

two children making \$11,000 a year is going to get back from the Federal Government \$4,100 in refundable earned income tax credits.

Remember what I just talked about? The Census Bureau says: Oh, that doesn't matter; not real money.

That mom is going to get back \$3,400 in a check in child tax credits. That mom is going to receive \$9,200 in food stamps. That mom is going to receive \$9,500—or at least she will be eligible to receive it—in housing subsidies. That mom is going to receive \$900 in utility bill subsidies, \$16,000 in Medicaid for her and her two children, and \$31 a year for free school lunches at school for her two kids. Let's suppose that on top of that, she gets \$6,600 a year in welfare payments.

Remember, the Census Bureau says that all this stuff doesn't count. The only thing that counts is that the lady works and makes \$11,000 a year, and she gets \$6,600 in welfare payments, so her income is only \$17,600, and she is below the poverty line.

Wrong. You don't have to be Euclid to be able to figure out that if you add up the TANF money and the \$11,000 that she earns and the refundable child tax credit and the refundable earned income tax credit and the food stamps and the housing subsidies and the utility bill subsidies and the Medicaid and the free school lunches that I have just talked about—do you know what her income is? It is \$64,100 tax free. Yet the Census Bureau says she is below the poverty line.

Now, look, I am not here to begrudge this lady, this hypothetical person. I am going to say it again: The American people are the most generous people in the world. We help our neighbors. But the American people put up this money, and they ought to get credit. And when the Census Bureau, which has been telling us since 1974—they have been lying to us. They have been lying to us. They learned to lie over there before they learned to talk.

They need to redefine the poverty level in America and the definition of "poverty." It is the Census Bureau's job, and that is what I talked to the good Secretary Howard Lutnick about. I talked to him in committee, and he said he would work on it. I thank him for that, and I am going to chase him like he stole Christmas until he does. I am going to chase him like he stole Christmas and Thanksgiving. He can do it with a rule or regulation. I have introduced a bill.

Again, the purpose of this is not to take any money away from anybody; the purpose of this is to tell the American people the truth—that they are the most generous people in the world and they should be proud of that.

This mother, this poor mom of two—she is not just getting around \$17,000 a year; she is getting almost \$65,000 a year tax free, but the American people get no credit. And do you know why? Because there are so many people in the bureaucracy—they want us to

think everybody is poor so they can go back and back and back to the taxpayer.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Secretary Lutnick, with all the respect I can muster, please fix this. Please fix this. And I am going to keep bringing it up until you do.

I will pass a bill if I can, but it is going to be kind of tough. The short way home here is to have the Secretary—I don't mean disrespect—to have the Secretary do his job.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask that the scheduled rollcall begin immediately.

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

#### CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant executive clerk 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. 651, Ryan McCormack, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy.

John Thune, Katie Boyd Britt, Jim Banks, John Barrasso, John R. Curtis, Tim Scott of South Carolina, Kevin Cramer, Joni Ernst, Pete Ricketts, Bernie Moreno, Rick Scott of Florida, Markwayne Mullin, Mike Crapo, Ted Budd, Roger F. Wicker, James Lankford, Chuck Grassley.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the mandatory quorum call under rule XXII has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Ryan McCormack, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. JUSTICE), and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN), and the Senator from Rhode

Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 60, nays 34, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 42 Leg.]

#### YEAS—60

Banks	Grassley	Moreno
Barrasso	Hagerty	Mullin
Blackburn	Hawley	Murkowski
Boozman	Hoeben	Ricketts
Britt	Husted	Risch
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Rosen
Cantwell	Johnson	Rounds
Capito	Kaine	Schatz
Cassidy	Kelly	Schmitt
Collins	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	King	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Klobuchar	Sheehy
Cramer	Lankford	Sullivan
Crapo	Lee	Thune
Cruz	Lummis	Tillis
Curtis	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	McConnell	Warner
Ernst	McCormick	Welch
Fetterman	Moody	Wicker
Fischer	Moran	Young

#### NAYS—34

Alsobrooks	Hickenlooper	Sanders
Baldwin	Hirono	Schiff
Bennet	Kim	Schumer
Blumenthal	Lujan	Shaheen
Blunt Rochester	Markey	Slotkin
Booker	Merkley	Smith
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murray	Warnock
Durbin	Ossoff	Warren
Gallego	Padilla	Wyden
Gillibrand	Peters	
Heinrich	Reed	

