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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at 12 p.m.

Senate

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2023

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable PETER WELCH, a Senator from the State of Vermont.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for the years to come, on this September 11, we pause to thank You for being a bulwark for our Nation. Throughout our national history, You have been our refuge and strength, our ever-present help in turbulent and tempestuous times. You were with us on September 11, 22 years ago. You are with us now. We remember the victims, the grief, and the courage. We also recall that even during the most challenging seasons, Your prevailing providence continues to sustain us. Today, may our lawmakers celebrate that You have been our help in all our yesterdays and our hope for all of our tomorrows.

We pray in Your magnificent Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 11, 2023.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable PETER WELCH, a Senator from the State of Vermont, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WELCH thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the fol-

lowing nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Tanya J. Bradsher, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

22ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, ATTACKS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, there is one day of the year that for me will always embody what is most admirable and most enduring about the human spirit, and that day is today.

Twenty-two years after the towers fell in New York, after a plane crashed into the Pentagon, after United No. 93 came down in Pennsylvania, we pay our respects to those we lost on September 11. We mourn their loss—every last soul taken from us too early. We honor and thank every single American who became an unassuming hero in the aftermath of the attack: the first responders, the legions of volunteers and blood donors, the nameless many who did their part.

I will never forget so many scenes. One of them was a guy who owned a shoe store a few blocks north of the World Trade Center, who was just handing out shoes to everybody because many people had lost their shoes as they tried to escape from the towers. But there were so many different things.

Everywhere I go, I always wear this pin on my lapel as a reminder of our

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



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sacred promise to never forget. I called on Americans the day after to wear and display the flag. Just about everybody did as a sign of unity, of our coming together after an awful day. I wear it every day, and every time I look at this flag, I think about so many who were lost.

I was at Ground Zero this morning. I mean, you just hear the names that were read, those of every different background. They had people come up who had lost loved ones of every different background, of every different philosophy, race, creed, color, religion, origin, talking about the people they had lost.

I remember, when I went down the day after when President Bush sent a plane for then-Senator Clinton and me to come up, there were 1,000 people on line, holding up little signs—“Have you seen my brother, Bill?” “Have you seen my daughter, Mary?”—because when people were missing that first day, people had hoped and prayed that maybe they were still alive, but, of course, very few were.

So a lifetime can pass, but, to me, it always feels like yesterday. I look out my window, and I see the Freedom Tower—a symbol of resilience in New York—and I can see it from my window in Brooklyn, but I also think of the Twin Towers that were there and of so many who were lost.

I remember that day: the smell of the pile, human flesh; the noise from the chaos of the aftermath; the images of destruction that New Yorkers and Americans had never seen. I remember three friends of mine who perished—a guy I played basketball with in high school, a businessman who helped me on the way up, and a firefighter I went around New York City and did blood drives with. They are gone 22 years ago.

But most of all, that day stays with me because on that day and on the days that followed, I saw countless ordinary Americans do extraordinary things. Taxi drivers and store managers and businessmen and city workers and so many others dropped what they were doing and became heroes. They gave blood, organized prayer vigils, helped neighbors track down family members, and visited with loved ones and friends who had lost loved ones. I saw firefighters and policemen and union workers and rescue workers cast aside any concern for their own safety as they worked the pile. Many of them—far too many—became sick and even died because of their illnesses.

Our obligation to care for these first responders continues to this day. It is why I worked hard, along with Senator GILLIBRAND, to add \$450 million for the World Trade Center Health Program to the NDAA. It is why I fought and successfully added another \$1 billion for that program in last year’s omnibus as well as the Fairness for 9/11 Families Act. And it is why, last summer, Congress enacted the largest expansion of veterans’ health benefits in the PACT

Act, because we learned what these carcinogens could do to people whether it was over in Iraq or down in the pile in Lower New York—because the phrase “never forget” is not just about remembering what happened two decades ago; it is all about taking action today to honor and care for all of those who made ultimate sacrifices in the defense of our beautiful Nation.

So may God bless the memories of all of those who perished on 9/11. May God bless our first responders, our service-members, and their families. May God bless our great democracy, and may we keep it.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE INSIGHT FORUM

Mr. President, on the AI Insight Forum this Wednesday, I will join with Senators ROUNDS, YOUNG, and HEINRICH in hosting one of the most important meetings Congress has held in years as we welcome the top minds in AI for the Senate’s first-ever AI Insight Forum.

Our inaugural forum will convene leaders from business, civil rights, defense, research, labor, the arts, and more—all for a candid debate about how Congress can tackle AI’s opportunities and AI’s challenges. These forums will provide the nutrient agar—the basis of knowledge and insight—essential for our committees to draft smart and effective legislation.

Wednesday’s inaugural forum can be boiled down to three words: bipartisan, diverse, and above all, balanced. We will have AI advocates and critics, CEOs and unions, leading experts and researchers all together in one room, talking about where Congress should start, what questions to ask, and how to build a consensus for SAFE innovation. We will need every sector of the workforce, every side of the political spectrum, all part of the process if we are to succeed. I am proud that the participants for the first forum achieve that balance really well.

That is what any action on AI must be, balanced and bipartisan—balanced in a way that gives everyone a seat at the table and prioritizes both innovation, the kind of transformational innovation that AI can bring, whether it is curing disease or improving education or making businesses more efficient or protecting our security. But there is also innovation in keeping guardrails, the kind of essential innovation that is needed to prevent AI from going off track, and we might lose it all—and bipartisan because if AI becomes a partisan issue, it will paralyze any chance for progress. So I am glad that the Senate’s interest in AI has been decidedly bipartisan.

As I said, these forums will be vital for helping our committees do the real legislative work of drafting AI policy. They will provide the nutrient agar to help the committees draft smart, effective legislation.

The good news is that many of the committees are already hard at work on this issue in a truly bipartisan way. I believe our hearing has increased the interest of committees to do work

here, but it has also made it clear that we cannot run away from this issue and put our heads in the sand like ostriches even though the issue is so difficult and changing and wide-reaching. I want to thank Senators ROUNDS, HEINRICH, and YOUNG, as well as committee chairs and ranking members, for their work thus far on AI.

Our subcommittees and committees have already held no fewer than nine hearings on AI this year on issues like national security, intellectual property, human rights, and more. This week, the Commerce Committee, the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, and the Judiciary Committee are scheduled to hold more hearings on AI transparency and oversight, which is just what our insight forums are intended to promote.

I am hopeful that our AI Insight Forums will supercharge the work already happening in the Senate by bringing outside voices to give their insights, their expertise, and their perspectives on how Congress can best proceed.

So, once again, I thank Senators ROUNDS, HEINRICH, and YOUNG for helping to organize this inaugural forum, and I encourage all Senators to attend our forum on Wednesday.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. President, finally, on approps, this week, the bipartisan appropriations process continues here in the Senate. Tomorrow, we will take the first procedural vote on a package of three appropriations bills: Military Construction-Veterans’ Affairs, Agriculture, and Transportation-HUD.

Earlier this year, Democrats and Republicans reached an agreement on next year’s spending levels as part of our work to avoid default, and these bills honor that agreement. Reaching bipartisan consensus on these bills certainly wasn’t easy, and it took plenty of compromise, lots of negotiations, and an understanding that neither side would get everything it wanted. But each of these bills received unanimous support in committee—these three bills—from Republicans and Democrats.

So thanks to the leadership of Chair MURRAY, Vice Chair COLLINS, and appropriators from both sides for moving forward. This is what a functional legislative body looks like. Disagreements don’t paralyze the process.

Now, as we process these appropriations bills through the floor, Congress must also avoid a pointless government shutdown later this month. I cannot stress enough that stumbling into a shutdown right now would not only be entirely unnecessary, it would cause immense harm to the American people. It could undermine so much of the progress we have made to lower costs, grow our economy, and restore the tens of millions of jobs lost during the worst days of COVID. It would also derail Congress from our work on so many important things, like lowering the

cost of insulin, prescription drugs; aiding our fellow Americans hurt by natural disasters; outcompeting the Chinese Government; and so much more. All of this would be undermined by a government shutdown. We certainly don't need to go down that road. The Senate has shown that bipartisan compromise is entirely possible even in these divided times.

When the House gavels back into session tomorrow, I implore House Republicans to follow the Senate's example and reject all-or-nothing tactics, to reject unrealistic, extreme demands. Don't let 30 people way out on the extreme dictate what the House does. Instead, the House should work in a bipartisan fashion to keep the government open beyond September 30. The only way we will avoid a shutdown is through bipartisanship in both Houses, and the time is short to get it done.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

22ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2001,
ATTACKS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today marks 22 years since terrorists shattered a peaceful morning in New York, Pennsylvania, and here in Washington; 22 years since enemies of America's freedom and leadership killed 2,977 innocent people; 22 years, but the shock of that day and the pain of loss are still every bit as real.

