time, will be preparing to attend religious services in observance of these important holidays. But it is the unfortunate reality that these holidays are now marked by a palpable fear because large gatherings make communities vulnerable to attacks.

Sadly, what should be a season of reflection and prayer, worship and renewal, is a source of, now, fear and anxiety for far too many American Jews. As a result, one in four Jewish Americans has skipped Jewish events and Jewish religious observances due to the fear of being targeted. It is not right. It is not right. They don't go to temple for fear of being targeted. Something must be done.

Before I came to the Senate, I was the president of the largest reform syn-

agogue in Nevada, and I know firsthand the preparations that synagogues undertake to keep their congregations safe—especially during the High Holidays. No one should have to worship behind a barricade. No one should have to go through a police check and police surrounding your entire building in order to go pray. But as anti-Semitic harassment and violence continue to be a real threat, heightened security measures are a fact of life for Jewish communities. Every synagogue leader in this country has to think about hiring professional security, installing cameras, doing everything they can to protect their congregation. Security is the largest line item on a budget now.

This heavy burden isn't only an emotional and logistical one; robust security comes with a steep financial cost.

There is a highly successful Federal grant program at FEMA that helps at-risk institutions, including houses of worship like synagogues, churches, and mosques. Well, it helps them to make the security upgrades they need so Americans can worship peacefully and safely.

That is why we need to robustly fund the Nonprofit Security Grant Program. In fact, authorizing \$1 billion for this program—nearly three times the current funding level—is the key component of the Jewish American Security Act. It is my comprehensive, bipartisan bill with Senator JAMES LANKFORD of Oklahoma to address anti-Semitism and threats to the Jewish community.

But this program can only help institutions if grant money is actually accessible and if there is enough money available to the applicants who need it all across this country in communities large and small. Unfortunately, many institutions had less than a month to apply for grants through the NSGP this year. Sometimes they only had days to review the program, develop proposals, and gather the necessary documents and supporting assessments. In past years, the application window had been as long as 80 days.

So that is why, in addition to making this historic investment in NSGP, our bipartisan bill would make important reforms to streamline how the program is implemented and allow grant funding to be used to hire security services so that the program truly matches the needs of the congregations it is meant to support.

And it won't just stop there. Our bipartisan Jewish American Security Act would also create a new Federal grant program to support local police who protect at-risk houses of worship. You know, I often say: Anti-Semitism is the canary in the coal mine. It is a warning sign—a warning sign—for all other forms of hate and discrimination to come.

Tackling anti-Semitism sends a strong message that we do not—will not—tolerate hate and discrimination in our country, in the United States of America. And if we don't draw this line now, if we don't stand up, if we don't

say, "Enough is enough," then when will we? Who is next?

The Jewish community is the canary in the coal mine. We must draw the line. We must pass this bill. The Jewish American Security Act is so critical to our safety and security.

When will we say, "Enough is enough"? Let's hope it is now.

Thank you.

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. MURPHY. 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 Senator from Connecticut.

IRAN

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, in a few moments, we are going to vote on a resolution to end the President's illegal, disastrous war with Iran. We should pass this resolution.

This is day 146 of a war that has no achievable objectives and no ending, a war that has ruined American families as gas prices are back over \$4 a gallon, unaffordable for many working-class Americans. We have sky-high diesel and fertilizer prices. We have seen record numbers of farms going into bankruptcy.

This is a war that has made Iran stronger, a war that has depleted American munitions so dangerously that we are now exposed, without the munitions and interceptors necessary if there was an actual threat posed to the United States elsewhere around the world.

This war has been an unmitigated disaster from start to finish. There is a reason why no American President—Republican or Democrat—prior to Donald Trump began a preemptive war with Iran, because everyone with even scant knowledge of the Middle East knew that a war with Iran was not winnable, knew that it would set off a series of other conflicts in the region that would result in chaos.

And that is what we have today—chaos—even worse, planned chaos, foreseeable chaos.

Every day, as we speak, Iran strikes its neighbors—Israel, Kuwait, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Qatar. Every day, Iran strikes U.S. forces and our bases in the region. They have done billions of dollars' worth of damage to our forces and to our partners' forces.

Our war against Iran has set off other wars. Israel has invaded Lebanon. In that country, 4,300 people have been killed, 12,000 have been wounded, and 1.2 million Lebanese have been displaced from their homes.

Let me say this again: The war with Iran has set off another war in which 4,300 people have been killed and 1.2 million people have been displaced from their homes.

And this week, a new conflict is breaking out between the Houthis in Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

The Strait of Hormuz is closed. Iran did not control the strait before the war, but they now effectively control it.

The Bab el-Mandeb Strait, connecting the Red Sea to global waterways, now appears also closed, and the Houthis—again, another Iranian ally—have started to attack ships there.

There are 17 Americans who have died. There are hundreds of others who have been wounded. Almost 2,000 Iranian civilians have died, including 250 children.