#### NOT VOTING—6

Coons	Hassan	Paul
Graham	Justice	Whitehouse

(Mr. HAGERTY assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BANKS). On this vote, the yeas are 60, the nays are 34. The motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

#### CAPE FOX LAND ENTITLEMENT FINALIZATION ACT OF 2025

#### SLOAN CANYON CONSERVATION AND LATERAL PIPELINE ACT

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I come to the floor with my friend and colleague from Nevada Senator CORTEZ MASTO to seek unanimous consent to pass two noncontroversial bills as a bipartisan pair. The first is H.R. 2815. This is sponsored by Congressman BEGICH from Alaska. It is the identical companion to my Cape Fox Land Entitlement Finalization Act. And the second is H.R. 972, sponsored by Representative DINA TITUS of Nevada. It is the identical companion to Senator CORTEZ MASTO's Sloan Canyon Conservation and Lateral Pipeline Act.

These are important bills to those in Southeastern Alaska and in Nevada. It probably won't make headlines out of those two areas, but they are very significant and important bills. After more than five decades, the Cape Fox bill will finally complete the land entitlement for the Native Village of Saxman in Southeast Alaska. The Sloan Canyon bill will facilitate construction of a water pipeline in the Las

Vegas Valley. This is critical infrastructure for hundreds of thousands of people.

These are House-passed bills, OK, so they can go directly to the President's desk to be signed into law. I mentioned that they are both noncontroversial. Their pairing is also noncontroversial. And there are no objections on the merits, on the substance, to either one of them. Both have had full process in the Senate over the course of multiple Congresses. So if these look familiar, it is because we have seen them before.

Both these bills passed the Senate by unanimous consent at the end of 2024, so over a year ago. Our cloakrooms on both sides of the aisle hotlined them again 6 weeks ago, and so that is what brings us here today as we are still trying to move them.

We have kind of gotten to a really difficult and frustrating—frustrating, as much as anything—time in our process. People are wondering, and they are asking me—those in the Ketchikan-Saxman area: What is the holdup here? If everybody is supportive of this, why is it taking so long and proving so hard for Congress to agree on things?

I don't have a good answer on that. I am not sure that there is one. But, again, we are trying to move noncontroversial bills through a process that requires support and consent on both ends of this building. And this end of the building has said yes, and things are getting stuck over on the other side. And rather than point fingers and call names, I want to unstick things. I want to have us know that we can move these bills that are important in our communities and in our regions and they don't get taken hostage, if you will, by the other body as they are trying to figure out how they gain leverage over something else here. That is not fair to the constituents that we represent. That is not fair to the lawmakers who are working very hard to try to advance their bills. So I appreciate the discussion that I have had with my colleagues here on the floor about a way, a process, a dialogue that needs to be had with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

So there are a few bills that we are looking at today specifically, but I think it goes to a bigger concern that needs to be addressed in a way that is going to work for other Members who are also trying to advance their bills into full passage by law.

So my commitment to my colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle and on the Democrat side of the aisle is let's leave from here and let's make the calls to set up the sitdowns with our colleagues on the other side—in the other body—to talk about how we are going to move these in a way that is fair and does not penalize the Members, the communities. We need to do right by our own process, and I would just suggest that we need to be doing more than we are so that we are not in a situation where we are waiting months and months and months to be able to see these matters resolved.

Before I make any motion on these bills, I want to yield to Senator CORTEZ MASTO.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I rise today, along with my good friend and colleague from Alaska Senator MURKOWSKI, to ask for the passage of both H.R. 2815 and H.R. 972. As the Presiding Officer has heard, they have already passed the House. There have been sets of hearings there, work to be done.

Let me talk a little bit about H.R. 972. This is the Sloan Canyon Conservation and Lateral Water Pipeline Act. This is the same bill that this Chamber already passed by unanimous consent last Congress. And, right now, almost 40 percent of Las Vegas residents and businesses depend on the South Valley Lateral pipeline. That is one single pipeline for nearly 3 million people. And that pipeline is 25 years old. Ten years from now, it will reach 95 percent capacity, and it won't be able to safely and reliably serve Las Vegas long term.

This bill that we are, hopefully, passing today will allow the Southern Nevada Water Authority to build a new pipeline that will improve the reliability and capacity of our existing water system and protect the water supply for nearly half of our Las Vegas residents and businesses.