Today, we remember the parents and the children and spouses and siblings who never returned home. We thank the first responders who ran toward danger in service of others. And we honor the servicemembers, intelligence professionals, and law enforcement officers who kept America safe since that awful day. But today is not just about remembering the past.

Year after year, September 11 is a reminder of our commitment to confront growing threats from global terror and to preserve the tools and authorities our national security community need to carry out this essential mission.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. President, on another matter, as I discussed last week, skeptics of American leadership like to hang their hats on the notion that support for Ukraine somehow saps our ability to compete with and deter communist China. This view does not hold up to serious scrutiny.

For one thing, the patina of hawkishness on China is too often just a mask—a mask—for isolationism. If critics of U.S. support for Ukraine disparage the principle that we should oppose adversaries who evade and destroy Western-aligned neighbors, how cred-

ible—how credible—is their commitment to defend Taiwan or other vulnerable allies?

Of course, this isn't a debate about abstract principles or philanthropy. The United States isn't arming Ukraine out of a sense of charity. We are backing a fellow democracy because it is in our direct interest to do so—in our interest to do so.

To rebut one ad hominem accusation in particular, there is nothing "neoconservative" about support for Ukraine. Helping a democratic partner defend its sovereign territory against an unprovoked attack from a common enemy is obviously in America's interest.

Let me stress, we aren't defending Ukraine from aggression. The Ukrainians are doing that. America's two most powerful adversaries have struck up a "friendship without limits." If we fail to help Ukraine stop Russia in its tracks, there is every reason to believe Russia and China will both be emboldened.

Our closest allies and partners in Asia—people with even more to lose from PRC aggression than armchair isolationists here in Washington—understand this fundamental reality.

It is why Taiwan provides humanitarian assistance to Ukraine. It is why the leaders of Japan and South Korea have traveled to Kyiv and pledged billions of dollars in assistance.

Our partners in Europe and Asia are joining us in investing in our military readiness and expanding our defense production capacity. If not for the conflict in Ukraine, it is difficult to imagine any of this happening.

Republicans should welcome Democrats who are finally willing to spend money on our defense industrial base. Such a bipartisan consensus will not survive if we turn our backs on this conflict.

And why would we pull the plug on the transatlantic alliance just when European allies are making credible investments in their own defenses and also coming around to share our concern about Chinese aggression?

Competition with China is a global proposition. And the strength of our closest military and economic allies in Europe affects China's calculus. Beijing would love to see the transatlantic alliance fracture in the wake of America turning our back on our closest trading partner.

If the United States proves we cannot be trusted to back our allies in Europe, why on Earth should our allies in Asia expect different treatment in the face of Chinese aggression?

War in Ukraine has taught the West a crucial lesson about the importance of investment in defense industrial capacity. And as I discussed last week, it has directed billions and billions of dollars toward restocking America's arsenal with American weapons built here by American workers.

This is a fundamental prerequisite for competition with China, and we are

accomplishing it using a tiny fraction of the historically small and insufficient defense budgets President Biden has sent up to Congress.

Put another way, America is making urgent strides in the race to compete with our biggest adversary, China. And in the process, we are helping degrade Russian military strength and encouraging our allies to "Buy American" and invest in their own defense.

This is American leadership, and Republicans should be pressing President Biden to show more of it instead of dreaming about American retreat.

VIOLENT CRIME

Mr. President, on one final matter, violent crime in some American cities has grown rampant, even the local media are struggling to keep up.

Last month, a Chicago news crew was filming a story about armed robbery when they themselves became the victims of armed robbery. This is a city where Democrats recently swapped out a mayor who famously refused to let law enforcement do their job for one who called defunding the police a "real political goal."

Unfortunately, millions of Americans live under liberal local leaders who would rather bend the soft-on-crime radicalism than keep their streets safe.

Last year, here in Washington, the U.S. attorney declined—declined—to prosecute 67 percent of the cases brought to him by police. In Los Angeles, the soft-on-crime DA has tasked his department's investigators with escorting staff to and from the office rather than prosecuting the criminals who make them feel so unsafe.

The solution here isn't exactly a mystery. As Washington's former police chief, Robert Contee, put it earlier this year, "We need to keep violent people in jail."

"We need to keep violent people in jail."

But somehow it took intervention from Congress to stop the radical city council from ignoring this lesson and going even softer on crime.

Well, some Democrats know the chief is right. In Minnesota last week, a local liberal official who once supported defunding the police, took to social media to urge her city to finally hold repeat offenders "accountable for their actions" after she was savagely beaten in her own driveway—her own driveway—by carjackers.

Here in Washington, Congresswoman ANGIE CRAIG, who was attacked earlier this year in her own apartment building, has been outspoken that "[w]e have to get these repeat offenders off the streets."

It shouldn't have to be like this. The American people don't deserve to live in fear. In every city and town, they deserve to feel safe in their own streets.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

22ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2001,
ATTACKS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today we take a moment to remember the anniversary of September 11, 2001.

Many people recall vividly that day where they were. I was in this building outside that door and a few steps down the hallway. I can recall seeing, on a small television set, the planes striking the towers in New York. First, we were confused: What is going on here that a plane would strike a building? But when the second one took place, it started to dawn on us that this was no longer an accident; it was by design.

I can recall looking down the Mall toward the Washington Monument and seeing black smoke billowing across the Mall. It took a few minutes to establish what had happened, a plane had crashed into the Pentagon and our Department of Defense, killing the innocent people on the plane and in that building. What we were seeing was the smoke from the fire of that crash.

It wasn't a few moments afterward that someone came to the door and said: Evacuate. Leave the building.

I have been around Capitol Hill for a number of years. I had never heard that before. But we all took it seriously, and we piled out onto what was the lawn between here and the Supreme Court Building. And people gathered. Tourists came up to me and said: Do you work here?

I said: Yes.

They said: Where are we supposed to go? It was a very fundamental question because, at that point, we heard sonic booms from the jets that were being scrambled to protect this building. We assumed it would be the next target. And it might have been were it not for the courage of the passengers and crew on that United Airlines flight that was brought down in Pennsylvania before it could reach Washington, DC.

These are memories we all have and will carry for a lifetime of what had happened 22 years ago.

Now, 22 years later, we are connected by sadness as we reflect on 2,977 lives lost at the World Trade Center in New York, the Pentagon in Washington, and that field in Pennsylvania.

But we also remember the care for our communities and the common purpose we found after that tragedy, after the attacks, as our Nation sought to find light amidst the darkness. In our most divided moments, we should look to that as a reminder that America, as a nation, is at its best when we seek unity and humanity over separation and hate.

NATO

Mr. President, I listened carefully to the statements made by my colleague from Kentucky, the Republican leader, Senator MCCONNELL. I want to join in and make it clear that I agree with virtually every word he spoke concerning our relationship with Ukraine. I do want to add a footnote which he may not have added, and I want to give credit to this President currently serving, Joe Biden, who led the United States' return to NATO after the previous President's administration.

There had been serious questions as to whether NATO, as an alliance,

would even survive under the previous President. President Biden has told Members of the Senate and others that at the first meeting of NATO after he was elected, our allies basically sat down and said: President Biden, is America in for the long haul when it comes to NATO? And even before the Ukraine challenge, he said yes.

What happened after Vladimir Putin, the war criminal, invaded Ukraine was that the members of the NATO alliance had to answer a basic question: Would we respond to the challenge?

I think the record is clear. NATO, as an alliance, has never, ever been stronger than it is today. The countries that are part of it have made a commitment not only to their common defense but also to help Ukraine, in any way possible, put an end to this invasion. In fact, if you reflect on what has happened to Vladimir Putin since he invaded Ukraine a little over a year and a half ago, you realize that the world is a lot worse for him.

The NATO alliance is not only strong, it is larger than ever. The accession of Finland and Sweden to join the NATO alliance was a bold, strong move that really gives notice to Vladimir Putin that his future is even more in doubt when it comes to his relationship with the West. I think, now that Sweden and Finland are now a part of NATO, to take a look at the map of Europe is to realize that the Baltic Sea is now a NATO sea with only two minor exceptions, and it means that we are stronger than ever.

I agree with Senator MCCONNELL. We need to stand behind Ukraine and the NATO alliance now more than ever, as people are making sacrifices and giving their lives to the cause of freedom and sovereignty. So I couldn't agree more with his statements.