The United States has depleted our munitions and interceptor stores to dangerous levels. Over decades, we carefully, methodically built up a stockpile of long-range stealth missiles—mostly in preparation for a possible future conflict with China.

Do you know what percentage of that stockpile has been fired at Iran in 146 days? Not 10 percent, not 30 percent—50 percent. We have fired half of our entire stockpile of long-range stealth missiles in 4 months.

And the situation is even worse for our allies and partners in the region. Reports suggest that the UAE and Kuwait may have burned through 75 percent of their Patriot missiles, just over the last 146 days.

This all sounds like a disaster—correct?—like an unmitigated five-alarm disaster. But the administration defends this reality.

They, frankly, can't object to the facts that I just laid out. They simply say that this is the cost of a just war. Lives lost, regional chaos, high prices, low stockpiles, taxpayers footing the bill—it is just all worth it, because the Trump administration says: We are achieving our goals, and the goals are worth the price.

And here is the most important thing to understand, as we approach this vote in a few moments: It is not worth it. Why? Because Trump has not achieved a single war goal, and Trump has no path to achieve any single war goal.

All of the costs, all of the chaos, all of the death that I just described are going to be for nothing because not a single one of these goals is going to be achieved.

Now, I will admit the goals have shifted over time, and so on this chart I am simplifying the set of goals. But the first goal has been articulated many times, in different forms, by the administration: regime change.

In Trump's video announcing the beginning of the war, he says:

When we are finished [with this campaign, the Iranian people should] take over your government. It will be yours to take. This will be probably your only chance for generations.

There is also extensive reporting on the plan, led by the Israelis but supported by the United States, to replace the old regime with leaders friendly to the United States and Israel.

But here is the reality. Yes, this war has taken out the previous leadership,

but what has happened is that the old regime has simply been swapped for a new generation of revolution-era ideologues that are younger, that are more emboldened, and that are less compromising.

The new Ayatollah is well known to be a prominent hardliner. He has surrounded himself with other hardliners—leaders of the Quds Force and those with a history of brutal repression of dissidents inside Iran. And they feel emboldened because they have survived this war. They have emerged controlling the country. They have taken America's best shot, and they are still in charge.

The President, at one point, tried to claim that this goal had been effectuated—that because the old Ayatollah is dead and there is a new Ayatollah, by definition, they had succeeded in regime change.

All we got is a younger set of leaders who are more confident they can beat the United States and are going to emerge from this conflict more powerful in the region.

The second war goal: destroying Iran's military capabilities.

Now, the administration, basically, as soon as the war began, claimed victory here on day 14 of this conflict. Nearly 5 months ago, the Secretary of Defense said that Iran's military had been "destroyed" and "made combat ineffective."

And 26 days into the conflict, Vice President VANCE declared:

The Iranian conventional military is effectively destroyed.

But with our own eyes, every single day, we can see that that is a lie, as missiles are being fired at our troops and our partners in the region, as wars break out anew each week.

According to public reporting in the New York Times and the Washington Post, U.S. intelligence suggests that Iran has retained as much as 70 percent of its prewar missile stock and 70 percent of its mobile missile launchers.

So \$100 billion spent and 140 days of war, and we have dented their missile capacity.

Along the Strait of Hormuz, where the missiles probably matter the most, a new U.S. intelligence estimate—again, this is open-source reporting—says that, of the 33 sites, only 3 sites are fully destroyed or inaccessible. Thirty missile sites along the Strait of Hormuz are still operational.

Military intelligence Agencies have also reported that Iran has regained access to 90 percent of the underground missile storage that we have hit. Iran still has their missiles. They still have their drones. They are rebuilding capacity. We have utterly failed at destroying Iran's military capabilities, and there is no path to success in this war aim.

Finally, the third goal: Eliminate Iran's nuclear program and ensure that they can never acquire a nuclear weapon.

This is, of course, a goal that has been shared by Republicans and Democrats, and, as Trump has said, this is the only thing that matters.

Secretary Hegseth reiterated several times at the hearing yesterday that the primary objective of the war is now to make sure that Iran doesn't have a nuclear weapon. But let's just be clear about the facts. According to the IAEA, Iran still has a stockpile of about 970 pounds of highly enriched uranium. That stockpile still exists in the country. Reports suggest that they have moved their highly advanced centrifuges to a place called Pickaxe Mountain and buried them so deep that no airstrike can impact them.

Most importantly, because Donald Trump pulled out of the previous nuclear agreement which had frozen Iran's nuclear research program, Iran has gained the knowledge to enrich uranium up to 60 percent, which everybody knows is effectively weapons-grade. And there is no military strike that can erase that fact. This is a reality that Donald Trump created.

Now, Trump's theory is that this military campaign is going to push Iran to the negotiating table and that the result will be a deal—a nuclear deal—that is better than the one that Iran signed. But this is fantasy. There is no world in which Iran, after this war, agrees to more than they agreed to in the JCPOA. And you just can't avoid the facts here. The primary reason is that we will have less leverage in these negotiations than the Obama administration had.

