The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 532, S.J. Res. 187, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to "Modification to the Start of the Submission Period for Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Reporting and Recordkeeping Under TSCA 8(a)(7)".

VOTE ON MOTION

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL).

The result was announced—yeas 48, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 222 Leg.]

YEAS—48

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

NAYS—50

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

NOT VOTING—2

Blackburn	McConnell

The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). On this vote, the yeas are 48, the nays are 50. The motion is not agreed to.

The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session.

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

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

NOMINATION OF TODD BLANCHE

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. Mr. President, the Senate is currently considering the nomination of Todd Blanche to serve as Attorney General of the United States. The Attorney General is one of the most important positions in the U.S. Government.

Not only does the Attorney General serve as a trusted member of the President's Cabinet, but he also leads the Department of Justice, the Agency responsible for enforcing the laws of the land and, hopefully—traditionally—enforcing them in a nonpartisan way.

That is a difficult job in any administration, but under this President, who values personal loyalty above pretty much all else, it may well be impossible.

During his confirmation hearing, Mr. Blanche was asked about his relationship with the President. He responded, "I'm his lawyer," before quickly correcting himself to say that he previously "was" his lawyer. Now, this wasn't a slip; this was a tell.

Mr. Blanche will not be an impartial check on the President.

And here is another tell: For months, Mr. Blanche has insisted the Department of Justice slush fund is dead. Yet, as recently as this weekend, President Trump was saying the exact opposite. He defended the fund.

So when Mr. Blanche says the slush fund is dead, the slush fund isn't moving forward, don't believe him, not for 1 second. His word is worth about as much as the Trump meme coin.

During reconciliation, we introduced an amendment to permanently—permanently—end the DOJ slush fund. Despite bipartisan support, it ultimately was voted down. That means taxpayers could still be on the hook for paying bounties, rewards to people who attacked our democracy, attacked this Capitol.

At a time when working families are struggling with rising costs, the last people the Federal Government should seek to reward, to subsidize are those who assault our elections, people like convicted election criminal Tina Peters, who tried to undermine Colorado's free and fair elections; people like the January 6 rioters—my first full day of work in this position—the rioters who stormed this very Chamber in an attempt to tear apart our democracy.

The DOJ slush fund isn't dead; it is dormant. Until Congress permanently closes this avenue through legislation, we shouldn't rely on assurances alone. If there is even a chance that this fund could be revived, this confirmation, this moment, is when this Chamber and its Members have the greatest leverage to act. We should not surrender that leverage for promises that can be undone at the President's whim.

A DOJ letter promising to end the slush fund isn't law, it isn't binding, and it is certainly not enough.

Now, to be clear, we don't believe Mr. Blanche will break all of his promises. When he says behind closed doors that he wants the Dobbs v. Jackson decision to become, in his words, "permanent in every state," we should believe him.

When someone reveals themselves to you, it is generally a good idea to believe them.

Whether it is abortion access or access to the ballot box, we should have little confidence that this new Attorney General will not target Colorado or other blue States because that is exactly what his boss wants.

We cannot allow a fox to guard the henhouse. We need an Attorney General who is loyal to the Constitution, not to President Trump. Mr. Blanche does not seem to be that person. Mr. Blanche is not that person.

I strongly, strongly oppose his confirmation and urge all of my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

HEMP

Mr. RICKETTS. Mr. President, we have a drug problem in this country today, and right now, there is an industry that is targeting our children with look-alike products with intoxicating levels of THC. THC is tetrahydrocannabinol. Now, this is the psychoactive ingredient that you find in marijuana.

How could we possibly let this happen? Well, let's take a step back. In 2018, we passed a farm bill, and at the time, there were those who wanted to separate hemp—a plant that has some THC in it—from cannabis, which is a marijuana plant. Hemp used to be grown in this country, made into rope back in the 1940s.

This is what we were told was going to happen. The bill was written, but in that farm bill, it said you had to keep the THC for delta-9, a certain type of THC, down to 0.3 percent by dry weight. Well, what happened was some clever chemist figured out that you could take this product, which makes CBD oil, right, which is commonly available, and take CBD oil, chemically alter it, and create delta-8 and delta-10, which also have those intoxicating effects.

The problem is, this is all unregulated, and so an industry exploded—an industry that in part targeted our kids with look-alike products that had THC at intoxicating levels, targeted kids with them.

For example, we have an example here of Sour Patch Kids look-alikes. You may say: Why are they doing that? Well, they are trying to grow their market share. Sadly, the outcome was that this past July, a 3-year-old and 4-year-old in Nebraska took these out of their mom's purse and got THC poisoning. Even worse news is that this is not an uncommon occurrence.

We have seen the potency of THC over the last few years, from 1995 to 2021, increase and increase four times.

We have seen, since 2016 to 2023, the number of THC poisonings of children under 5 go up 10 times and the number of hospitalizations of children under 5 go up 3 times.

In 2024, that was 620 children under the age of 5 poisoned. Of those children being poisoned, 100 have been hospitalized and ended up on ventilators. This is a serious health risk problem.

And I mention the Sour Patch Kids here, but let's look at some of the other examples of how this industry is targeting and trying to confuse consumers.

Here we have Nerds, a candy many children are familiar with, and a Nerds knockoff that has THC in it. Here we have Fritos—the regular Fritos product that is a safe product—and Fritos with THC in it. Here we have a safe product, again, that looks like gummy worms, and here we have a product with THC in it.

This is an industry that, because we made a mistake in the farm bill in 2018, has taken advantage of a loophole of the law to manufacture delta-8 and delta-10 THC to be able to infuse it into these products.