I do question, when he talks about violence in the streets of Chicago, as to why he never refers to cities in red States that are witnessing the same phenomenon going on today—in fact, even worse than in my city of Chicago that I represent.

We have a crime problem in this country, and we have to deal with it. It is made more difficult and challenging because of the proliferation of guns in America. We are a nation of 320 million people, perhaps, with 400 million guns, and they are moving across State borders with abandon into the hands of people who have no business owning a gun. We could do a lot more about that right here in the Senate.

I still remember that it was a little over a year ago in Highland Park, IL, when a deranged individual went on the roof of a local business, pulled out his weapon, and fired 83 rounds in 60 seconds into a crowd, killing seven innocent people and injuring dozens of others. Why in the world he should ever have had a military assault weapon is beyond me, and it is way beyond anything the Founding Fathers envisioned when they wrote the Second Amendment.

We can do more and should do more to make the streets safer across America. I agree with that part of Senator MCCONNELL's speech, but I wish he would have given us a more complete presentation of the challenge we face.

FDA AND APPROPRIATIONS

Now, Mr. President, on another subject, this weekend marked 2 years, the second anniversary, since the Food and Drug Administration missed a Federal court-ordered date to finish its review of vaping applications, e-cigarette applications that have illegally flooded the market in the United States.

We estimate that during that 2-year period of time when the FDA refused to respond to the Federal court order, approximately 2 million American children may have started vaping; and despite missing this deadline by 2 years, the Food and Drug Administration remains nowhere close to meeting the legal mandate to regulate these addictive e-cigarettes.

You see, under the law, a vaping product is required to apply first to the FDA before entering the market and prove to the Food and Drug Administration that the e-cigarette is, in the law—this is from the law—"appropriate for the protection of public health."

They can't prove that. This has not happened. Instead, tens of thousands of dangerous, highly addictive e-cigarettes have illegally shown up on store shelves without FDA review or approval, and they have hooked a generation of kids. In fact, studies have shown that there are more vaping devices on the market today than 2 years ago when the FDA was ordered by a Federal court to do so. That is unacceptable.

My office recently investigated the FDA's effectiveness in following through even after it issues a denial for a vaping application. So a company comes to the FDA, submits their product. It is supposed to show how it is consistent with public health. It fails to do so. They are told not to sell the product in America.

And what do they do? We found that many FDA-denied e-cigarettes which subsequently received warning letters for continuing to sell in violation of the law still remain available. I just don't understand it. The Food and Drug Administration is cowardly, refusing to use its full arsenal of enforcement tools—fines, injunctions—for even the most flagrant cases. We also found that the FDA has only issued "closeout letters" to 10 percent of the tobacco products that it had warned were violating the law.

The Administration, the Food and Drug Administration, has the authority to decide whether a vaping device or cigarette can be sold. If they decide it cannot be, they tell them: You have got to stop at this point.

How many actually followed the warning and refused to violate the law: 1 out of 10, meaning the Agency has one of the worst records in history of

following through and ensuring compliance with enforcement.

I have referred all this information to the Department of Justice. Maybe they will take action.

Let me be clear. None of the most popular e-cigarettes used by kids have been granted the authority to be sold in the United States by the Food and Drug Administration, yet they remain on the market in violation of the law, putting our children and teenagers in harm's way.

This isn't the only instance where the FDA's delays are dangerous. Last month, the FDA blew through a deadline to finalize rules to prohibit menthol-flavored cigarettes and flavored cigars. This regulation is also long overdue and has the potential to save thousands of lives. The FDA must end its delays.

This week, we are going to embark on a task that is really rare. The full U.S. Senate, this week, is going to consider three government spending bills. You say to yourself: Well, I am sure that has happened before. Yes, about 5 years ago; and since then, what we have done is wait until the very last minute when all hell is about to break loose and create omnibus spending bills. But this year we are actually going to bring an appropriation bill to the floor in the Senate. It is a cause for celebration.

This package includes appropriation bills for agriculture, which funds the Food and Drug Administration. In light of the FDA's embarrassing delay in reviewing these products and keeping them away from kids, I am preparing amendments to the bill to improve regulatory and enforcement efforts. I hope my colleagues will join me in this effort to protect children from Big Tobacco. It cannot be business as usual for the Food and Drug Administration and its commissioner. We have to do something.

I am glad to say that the bills we are considering this week include bills that have had strong, overwhelming bipartisan support. In addition to agriculture, it will be the military construction and veterans affairs bill and the transportation, housing, and urban development spending bill. Each bill makes significant investments in America.

These bills would provide veterans with the mental health services they deserve; strengthen and improve our Nation's infrastructure; and ensure women, infants, and children can get the nutrition that they need.

My colleagues on the Senate Appropriations Committee, led by Chair PATTY MURRAY, my fellow Senator from the State of Washington, and Ranking Member SUSAN COLLINS, my friend and Senator from Maine, worked across the aisle to pass all 12 bills out of committee.

I know that the Presiding Officer is new to the Senate, but I want to tell you, this is also new to the Senate. It has been so seldom that we have ever

had two working together so well on a bipartisan basis, and I commend them both.

The leaders of each subcommittee drafted bills to the levels agreed upon in the debt ceiling deal made between the Republican-controlled House of Representatives and President Biden. Remember when we were facing that debt ceiling debate and afraid that our government—maybe our economy—would shut down and Joe Biden stepped in and negotiated with the Speaker of the House, Republican KEVIN MCCARTHY, and they came up with a spending plan on a bipartisan basis so that they could pass the bill for the debt ceiling? That was just a few months ago.

Now, a handful of Republicans in the House say: Throw out the deal; let's start over—with the risk of shutting down the government as a very real possibility for them. It would be the height of irresponsibility and a painful decision that would hurt veterans, people receiving Social Security, and innocent people across America. I hope that KEVIN MCCARTHY will stick by his agreement with President Biden, and I hope that he will tell the extremists in his caucus this is no way to run a country.

The Senate is making good on its promise on this side of the Rotunda to the American people by working to fund the government through regular order through our appropriation bills.

I wish our Republicans in the House could say the same. They have drafted bills to levels wildly less than those that were agreed on. Here is where they think we should make cuts: education, medical research, public safety, public health programs, and more. And so far, they have been unable to pass all of these partisan drafts out of committee.

Here in the Senate, we are following regular order and working to avoid a shutdown and fund the government without interruption because we have seen the ramifications of putting politics above our duty to the American people. Shutdowns severely reduce our gross domestic product, force families to go without paychecks, and signal to our adversaries that we hesitate to make the critical investments necessary to remain competitive and keep our country secure.

Last week, I was pleased to hear Senate minority leader Senator MCCONNELL, who just left the floor, say we need to "keep the lights on" by funding the government through regular order. I couldn't agree with him more. I hope our House Republican colleagues will heed this message and meet with us to meet this moment in history.

Today is a day of history. Let's make our own in the future in a much more positive way, and I am confident we can.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MILITARY PROMOTIONS

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, today, as our Nation marks the 22nd anniversary of the September 11 attacks, we mourn the loss of some 3,000 Americans who were murdered by terrorists. It was one of the darkest days in our history.

Just last week, we marked another sad anniversary. It was the second anniversary of President Biden's surrender in Afghanistan. On 9/11/2021, the Taliban controlled more territory in Afghanistan than they did on 9/11/2001. That is an absolute disgrace. The responsibility goes straight to our Commander in Chief.

At the time, President Biden called it "an extraordinary success." Nobody else thought so. The American people overwhelmingly reject this idea. Our allies certainly reject this idea. It was not a success. It was the worst embarrassment of our Nation in decades.

Two years since the fall of Afghanistan, there has been absolutely no accountability within the Biden administration. No one has been fired. Nobody paid the price. Thousands and thousands of our allies in Afghanistan have lost their lives.

We surrendered billions of dollars in military equipment to the Taliban. As a result, the Taliban is now the best armed terrorist group in the history of the world. And, again, nobody has been fired. In fact, the only one in our military who got fired was a colonel who sounded the alarm as a whistleblower—what a disgrace.

It even gets worse. Just weeks after the fall of Afghanistan, President Biden issued his vaccine mandate. The Supreme Court struck it down for private companies. It took an act of Congress to stop it for our military more than a year later.

So just weeks after our worst military defeat in decades, President Biden purged the ranks of some 8,000 patriots. There was never any scientific basis for this mandate—none. No one disputed the fact that these were healthy servicemembers who were ready and willing to defend the United States of America. They were pushed out for ideological reasons. This was a real threat to readiness, and it inflicted real hardship on military families.