And if you are from the West, water is the issue. My colleague from California knows this. This is why I appreciate the conversation we have had today.

Let me just say this. As a member of leadership in the Democratic caucus as well as a member of Energy and Natural Resources and the ranking member on the Public Lands Subcommittee, I couldn't agree more with not only the comments Senator MURKOWSKI has made about our challenges in the work we need to do to pass several pieces of legislation, in both Houses, to the benefit of our constituents and my commitment to do just that.

I also understand and respect my colleague from California. We work so closely on so many issues, from water issues to land issues. I understand his frustration. I understand his concern that there is a lack of movement with some of these important bills that we all need to work on together. So I make a commitment to him to use whatever authority and power I have to get this unstuck, to make sure that we are working together to address his concerns, which are completely valid, and to move forward as quickly as we possibly can, whether that is requiring meetings amongst the—bicameral—with the House Members of jurisdiction, making sure that, as a Senate caucus, this is a priority, working with our Republican colleagues as well.

I really appreciate the Senator bringing this to everyone's attention in the way that he has, and I think it is important for us to continue to move for-

ward together now to follow through and unstick a lot of the challenges that we are seeing with these lands bills and bills that we need to get passed in both Chambers.

So I thank the Senator, and I will yield to Senator MURKOWSKI.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, we speak about the frustrations. There is always room for frustration around here. But I share the many concerns of my friend from California. Three of my bills and ones that he also cares about and more that I have cosponsored are also pending over there. And so this is not just the three of us sharing that we need to find a path forward, but I think it is also an effort and a need to find a path forward, working with the House to move these bills forward.

In the meantime, here in the Senate, we need to keep doing our work, but we can't forget that we have the other body that we need to have a working relationship with, and passage of the bills requires just that.

So I think, today, we want to get focused on outcomes, pushing to pass the bills where we can, however we can, whether they start with an "H.R." or an "S," not caring about who gets the credit but just making sure we are advancing some laws here.

Mr. President, as if in legislative session and notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be discharged and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of the following bills en bloc; further, that the bills be considered read a third time and passed en bloc and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc: H.R. 2815, Cape Fox Land Entitlement Finalization Act of 2025 and H.R. 972, Sloan Canyon Conservation and Lateral Pipeline Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from California.

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, colleagues, I have been down here many, many times and have spoken up in committee many, many times as we try to create a better way of ensuring that we, indeed, have a fair and bipartisan and bicameral approach to consideration and passage of public lands bills.

I certainly understand my colleagues' frustration with how the public lands process is currently playing out. I am glad that they are acknowledging I, too, share that frustration. But I also can't believe we can't create a scenario where the Senate completely cedes to the House the ability to pick and choose which public lands bills are allowed to be sent to the White House.

Regardless of who is in the majority, the process has historically been both bicameral and bipartisan, and we need to get back to that.

So as I said publicly, and as I have reminded in private, my objection to

these bills is not on the substance, and my objection is not an objection forever. So I appreciate when my colleagues have offered to join me in this effort to push leadership of both parties of the committees in both Houses to convene and create that process that isn't just going to be a fair consideration of my proposals or their proposals but all the proposals that come from the Senate through the Natural Resources Committee; give them a shot for consideration on the House side and proper consideration for signature by the President of the United States.

My colleague from Alaska, not just as a member of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee but her leadership on the Committee of Indian Affairs—not all public lands bills involve Indian Country, but many, indeed, do, including some of mine that have been in the pipeline—I appreciate her willingness to bring her authority and role in her caucus to bear in this effort and conversation.

My colleague from the State of Nevada, not just a member of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee but a member of the leadership team on the Democratic side here in the Senate, I appreciate her willingness to bring her authority and power to bear in advancing this conversation.

So, for today, I shall not object on these two bills but reiterate my frustration and am glad to be joined by two additional colleagues in trying to push, again, leadership on both sides of the aisle, not just the Senate committees but the House committees, to establish a fair way forward for all Members and all of our proposals.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 2815) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

The bill (H.R. 972) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I want to thank not only the Senator from California but my colleague Senator CORTEZ MASTO from Nevada as we have worked through this.

Know that the Senator from California does have my commitment to try to address not only the matters that are on your specific docket today but, again, to try and find a better path forward for all the legislation that means so much to so many of us in our communities. And I thank you for the courtesy today.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise to discuss a matter that will likely be before the body next week, a vote on my bipartisan War Powers Resolution to advance the proposition we shouldn't be at war against Iran without a vote of Congress.