Why is that? One, this regime is harder line, less willing to negotiate and compromise than the administration Obama was negotiating with. Second, there is no fear of U.S. airstrikes. That was always a sword of Damocles hovering over the negotiations during the Obama administration. Now Iran knows that they can survive, the regime can survive America's best shot. Our military leverage is just much weaker. Our primary leverage that we had during the Obama administration—the removal of oil sanctions—will not be available to us in these negotiations because we have already demonstrated that those sanctions will be released just to get Iran to reopen the strait.

So we won't have the military leverage. We won't have the oil sanctions leverage. We will be dealing with a regime that is harder line than the one we were dealing with prior. There is no world in which, at the end of this conflict, we are getting a better nuclear agreement than the one that Trump left.

Billions of dollars wasted; 18 Americans dead; thousands of civilians and children in the Middle East killed; our military stockpile is dangerously depleted; new wars in the region breaking out by the week; the Strait of Hormuz and possibly the Red Sea now closed, controlled by our enemies; gas prices skyrocketing; the global economy

melting down—all of this, for what? Nothing. Not a single war objective achieved. Not a viable path to achieve any of them in the coming months.

This war was a mistake from the start. Everyone except for Donald Trump knew it would be a disaster. It is a disaster, and we have a chance today to vote to end it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

NOMINATION OF DANIEL MACK TRAYNOR

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of Judge Daniel Traynor's nomination to serve on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit.

Judge Traynor is seeking to fill a seat being vacated by Judge Ralph Erickson, who will be taking senior status upon Judge Traynor's confirmation. I want to take this opportunity to thank Judge Erickson for his many years of serving on the bench. Whether at the State district court, the Federal district court, or as a circuit court judge, Ralph Erickson has been a dedicated public servant, and we thank him for his hard work over the decades.

I actually have known him since high school. He was on both the football team and the basketball team, and he is a huge guy. I remember he was a good lineman, and I remember that if he stood in the lane at basketball, you couldn't get anywhere near the basket. You had to kind of shoot a 3-pointer. A super guy, great sense of humor, good friend.

We will miss Ralph in terms of his full-time status, but the good news is, he will be on senior status and still involved. He is just a tremendous judge, and I am very confident that Judge Traynor will do a fantastic job carrying on his legacy.

Today, I have the privilege of supporting a nominee in Judge Traynor who embodies the highest standards of judicial service and who has dedicated his professional life to upholding the rule of law. Judge Traynor is a man of integrity, intellect, and deep faith in our constitutional system. He has earned a reputation as a thoughtful and fair jurist whose commitment to justice is respected by those who know him and those who have appeared before him.

Judge Traynor is a lifelong North Dakotan through and through. He was born in Devils Lake, ND. He received his bachelor of arts from the University of North Dakota and his juris doctorate from the University of North Dakota School of Law.

Judge Traynor's roots in our State have shaped his understanding of the law's impact on individuals, on families, on businesses, and on our rural communities. Throughout his career, Judge Traynor has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to public service and to the faithful application of the law.

Since his confirmation to serve as judge for the U.S. District Court for

the District of North Dakota, Judge Traynor has distinguished himself through his diligence, impartiality, and careful attention to the facts and law before him. His judicial record reflects a deep respect for the Constitution and appreciation for the limited role of the judiciary and a commitment to deciding cases based on the law rather than on his personal opinion or policies.

The Eighth Circuit plays a critical role in interpreting and applying Federal law throughout our region of the country. The citizens it serves deserve a judge who approaches that responsibility with independence, impartiality, and fidelity to the Constitution and the rule of law. Judge Traynor possesses each of these qualities. He does not legislate from the bench.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Judge Traynor is a devoted husband, father, and member of his community. His wife Patricia, a retired lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Air Force, along with their three children—Mary, Mack, and Joe—are rightfully proud of what Judge Traynor has accomplished. He understands the values of hard work, service, and responsibility that are central to the people of North Dakota and the Eighth Circuit.

I am proud to support his nomination. I am confident that he will serve with distinction on the court of appeals. For all these reasons, I call on my colleagues to join me in supporting his nomination.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

DIRECTING THE REMOVAL OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES FROM HOSTILITIES WITHIN OR AGAINST THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN THAT HAVE NOT BEEN AUTHORIZED BY CONGRESS—Motion to Discharge

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1546a and in accordance with section 601(b) of the International Security Assistance and Arms Export Control Act, I move to discharge the Committee on Foreign Relations from further consideration of S.J. Res. 180.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to discharge from the Committee on Foreign Relations, S.J. Res. 180, a joint resolution to direct the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities within or against the Islamic Republic of Iran that have not been authorized by Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator SHEEHY be able to speak for up to 5 minutes, that I then speak for up to 20 minutes, and Senator SCHUMER be permitted to speak for 2 minutes before the scheduled vote.