Democrats have been talking a lot about readiness lately and military families, but there was silence when Joe Biden fired 8,000 American patriots and left their families without income. Thousands and thousands more servicemembers were vaccinated despite serious reservations of conscience. This was a slap in the face to our heroes in uniform.

The Senate had the chance to fix this in July, but our Democratic colleagues blocked it. Senator CRUZ offered an amendment to this year's defense bill

that would have reinstated all of these heroes—all 8,000 of them—but my Democratic colleagues refused and rejected it. Now, these same Democrats are lecturing us about readiness and about their support for military families. I hear about it every day.

Meanwhile, the Democrats' efforts to inject leftwing politics into our military have only continued. I have spoken at length about their illegal use of the Pentagon budget for abortion for the last 7 months.

Since my hold went into effect, it has allowed me more time to look into the background of some of the Pentagon's nominees. These are nominees that my colleagues on the left are saying should not receive a vote. Democrats are saying we should just approve them without ever voting. Senator REED said it was "disrespectful" not to approve them by unanimous consent. I do not agree with that. Many of these nominees are worthy of confirmation. I will agree and I will vote for them. But some are not. The Senate ought to do our job under the Constitution and advise and consent to these nominations. Some we should confirm. Some we should reject.

A large number of these nominees have publicly expressed support for so-called diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. I am concerned—very concerned—that DEI distracts our military from its mission. The American military is not a social justice program. It is not a jobs program. The military is not an equal opportunity employer. It never has been and shouldn't be. The American military is the world's greatest killing machine. The military has one mission and one mission only: to win wars. Other considerations, no matter how reasonable or admirable they might be, have to be set aside. As General MacArthur famously said, "there is no substitute for victory."

Everything we have in this country depends on our military—everything. Our entire way of life is made possible by the fact that we have the best fighting force that has ever been assembled. Our enemies would love to take away our role as world leader. If we lose a strong military, then we will lose everything.

Therefore, it is my view that the Senate ought to vote on these nominations, especially those at the very top.

It is my view that, this month, the U.S. Senate ought to vote on the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The current Chairman, General Milley, received a floor vote in 2018. The nominee, General Brown, received a floor vote for his current position as Chief of Staff of the Air Force. There is nothing wrong with a floor vote on these nominations. Contrary to what Senator REED said, there is nothing disrespectful about a confirmation vote. If we do not vote on General Brown's nomination, then that is entirely the fault of the Democratic majority that runs this floor.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has a budget of more than \$1 billion—that is a "b"—\$1 billion and a staff of thousands. This job is too important not to receive consideration by the Senate or to simply be confirmed without a vote. Democrats can either stop complaining about having acting officials or they can confirm these nominees. You can't have it both ways.

If my colleagues on the left were actually worried about readiness and about military families, then we would be voting on these nominees today. If Democrats were really concerned about readiness for military families, then they would have reinstated the 8,000 heroes discharged under the vaccine mandate—8,000 people who lost their jobs and who had to go find something else to do to support their families. But my Democratic colleagues refuse to do that.

Despite what the Pentagon just said falsely last week, it would take just 2 hours to confirm one of these nominees—2 hours. The Democrats' excuses that votes take time is not good enough. The Senate has had more than 80 days off this year, not counting weekends. We just had a 5-week recess. We took Labor Day off. This is one of the least productive Senates in memory.

I had a 40-year career before I came here. I didn't need this job, but I wanted to help my country. I came here to the Senate to vote and to uphold the Constitution. That is what this group and floor is about. I came here to make laws, not to outsource my job to the executive branch.

I grew up in a military family. There is nothing in this world that I honor more than the U.S. military, except the Constitution, which they have sworn to defend and to follow.

We need to get politics out of the military. It has no place in the place that keeps this country and our allies safe.

The widespread perception that our military has gone woke under Joe Biden is driving away recruits. They are not signing up. Unfortunately, that perception is becoming more and more justified. Unlike my hold, recruiting is a real crisis, as we speak.

We need the best of the best in our military and, generally speaking, that is exactly who we have. We have the best of the best in our military. We do not need politically or ideologically motivated people in our military. We do not need political activists in the Pentagon. We need a military that is focused on its mission of fighting and winning wars, nothing else. That is their job. We depend on that.

I still believe that our military is the best fighting force this world has ever seen. I still believe that our military has been the greatest force for peace for the last 75 years. All the false attacks on me, including on the Senate floor, do nothing to change those facts. All the false attacks on me do nothing except to strengthen my resolve.

For my entire life, I have held the U.S. military as sacred—and the blood of the fallen heroes. If we allow our military to become political, then we will have done a disservice to every one of the people who have fought and died. If my Democratic colleagues and the Biden administration continue to inject politics into our military, then our children and our grandchildren will have to live in a much more dangerous world.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CARDIN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Iowa.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am committed to lowering healthcare costs, expanding access to high-quality care, and supporting research and innovation. The healthcare system in the United States needs more reform and accountability. However, we shouldn't ruin it by turning it into a government-run healthcare system, whether you want to call it government-run healthcare system, Medicare for All, or single payer, or even socialized medicine.

A government-run healthcare system is a one-size-fits-all approach. It results in longer wait times, delayed care, and do-it-yourself healthcare because you cannot access a doctor.

In February, the Wall Street Journal highlighted the failure of the United Kingdom's National Health Service, NHS for short.

They wrote:

Now, the state-funded service is falling apart. People who suffer heart attacks or strokes wait more than 1½ hours on average for an ambulance. Hospitals are so full that they are turning patients away. A record 7.1 million people in England—more than one in 10—are stuck on waiting lists for non-emergency hospital treatment like hip replacements.

But I want to quote from the article of the Wall Street Journal, another one:

Delays in treating people are causing the premature deaths of 300 to 500 people a week. One in five British people were waiting for a medical appointment or treatment by NHS in December.

If you didn't find that article about the United Kingdom alarming, in May, British Columbia announced that they are sending cancer patients to Bellingham, WA, in the United States, for treatment.

A Canadian news outlet wrote this:

Health Minister Adrian Dix announced . . . that eligible breast and prostate cancer patients will be sent to one of two clinics in Bellingham for radiation treatment. . . . The unprecedented move to send thousands of [British Columbia] patients to the [United

States] over the next two years is an attempt to address the backlog in [British Columbia] which has one of the longest waits for radiation treatment in Canada.

Canada is taking this action because its cancer patients face unacceptable waiting times. Currently, only 82.9 percent of the British cancer patients who require radiation start treatment within 28 days. That means that 17 percent of cancer patients are waiting at least a month or longer to start cancer treatment.

Canada's single-payer healthcare problems aren't found in just one province. In January, the Wall Street Journal reported that Ontario is turning to private healthcare options to fix the growing problem with its single-payer-funded healthcare system. Canada's most populous province is allowing more patients to go to private treatment centers for cataracts and joint replacement surgeries and for services such as MRIs and CT scans.

The Wall Street Journal writes:

[T]he median wait time in Canada last year between referral and treatment was between 27.4 weeks, the longest on record, compared with 9.3 weeks in 1993. Ontario reported the shortest wait times of 20.3 weeks, while the eastern province of Prince Edward Island reported the longest at 64.7 weeks.

And, finally, back to Great Britain, a YouGov poll recently found that Britons are "pulling their teeth out with pliers" because they can't access the National Healthcare Service dentists. The poll found 10 percent of the respondents had attempted do-it-yourself dentistry.

I am committed to improving the healthcare system. I am working to lower the cost of prescription drugs, maintain access to rural healthcare, ensure our Nation's seniors can have high-quality, affordable hearing aids, address high maternal mortality rates, and, lastly, improve the healthcare delivery systems for kids with complex medical needs. And that is just to name a few.

However, a government-run healthcare system is not the answer. British and Canadian healthcare systems are plagued by longer and longer wait times and delayed care. These government-run healthcare systems are paying for patients to get care in the United States, not resorting to DIY healthcare. This body needs to be reminded how government-run healthcare systems are broken and do not work.

In closing, I ask unanimous consent that the articles I referred to in my remarks be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Senator Grassley Floor Remarks—More Examples of Socialized Health Systems Failing Patients

[From the Wall Street Journal, Feb. 6, 2023]

THE U.K.'S GOVERNMENT-RUN HEALTHCARE SERVICE IS IN CRISIS

(By David Luhnow and Max Colchester)

For more than a decade, the British government has run its National Health Service,

the world's largest government-run healthcare system, on a tight budget. The NHS prided itself on being one of the leanest healthcare systems in the developed world, spending less per head on average than its large European neighbors—and far less than the U.S.