I want to take a few minutes today to put this in a context that we may all be discussing a little more next week. I believe very strongly that a war with Iran today is both unnecessary and dangerous. I want to spend a little bit of time talking about why we are at this moment right now where President Trump, as recently as Tuesday night at the State of the Union, is suggesting that we may possibly need to be at war with the Nation of Iran.

The history of relations between the United States and Iran from the beginning of the 20th century to now is very, very tragic. The United States and Iran were generally allies from the turn of the 1900s until the early 1950s.

In the middle of World War II, at the Tehran Conference, President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill, and Leader Stalin basically devised what would be the boundaries of the current-day Iran. That has essentially stuck.

Iran's prehistory was very complicated, and the United States earned really good—significant good will from the Iranian people, from the Iranian Government being involved in that discussion.

We continued being seen as a real ally of Iran. In the early 1950s, after having had essentially a dictatorship or monarchy, Iran elected a popular Prime Minister. The British Government was worried about that government—the Iranian Government's efforts to potentially nationalize British oil assets.

So the British Government tried to talk the United States into a military action to topple the Government of Iran. The United States refused and convinced Britain not to do it. But later in 1953, the United States and Britain together arranged—and these are basic facts, no supposition, no opinion here—the United States and Britain joined in an effort to foment a coup d'etat that toppled the popularly elected Government of Iran and installed Reza Pahlavi as the Shah of Iran over the objections of the Iranian people.

We did that. Britain did that.

The United States then funded the training of a secret police operation in Iran, the SAVAK, that between 1953 and 1979 perpetrated gross human rights abuses against the Iranian people.

This is a history that is not that well known to Americans, but a history that is very well known to Iranians.

That dictatorship and the human rights abuses perpetrated by the SAVAK and the Pahlavi regime eventually led to an uprising in Iran in 1979, and Ayatollah Khomeini, another opposition leader, toppled the Pahlavi regime and took control of the Iranian Government.

Most Americans remember that Iranian protestors stormed the U.S. Embassy, took 52 hostages in that Embassy, and held them for 440-plus days. It was not as a result of the change in regime, but there was an additional fact.

After the regime changed, the Shah of Iran sought to come to the United States for refuge and medical treatment. The State Department urged President Carter not to allow it on the grounds they were trying to at least maintain some positive future relationship with the Iranian Government, but the United States allowed the Shah of Iran to come into the United States for medical treatment and care, and that led Iranian protestors to attack the American Embassy.

That was a horrible, unlawful act, and the hostages held for 440 days were treated very, very badly. But that then led to a series of back-and-forths between the United States and Iran.

The United States, in the 1980s, funded Iraq in an 8-year war against Iran that cost hundreds of thousands of Iranian lives. The United States supplied military assets to Iraq, to Saddam Hussein, to carry out war against Iran. We transferred military assets, including chemical weapons, to Saddam Hussein that were used against the Iranian population.

The Iranian population grew to have a deep distrust and fear and even hatred of the United States because of this toppling of the Prime Minister through U.S. funding of a war against Iran.

During this Iran-Iraq war, the USS *Vincennes*, a Navy ship, accidentally shot down an Iranian airliner in the region, killing more than 250 Iranian civilians. It was an accident, but Iran didn't believe it was an accident because they knew that the United States was funding Iraq in the war against it, and they viewed that attack on their civilian aircraft as something they could not countenance.

As this was happening, then-Iran-funded Shia militias and terrorist groups bombed the Marine barracks in Beirut in the early 1980s as the Iran-Iraq war was going on and the United States was funding the war against Iran. This back-and-forth started to escalate.

Later, as you all know, the United States invaded Iran's two neighbors—to the west, Iraq; to the east, Afghanistan—and put U.S. troops all around Iran in its neighborhood. Iran interpreted those invasions as a piece of the toppling of their government and the downing of the commercial aircraft and the funding of the Iraq war.

And so, by the time we get into the 2000s, the depth of enmity between the United States and Iran was so intense, the Iranian regime chants "Death to America" because of this history. And we were friends just 60 or 70 years ago. We took a fundamental turn in the relationship and opened the path for a potential new chapter in United States-Iranian relationships when, during the Obama administration, the United States, European allies and China and Russia joined together to negotiate with Iran to curb their nuclear program.

I wrote a piece of legislation, the Iran Nuclear Review Act, that led to a