Now, again, you cannot grow the hemp plant in concentrations to make this. You have to manufacture this. This was done on purpose. It was manufactured. And, by the way, this kind of knockoff doesn't happen by accident either. This was on purpose too. And this is what is poisoning our children. We have to shut this loophole down.

And so last year we did. We actually changed the definition to cover all THC that would be in these types of products; that all THC products would have to stay below that 0.3 percent case. So it is not going to impact CBD oil because that is below 0.3 percent. It wouldn't impact any of those products that are used for clothing or for jewelry because they are all below 0.3 percent.

In fact, the only place it is going to impact is for the intoxicating products that are out there in the marketplace, that are only out there because of this loophole that we created back in 2018.

So, last year in our Ag appropriations bill, we closed this loophole. Now, one of the Senators in our body offered an amendment to strip out that loop—closing the loophole. And we had Republicans and Democrats vote together to stop that amendment—75 Senators, 51 Republicans all came together to say: No, we want to close this loophole.

Well, now in our continuing resolution, somebody has decided to open that loophole back up again. We gave the industry until November 12 to adjust. We said: The loophole has been out there. We are going to give you a year to get your products in line with the new law. It has got to be below 0.3 percent, and you have got until November 12.

But in our current continuing resolution, somebody wants to keep that extended until December 11.

I have cosponsored an amendment with TED BUDD to take that amendment out of the continuing resolution. I am cosponsoring that because we don't need to extend this. This has been out there for a year. People know what is coming. One month more is not going to make a big difference in doing this.

For those of you who say this is going to impact agriculture, I will tell you right now, hemp production in the United States probably presents about 0.0056 percent of all the farmland—49,000 acres—and only 17,000 are using it to grow the kind of hemp that would go into these kinds of products.

There are pilot programs right now on how to use CBD oil in the treatments of things like cancer. They are all out there. They are not going to be impacted. We should let this expire November 12.

My colleague TED BUDD and I—the Senator from North Carolina—we want an amendment vote to be able to take this out of this continuing resolution and call upon my colleagues to help pass it.

This is literally—these high-THC products disguised as candies—could get into the hands of young children and poison them. It has done so already.

Let's stop this right now because we know when THC gets into young people's minds, it can reduce their IQs, lead to mental health issues, such as suicidal ideation, anxiety, depression. This drug is bad for young people. So let's close this loophole and keep it closed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. JUSTICE). The Senator from Louisiana.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I have been coming to this floor talking about Social Security. No offense, but you look like, with that gray hair of yours, you might be on Social Security. I am thinking that might be the case.

But a lot of people who are watching right now are on Social Security. Why? Like 75 million Americans are, and this should be important to Congress because in 6 years, Social Security goes insolvent.

And when that happens, those folks watching right now who are on Social or anybody who is watching who is going to be on Social—which I hope includes everybody in this room, including the young people who are our pages—they will get a 22- to 28.5-percent cut in their benefits.

Let me say that again. In 6 years, when the Social Security trust fund goes insolvent, by law, there will be a 22- to 28.5-percent cut in the benefits that people on Social Security receive—from now until eternity.

And folks say: No, no, no, we will just raise taxes. We will just pay for it. We won't cut benefits. We will just raise taxes.

If we do that, according to the actuaries, we have to raise payroll taxes 40 percent. So think about that family who is struggling to make ends meet. They notice that they are paying a payroll tax, and now that goes up 40 percent.

Over the course of the year, that can be thousands of dollars that they don't have in their pocket to pay for their groceries, their gasoline, the time to be together on a special night, hopefully, putting some away for savings. That won't be there because, instead of cutting benefits, we are going to raise taxes.

And then a third group says: No, no, we are just going to borrow the money.

The Congressional Budget Office has looked at it. If we just try and borrow our way out of here, they say the amount of debt accumulated is so large, their models cannot calculate the destabilizing effect upon the U.S. economy.

What does that mean? Interest rates sky-high, can't afford a car, can't afford to buy a house. You can't afford to buy a house, so no one is employed building houses. No one is employed building houses, so no one is making shingles. No one is cutting wood, so no one is shipping lumber from here to there. That has ramifications for each of us. We need a better solution.

But the problem is that we have lacked a sense of urgency of fixing Social Security now. I say we need to have that urgency. It is almost like we are telling our seniors: We built a bridge for Social Security, but, by the way, it is about to lose a step. And on that last step, ''woo, boom.'' And Congress sits there and says: We will get to it someday.

It is time for Congress to do its job. It is time for Congress to get serious about something affecting not just the folks in this, who look as if they are elderly, but folks of all ages who will be affected because one day we will all, hopefully, be able to access Social Security.

Now, the good news is, today we had a Senate Finance Committee hearing on the PROMISE Act. DICK DURBIN—a Democratic Senator, the whip for the Democrats and their leadership, been here for a long time—he has got a bill. BILL CASSIDY is the cosponsor, a conservative Republican. We have got a bill called the PROMISE Act that doesn't say how Social Security is going to be fixed; it sets up a process by which we would consider how to fix Social Security—a process that, ideally, would give a product for the Senate and the House to consider sometime later in the year. Instead of saying we will get to it someday, we get to it this Congress.

By the way, this process is transparent, with input from anybody who wishes to have an input. And we are not saying what the solution is going to be. We are saying: Come up with a solution. But, by the way, if the Senate doesn't like it or if the Senate Finance Committee doesn't like it, they can replace it or, if an individual Member—BERNIE SANDERS has a bill. If BERNIE doesn't like the product, he can offer