Now the state-funded service is falling apart. People who suffer heart attacks or strokes wait more than 1½ hours on average for an ambulance. Hospitals are so full they are turning patients away. A record 7.1 million people in England—more than one in 10 people—are stuck on waiting lists for non-emergency hospital treatment like hip replacements. The NHS on Monday faced the biggest strike in its history, with thousands of paramedics and nurses walking out over pay.

The NHS's woes are an extreme example of issues playing out across the developed world. Healthcare systems, hit hard by Covid, are under pressure as people live longer and have a wider range of treatment options. Aging populations mean costs will keep growing. The U.K.'s experience is a warning of what happens when supply in healthcare provision can't keep up with demand.

"The healthcare system in the U.K. is facing a crisis like no other I have seen in my career," said Nigel Edwards, the retiring chief executive of the Nuffield Trust, a healthcare think tank, and former chief executive for the NHS. "The U.K. has mistaken cheapness for efficiency in its approach to health, and it's coming home to roost."

The NHS has lost thousands of hospital beds in the past decade in its drive for efficiency. Covid delayed treatments for patients, resulting in a vast waiting list. Hospitals in England were already at 98% capacity in December when the brutal flu season began to take hold. The mass of sick patients gummed up the system to devastating effect.

Delays in treating people are causing the premature deaths of 300 to 500 people a week, according to estimates from the Royal College of Emergency Medicine, a professional association in London. One in five British people were waiting for a medical appointment or treatment by the NHS in December, according to the U.K. Office for National Statistics (ONS).

The NHS said those excess death figures are likely too high but acknowledged delays are costing lives. In late January, the U.K. government announced funding to provide more ambulances, call handlers and 1,000 extra hospital beds to relieve the strain on the health system.

Fixing the service will take time, said NHS chief executive Amanda Pritchard. The NHS said that over the next year it aims to cut the average time a heart attack sufferer waits for an ambulance to 30 minutes.

"No one should be waiting longer than necessary for treatment," said Will Quince, a minister of state for health, adding that the government is spending up to \$17 billion over the next two years to address issues facing the NHS and social care services.

Just before 5 p.m. on Nov. 18, the family of Martin Clark called 999, the U.K. equivalent of 911, after the 68-year-old father of five began having chest pains. After waiting half an hour, the family said, they called again and pleaded for an ambulance, saying Mr. Clark's condition was getting worse. In another call 15 minutes later, they told the dispatcher they were going to drive him to hospital themselves, according to the family, even though the dispatcher encouraged them to wait for the paramedics.

Twenty minutes after the family had left for the hospital, the dispatcher left a voice mail to say the service still didn't have an

ambulance to send. Mr. Clark died shortly after arriving at the hospital.

About a week later, 5-year-old Yusuf Mahmud Nazir died from what began as a throat infection. His family said they had taken the boy, who was having trouble breathing, to the emergency room at their local hospital in Rotherham, which gave him some antibiotic pills after a six-hour wait and sent him home. The family said it pleaded with the hospital a few days later to let Yusuf be admitted and given further tests, but were told the hospital was full.

By the time the family got Yusuf by ambulance to another hospital, he had severe pneumonia. He died days later from organ failure and cardiac arrest.

"They killed Yusuf—it's as simple as that," said Yusuf's uncle, Zaheer Ahmed, who accompanied the boy's family at the hospital. "A 5-year-old boy has died of tonsillitis in a rich, industrialized country. It shows the entire system has serious issues."

The Rotherham hospital said in a public statement it had met with the family, apologized and launched an independent investigation into what happened. It declined to comment further.

Almost every day, media reports allege new horror stories: An 83-year-old woman in Leicester with a suspected stroke waited more than 18 hours in a makeshift tent outside a hospital emergency room. A 90-year-old woman with suspected sepsis waited three days. A man in Wales with diabetes lost his toe after it turned blue and then black after he sat waiting for treatment for three days.

The NHS is Europe's biggest employer, with around 1.2 million staffers, and has a budget this year of about \$188.6 billion, funded through taxes. It now has 2.9 doctors per 1,000 people, compared with a European average of 3.7. The U.S. has slightly less, at about 2.6 doctors per 1,000, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Aging populations will add to the demand. The elderly consume between three and five times the amount of healthcare compared with younger people, according to an estimate by the OECD. The number of people in the U.K. aged 85 and above is expected to double to more than 3 million by 2041. The U.K.'s current population is around 67 million.

Until 2010, governments of all political stripes kept funding for the NHS growing faster than both population growth and inflation—with annual increases from 2% to nearly 6% per capita, adjusted for inflation. But from 2010 to 2020, per capita, inflation-adjusted funding declined very slightly.

The Conservative government has sharply increased funds to the NHS since 2020, but most of the money has gone toward the pandemic, including for vaccines. Inflation is now eating away at about half the additional yearly funding. Overall, the inflation-adjusted increase in funding amounts to a 2.9 yearly increase, still below the historic average of 3.4%, according to the Institute for Fiscal Studies think tank in London.

Healthcare expenditures, both public and private, amounted to around 11.9% of the U.K.'s gross domestic product in 2021, according to the ONS. That compares with 18.3% of GDP in the U.S. that year, according to government data.

For the first time since the Industrial Revolution, Britain's ill health is acting as a brake on economic growth, said Andy Haldane, a former chief economist at the Bank of England. The growing number of sick people is exacerbating a productivity crisis within the British economy, he said. The number of long-term ill people in the U.K. has shot up by half a million in the past two

years, to a record 2.5 million, something economists say is due in part to the NHS's inability to quickly treat sick people.

The NHS was created after World War II to offer free healthcare to a war-hit population. Every hospital was effectively nationalized and put under government direction. It was a more sweeping overhaul than in any European country. Some countries, such as Denmark, adopted a similar system, while others have varying degrees of private care and publicly funded insurance.

The NHS has long been a point of pride for many Britons, who have generally received quality care and can simply walk out of hospital, without paying a bill. Yet seven in 10 now describe the NHS service as bad, compared with 21% who describe it as good, according to a YouGov poll.

People can pay to access private healthcare in the U.K., and according to the ONS, one in eight adults in Britain said they paid for private healthcare in the past year because NHS waiting lists were too long. Several private healthcare providers have reported a jump in demand.

Still, the overwhelming majority continue to support the NHS's basic model of a government-run system. Just 3% said they wanted the system totally privatized, according to the YouGov poll.

The government started constraining the NHS's budget in 2010, at the same time it launched an effort to make the system more efficient, such as adding more internal competition between different parts of the NHS for government funds.

These changes proved a distraction for management, former and current officials say. As part of the drive for efficiency, NHS managers were pressured to keep bed vacancies low. Recruiting and training was given less priority, and salaries for doctors and nurses steadily fell behind inflation.

When the pandemic hit in early 2020, the NHS's centralized system helped it weather the crisis. The service delayed non-urgent treatments, and successfully rolled out a mass vaccination program.

The ripple effects are being felt now. By December, a total of 401,537 people in England were waiting more than a year for hospital treatment. The total was 1,613 just before the pandemic.

Struggles in the U.K.'s elderly care system, which has major staff shortages and is funded separately from the NHS, has also meant that many patients who would normally be looked after at home or in a retirement home instead languished in hospital wards.

In December, an average of 13,439 beds a day in England out of the roughly 100,000 available were taken up by elderly patients medically fit for discharge—up almost a third from the previous year, according to the NHS.

The lack of space at hospitals this winter, when the flu began to take hold, had a cascading effect. Ambulances began to form lines outside of hospitals, waiting to discharge patients because of a lack of free beds. That delayed the time it took for ambulances to attend to other people in need.

By this winter, half of all patients in an emergency ward waited four hours or more to be seen by a doctor, and a further four hours on average to get a bed, according to NHS data.

A study of more than 5 million patients published in early 2022 by the U.K.'s top medical journal, the BMJ, found that for every 82 people forced to wait beyond four hours for emergency care, one additional person died who otherwise would not have. The longer the wait, the worse the outcomes.

"Every day, I wake up thinking, how much harm is going to occur to patients that we

are responsible for," said Simon Walsh, head of emergency-room services at a London hospital. "It's not if harm is going to occur, it's how much."

The stress of the pandemic and funding squeeze is exacerbating a staffing crisis in the U.K. As of September last year, there were 133,000 staff vacancies in the NHS, compared with 83,000 before the pandemic, according to government data.

The average fully qualified family doctor in England is now responsible for 2,300 patients on average, compared with 2,100 in 2018, according to government statistics. Average pay has fallen by more than 2% since 2008, adjusted for inflation, according to the British Medical Association, a union for doctors. The number of doctors who are retiring early has tripled in the past 13 years.

While the overall numbers of nurses have remained stable, turnover has grown. From mid-2021 to mid-2022, more than 34,000 nurses left their role in the NHS, an increase of 25% from the previous year, according to the King's Fund, a healthcare think tank.

Demands for increases in spending are coming up against economic pressures. The Bank of England projects the U.K.'s economy will shrink this year, potentially lowering tax revenues. And as changes in demographics and medical technology continue to weigh on the NHS, ever-higher funding risks crowding out state spending in other areas, such as education and infrastructure.

Money alone may not solve the problem, some in the industry warn. In Wales, the regional government has for most years since 2000 spent more money per capita than any region in the U.K. Yet nearly every indicator from waiting times to health outcomes are still worse. One explanation: Wales is both poorer and has the oldest population in the U.K.

Focus is turning to whether the system needs to be revamped. In Scotland, which runs its own NHS, officials have discussed ideas including further rationing of care or having wealthier residents pay for care in order to fund free care for the rest—an option that officials say was discarded.

One former U.K. health secretary recently said patients should pay to see a doctor. The idea was quickly dismissed by the government.

Just over a year ago, Akshay Patel, an IT professional in northern England, made five calls to 999 when his mother, Bina Patel, developed breathing problems. Initially the call handler told him an ambulance would be there soon, Mr. Patel said. His mother's health quickly worsened and she became too sick to be loaded into a car. He watched his distressed 56-year-old mother gradually go pale and die. The paramedics arrived after an hour and were unable to resuscitate her. The local hospital was a 2-minute drive away.

"We always believe that the NHS exists for us when we're in need," said Mr. Patel. "But personally if I had to call an ambulance, I wouldn't. I don't trust them. I can't."

[From the Wall Street Journal, Jan. 21, 2023]

CANADA PURSUES PRIVATE OPTIONS TO EASE HEALTHCARE BACKLOGS

(By Vipal Monga)

TORONTO.—Ontario is the latest Canadian province that is turning to private healthcare options in a bid to fix growing problems with the publicly funded healthcare system.

Canada's most-populous province this past week outlined a plan to allow more patients to go to private treatment centers for cataract and joint-replacement surgeries as well as for services such as MRIs or CT scans. The province will invest more than 18 million Ca-

nadian dollars, equivalent to \$13.4 million, in the private facilities to increase their capacity.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford said the moves would reduce the backlog of 206,000 surgeries in the province and free up public hospitals to concentrate on more-complicated procedures. Patients wouldn't pay out of pocket, and the treatments would be covered by the provincial insurance plan, said Mr. Ford.

British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Quebec have all in recent years increased the role of private clinics in their provinces.

Health authorities across Canada have been grappling with long wait times in emergency rooms, backlogs for surgeries and shortages of doctors and nurses.

According to the Fraser Institute, a public-policy think tank, the median wait time in Canada last year between referral and treatment was 27.4 weeks, the longest on record, compared with 9.3 weeks in 1993. Ontario reported the shortest wait time of 20.3 weeks, while the eastern province of Prince Edward Island reported the longest at 64.7 weeks.

Former government officials have been calling for a rethink of the way the Canadian system has been structured.

Bill Morneau, former finance minister under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, said in a memoir published this past week that Canada needed to change a system that costs the country an amount equal to roughly 13% of gross domestic product.

Peter Nicholson, who advised then-Prime Minister Paul Martin in the early 2000s, said in a policy paper earlier this month that Canada should look to countries such as Australia, Germany and Norway, which have used private healthcare to improve their systems.

Canada's healthcare system is run separately by each province.

In Ontario, healthcare unions have said Mr. Ford's plan would enrich the private providers at the expense of the public hospitals and create a system in which wealthy residents get better services and treatment. Mr. Ford's government has said that residents wouldn't have to pay for procedures covered by the provincial insurance plan, but the private clinics would be able to sell patients more-expensive products not covered by the insurance.

Sharleen Stewart, president of SEIU Healthcare, which represents 60,000 Canadian healthcare workers, said the plan risks starving public hospitals of resources and siphoning doctors and nurses into private clinics, which could worsen outcomes for more-complex surgeries and deepen an already-acute healthcare labor shortage. "It will be a two-tiered system," she said.

Job vacancies in healthcare and social services rose to a record high of about 150,100 in the third quarter of last year as demand for nurses surged, according to Statistics Canada. The Canadian healthcare system could be short 44,000 doctors by 2028, according to government projections.

Mr. Ford said his plan is meant to deal with the lingering impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, which caused delays for patients who needed treatment for nonpriority conditions or wanted to have tests done. Hospital wait times have surged since 2020. Patients in Ontario spent an average of 22.9 hours in an emergency department before being admitted to a hospital in October, the longest average wait time on record, according to provincial data.

There are roughly 900 private clinics in Ontario, most of which only do diagnostic testing; 10 private clinics are licensed to perform surgeries. More would open under the government's plan.

During his announcement, Mr. Ford dismissed the concerns about how treatments

are delivered. He said something must be done quickly to reduce the backlog of surgeries in the province. "A lot of people out there, they want to have the endless debates about who should provide care," Mr. Ford said. "All our government cares about is that you get the care you need quickly and safely."

Other supporters said that the plan could provide patients with more options, give them greater access to timely care and relieve stress on a system that has begun to buckle.

"We need to be more effective at deploying resources we currently have," said Allan O'Dette, chief executive of the Ontario Medical Association, a group that represents 43,000 doctors and medical students and that supports Ontario's plan. "Noncomplicated, low-acuity surgeries can easily be done outside a hospital setting."

[From the Vancouver Sun, May 16, 2023]

SENDING B.C. CANCER PATIENTS TO BELLINGHAM FOR TREATMENT 'A SAD STATE OF REALITY,' CRITICS SAY

(By Katie DeRosa)

Quote from the article: "While the decision by the province to send breast cancer and prostate cancer patients to the U.S. for faster radiation treatment is being welcomed by some, critics say it's an indictment of a flagging health care system that has not kept up with demand. Health Minister Adrian Dix announced Monday that eligible breast and prostate cancer patients will be sent to one of two clinics in Bellingham for radiation treatment, starting May 29. The unprecedented move to send thousands of B.C. patients to the U.S. over the next two years is an attempt to address the backlog in B.C. which has one of the longest waits for radiation treatment in Canada."

Quote from the article: "Dix acknowledged cancer patients face unacceptable waiting times which is why the province opted to strike a deal with the clinics in Washington state. Currently, 82.9 per cent of B.C. cancer patients who require radiation start treatment within 28 days, Dix said. That's well below the national average of 97 per cent, according to figures compiled by the Canadian Institute for Health Information. "We want to be at 95 to 100 per cent within 28 days," he said. The percentage of British Columbians receiving timely radiation has steadily declined, down from 93 per cent in 2019. Dix in February announced the government will spend \$440 million over the next 10 years to reduce the waiting times for cancer treatment. Some of that money will boost wages for radiation technologists and oncologists as part of the recruitment drive, Dix said. The province is also trying to acquire more linear accelerators, a specialized piece of equipment which delivers external beam radiation therapy to target and shrink cancer cells. Radiation therapy is different from chemotherapy, which uses special drugs to kill the cancer cells. More than 30,000 people in B.C. were diagnosed with cancer in 2021 and B.C. Cancer projects that number could rise to 45,000 by 2034. About half of cancer patients need radiation treatment."

The article continues at: https://vancouvernews.com/news/local-news/critics-upset-that-b-c-has-to-send-cancer-patients-to-bellingham-for-treatment?mc_cid=4ba8999cb&mc_eid=3337eaf99e.

[From Sky News, July 14, 2023]

BRITONS ARE 'PULLING THEIR OWN TEETH OUT WITH PLIERS' BECAUSE THEY CAN'T ACCESS NHS DENTISTS

Quote from the article: A YouGov poll which spoke to more than 2,000 people found

more than 10% of people had attempted "DIY dentistry"—with more than half of those having carried it out in the last year. People across the UK have had to pull their own teeth out because they can't access or afford an NHS dentist, a report suggests. Extractions have been performed with pliers in some cases, while others have been forced to make a five-hour round trip to see a professional. The Health and Social Care Committee says "urgent and fundamental reform" is needed—and there is evidence of pain and distress that is "totally unacceptable in the 21st century". Its report includes figures from a YouGov poll performed in March 2023 that found 10% of respondents had attempted "DIY dentistry"—and of those, 20% did so because they couldn't find an NHS dentist."

The article continues at: <https://news.sky.com/story/britons-are-pulling-their-own-teeth-out-with-pliers-because-they-cant-access-nhs-dentists-12920715#:g807:;text=People%20across%20the%20UK%20have.trip%20to%20see%20a%20professional>.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

MILITARY PROMOTIONS

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, as you know, we are at an unprecedented moment in the history of the Senate. There are hundreds of brave, courageous leaders in our military who are being denied—promotions being denied—the rank that they deserve because of the actions of Senator TUBERVILLE and Senate Republicans.

And Senator TUBERVILLE was out on the floor just moments ago defending his actions. I think most Americans believe that his hold on all of these promotions is indefensible. But what probably won't get covered is an additional idea that he presented to the Senate in his remarks.

Senator TUBERVILLE said today that he thinks that our military leadership should be fired for failing to defeat the Taliban. That is pretty extraordinary. For those of us who have served in the Senate and in the House during the time that we have been in Afghanistan, we had the opportunity to see that mission on the ground. It was a difficult, hard mission. Some might say it was an impossible mission, badly underresourced, right from the beginning.

But the idea that our soldiers or our military leadership—captains, lieutenant colonels, generals—should be fired because they couldn't perform a mission that was likely impossible, that, frankly, will have an even bigger chilling effect than Senator TUBERVILLE's hold on military promotions.

There is no doubt that there should be consequences for gross negligence on the job in any profession, including the military, but for any of us who saw the work being done in Afghanistan, our military from the top down, they were doing the best they could under difficult circumstances.

Refusing military promotions apparently isn't cruel enough. Now, Republicans want military leaders fired when

they can't complete impossible, underresourced missions.

This is a growing attack, a growing set of attacks on our military, and all in the service of a bunch of old men telling young women what healthcare they can get and what healthcare they can't get.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Mr. President, in May of 2019, Leilah Hernandez had her quinceanera. She was in a bedazzled green gown. She looked absolutely magnificent. She was having a great sophomore year in high school. She was playing basketball, No. 23. She had a lot of friends.

One friend said that Leilah is just one of these people "full of joy and happiness. She knew how to make somebody's bad day turn into a good day."

In September of that year, 2019, Leilah went to a car dealership in the Midland-Odessa area of Texas. Her 18-year-old brother Nathan was buying a truck. This was a big deal for this family. I don't know if it was the whole family, but her mom was there, Nathan was there, she was there, and her 9-year-old brother was there.

And I believe that they were emerging from the dealership. They heard gunshots. Her mother took the younger brother—the 9-year-old—and they ducked underneath a car. Nathan, 18, all he could do was just wrap his hands around Leilah. But the shooting was relentless. Nathan was hit in the arm, but Leilah was hit closer to the neck. Leilah's last words in the embrace of her brother were "Help me, help me."

She was one of seven who died in the Midland-Odessa mass shooting. Thirty-two people were shot. A lot of them, like Nathan, survived, many with injuries that will impact them for the rest of their life. But Leilah Hernandez, just a few months from her quinceanera, died that day.

The young man who shot her was ineligible to own a weapon. He had serious mental illness—serious enough that he was on the list of individuals who was prohibited from buying a weapon. He had tried to buy a weapon, but he had been denied when he tried to do it at a licensed gun dealer. He is one of millions of Americans who have been stopped from buying a gun because they are a felon or they are seriously mentally ill. But this young man was still able, rather easily, to get a weapon.

Why is that? Well, it is because many of our weapons in this country are sold without background checks.

What happened in this case? How did this young man with a serious history of mental illness get his hands on a powerful weapon that allowed him to kill Leilah and six others?

Well, the story runs through a man named Marcus Braziel. Marcus Braziel was a gun dealer. No doubt, he was a gun dealer. He might not have had a brick-and-mortar store, but Mr. Braziel was regularly selling guns. In a 3-year period of time, he bought 90-some-odd guns and resold 70 of them.

In the court papers that were part of his arrest and conviction, he admitted that he routinely bought firearm firing mechanisms, termed “lower receivers,” and used milling equipment to build them into full-fledged guns, and then sold the completed weapons, each one for about a profit of \$100 to \$200.

He listed his firearms on armslist.com, and then he conducted the sales in the parking lot of a local sporting goods store or sometimes out of his garage.

He was a gun dealer, but he never performed background checks because he didn't get licensed. And when he advertised a weapon online, Seth Ator, prohibited from buying a gun from a brick-and-mortar store, answered the ad, bought the weapon, and used it to kill Leilah Hernandez and shoot 32 other people.

This, unfortunately, is not the exception. This is, in America, the rule today. Twenty-two percent of gun owners report that they obtained their weapons without a background check, and an analysis of gun sale ads from 2018 to 2020 revealed that the majority of ads were being placed by people like Mr. Braziel, unlicensed sellers not required to do background checks.

So what that means is that there are tens of thousands of guns, perhaps more, in this country, every single year, being not just sold without background checks but being sold to individuals who are prohibited from buying those weapons, because that is exactly where those people go. People like Seth Ator, the shooter in Midland-Odessa, they know that this black market exists. They know there are people on armslist.com who will willingly sell them weapons without a background check. So, when they get stopped from buying a gun at a gun store, they go and buy one online.

That is the bad news.

The good news is that Republicans and Democrats in the Senate and House recognized this problem, and as part of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, last year, we updated the definition of a gun dealer to make it crystal clear that people like Mr. Braziel need to get a license and they need to conduct background checks. What we did was to basically clarify that it doesn't need to be your full-time job. But so long as you are selling guns predominantly for a profit, you have to get licensed. You have to perform background checks.

The Biden administration, 2 weeks ago, released a draft rule implementing that change that we voted for on a bipartisan basis in the Senate. An analysis of the statutory change that we voted for and the rule that the Biden administration has proposed suggests that up to 328,000 additional dealers could be required to perform background checks. Now, even if those dealers are only conducting a handful of sales a year—and most of these are probably conducting dozens of sales a year, either at gun shows or online on

sites like armslist.com—we are talking about millions of guns—millions of guns that right now are being sold outside the background check system and that will now be sold inside the background check system.

That is a big deal, because that shooter in Midland is not the exception. Like I said, unfortunately, he is the rule. So by having so many more guns go through the background check system and really closing off the ways that felons, criminals, and people with serious mental illness can buy guns, you are saving lives.

Maybe Leilah Hernandez would be alive today. She probably would be if this rule had been in place and Mr. Braziel had looked at that definition and come to the conclusion that he needed to get licensed. Admittedly, today, the definition is a little fuzzy, and without a rule making it clear what constitutes being a dealer and what does not, it is even harder for individuals out there to decide whether they need to be licensed or not.

Now Mr. Braziel's case is a pretty clear one. He obviously should have known that he was a gun dealer. That is why he got prosecuted and put in jail for the actions that led up to the murder of Leilah Hernandez. But many other Americans may not know that they need to be licensed. Now, with this rule that the Biden administration has put forward, they will know, and they will get licensed.

And so I hope that my colleagues will learn about this rule, that my Republican colleagues will understand how far it goes and how far it does not go. This does not mean that an individual who is just selling a gun to a family member is going to have to get licensed. That individual is not a dealer. It doesn't mean that someone who is just liquidating their collection of firearms has to be licensed. That person is not a gun dealer.

The rule makes it very clear who is a dealer based upon their desire to earn a profit, based upon whether they have the trappings of a business, based upon the places where they are selling weapons, where they are more likely to be strangers, on whom they would need to have a background check to understand whether they are selling to a responsible individual. Those people have to be licensed. But there are lots of people who are selling one or two or three guns a year who likely don't have to be licensed under this rule.

So I hope my colleagues will do their own research, not just listen to the spin of advocacy groups, because I think if you do your own research, you will find out that this is exactly what Americans want us to be doing. They want us to be making sure that when there are commercial transactions of weapons, there is a background check.

By the way, the background check takes 5 minutes. When it doesn't take 5 minutes, that generally is for a reason—that the individual likely has a more complicated mental health or

criminal history that has to be unwound.

So I am really excited for the Biden administration's very appropriate steps to implement this provision of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, and I would just finally note that it is the latest in a series of announcements making clear that the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act has had a substantial and important impact. Since the passage of the BSCA, almost 1,000 transactions of weapons to young buyers—those under 21—have been denied. We put in place enhanced background checks for 18-, 19-, and 20-year-olds when they are buying rifles and assault weapons. And that additional background check has already identified 1,000 people all across the country, young people who would have gotten the weapon had it not been for the advanced background check, but we found out they had a disqualifying record—a serious mental illness or undiscovered criminal conviction—and they didn't get the weapon.

That is really good news.

Second, more than 100 defendants all across the country have been charged with new BSCA violations of gun trafficking. Gun trafficking wasn't a Federal crime until we passed that law, and now it is. Over 100 cases have been brought against defendants for violations of trafficking firearms. Prosecutions against unlicensed dealers, even before the Biden administration's announcement of the rule, were up by 52 percent.

Lastly, the administration has made 49 awards for red flag incentive grants—\$231 million. Those funds have helped States implement existing red flag laws. But we stood here on the Senate floor and said: We bet you that States are going to pass new red flag laws or stronger red flag laws in part because of the money they are getting from the Federal Government.

That is exactly what happened. Just in the last year, Michigan, Colorado, and Minnesota—to name three States—have passed new red flag laws or strengthened existing red flag laws that will now have additional resources to get the job done.

The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act doesn't do everything we need to do, not even close. We need to have universal background checks. We need to get assault weapons off the street. But we did show that Republicans and Democrats can step up and make meaningful changes in the law to protect people from gun violence.

The Biden administration's rule implementing the change of the definition of a gun dealer is going to mean that millions of gun sales that 2 years ago were made without a background check are now done with a background check. That means a lot fewer dangerous people get guns in this country. That is good news for everybody.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The Senator from Montana.

NOMINATION OF TANYA J. BRADSHER

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, with a historic number of veterans receiving care and benefits under the PACT Act, the Department of Veterans Affairs needs a qualified second-in-command.

Now more than ever, the VA needs a steady hand to uphold its mission to deliver veterans the healthcare and benefits that they have earned.

I rise today because Tanya Bradsher is that leader. She has an impressive record of serving our country in and out of uniform, especially in her current role—which is VA Chief of Staff—where she has been critical in overseeing the Department's implementation of the PACT Act.

Between her time serving in the U.S. Army—including a deployment to Iraq—and working in Congress and working at the White House and the Defense Health Agency and at the Department of Homeland Security, it is clear that she is qualified for the job and ready to hit the ground running to serve our Nation's veterans.

It is no secret that the VA has a lot of work on its plate. From rolling out the Electronic Health Record Modernization program to working with the Defense Department to improve transition process for servicemembers who are leaving the military, these are challenges VA's No. 2 official is directly tasked with, all while running the day-to-day operations of the VA.

That is why this body needs to come together in a bipartisan way to make Tanya Bradsher the permanent leader—the leader who will tackle these challenges and ensure that the VA is upholding its mission to the veterans and their families.

The fact is, having a permanent leader in this role ensures that we can hold the VA accountable to do their job. And our veterans deserve no less.

In the past, this body has been able to rise above politics to install qualified individuals at the VA responsible for getting vets the healthcare and the benefits they need and that they have earned. Today, we must do that again to confirm Tanya Bradsher as VA's next Deputy Secretary and making her the first woman ever confirmed for this position.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that this vote occur immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, 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 legislative 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. 261, Tanya

J. Bradsher, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Charles E. Schumer, Jon Tester, Raphael G. Warnock, Angus S. King, Jr., Sherrod Brown, Tim Kaine, Tina Smith, Mark Kelly, Debbie Stabenow, Richard J. Durbin, Jeanne Shaheen, Catherine Cortez Masto, Chris Van Hollen, Alex Padilla, Gary C. Peters, Richard Blumenthal, Margaret Wood Hassan.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Tanya J. Bradsher, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk called the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF), and the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 49, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 223 Ex.]

YEAS—49

Baldwin	Heinrich	Sanders
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Schatz
Blumenthal	Hirono	Schumer
Booker	Kaine	Shaheen
Brown	Kelly	Sinema
Cantwell	King	Smith
Cardin	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Carper	Lujan	Tester
Casey	Manchin	Van Hollen
Collins	Markey	Warner
Coons	Merkley	Warnock
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Warren
Durbin	Murray	Welch
Feinstein	Peters	Whitehouse
Fetterman	Reed	Wyden
Gillibrand	Rosen	
Hassan	Rounds	

NAYS—44

Barrasso	Grassley	Murkowski
Blackburn	Hagerty	Paul
Boozman	Hawley	Ricketts
Britt	Hoeben	Romney
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Capito	Johnson	Schmitt
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Tillis
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	McConnell	Vance
Ernst	Menendez	Wicker
Fischer	Moran	Young
Graham	Mullin	

NOT VOTING—7

Braun	Ossoff	Scott (SC)
Cramer	Padilla	
Duckworth	Risch	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). On this vote, the yeas are 49, the nays are 44.

The motion is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

AZERBAIJAN AND ARMENIA

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise to speak about a horrific set of events that are taking place in a part of the world that we could do something about.

In this photo, this dead man's body is completely emaciated. The skin, tight over his bones, barely covers his skeleton. Bruises and scars stretch across his chest.

This is not a victim at the side of the road during the Ottoman Turks' Armenian genocide. It is not a holocaust survivor lying on the ground as allies liberated Buchenwald. It is not a human carcass left in the wake of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia or the Hutu in Rwanda or Serbian forces in Bosnia.

It is from the Human Rights Defender's Office in Nagorno-Karabakh, and it is from August—only weeks ago. Because, right now, as the Presiding Officer sits here on the dais and I stand here in the Chamber, the Aliyev government in Azerbaijan is carrying out a campaign of heinous atrocities that bear the hallmarks of genocide against the Armenians in Artsakh. They have purposely and viciously trapped an estimated 100,000 to 120,000 Christian Armenians in the Karabakh Mountains.

There is only one road out connecting Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia for people, food, medicine, and basic supplies. And the Azerbaijanis have blocked it since December of last year.

Now, despite some reports yesterday, no aid has moved. They have tried to deny their role, but make no mistake—the Azerbaijani government is now wholeheartedly embracing this brutal blockade, denying the Armenian community food and fuel and medicine. Aliyev and his regime are trying to starve these people into death or political submission.

“There are no cemeteries and there are no machete attacks,” wrote the former prosecutor at the International Criminal Court, Luis Moreno Ocampo, in a recent report. But he said:

Starvation is the invisible genocide weapon. Without immediate dramatic change, this group of Armenians will be destroyed in a few weeks.

This group of Armenians—we're talking about over 100,000—will be destroyed in a few weeks. Not my observations; the observations of the former prosecutor at the International Criminal Court.

In Artsakh, the shelves at stores are empty. Children wait in lines for the chance of finding bread to feed their grandparents who are too weak to leave the house. There is no gas for ambulances. According to the head doctor at one maternity hospital, miscarriages have nearly tripled. And the BBC reports that one in three deaths in Nagorno-Karabakh is from malnutrition.

For months, Azerbaijan was just doing the bare minimum, allowing the International Committee of the Red Cross limited access. But in July, Aliyev blocked even the Red Cross. And

in complete defiance of the Geneva Conventions, Azerbaijan detained medical patients the Red Cross was transporting through the corridor. This is not only outrageous at face value, but an insult to the international community and a threat to brave Red Cross workers around the world.

In addition to arresting sick and elderly residents a few weeks ago, Azerbaijan also detained university students who were trying to go to Armenia to start the school year. Azerbaijan's foreign ministry says: Oh, there is nothing to worry about. These concerns are just a result of "propaganda and political manipulations spread by Armenia."

Really? They are blaming Armenia for this? That is a flat-out lie.

It was Azerbaijan, with Turkish backing, that launched the war in 2020—a war that uprooted close to 100,000 Armenians from their homes in Nagorno-Karabakh; a war that killed 6,500 people. Now Aliyev blocks the Lachin corridor and says: I am "not organizing ethnic cleansing." The same Azerbaijani President who has also threatened to "chase away" Armenian separatists "like dogs," whose government issued a commemorative postage stamp showing a worker in hazmat gear spraying disinfectant on the region.

We have seen and heard this kind of propaganda throughout history. It is the work of a regime intent on destroying and erasing this ancient Armenian community's history in Nagorno-Karabakh.

And right now, the United States is failing. The United States is not meeting the humanitarian needs or publicly putting enough pressure on Aliyev to stop the campaign of ethnic cleansing.

I sincerely hope the State Department is not considering renewing the 907 waiver which allows for security assistance to go to Azerbaijan. I don't know how the United States can justify spending any kind of support—security or otherwise—to the regime in Baku.

We have seen a video of Azerbaijani forces killing unarmed Armenian soldiers in cold blood. We have reports of Azerbaijani soldiers sexually assaulting and mutilating an Armenian female soldier. So to send them assistance makes a mockery of the FREEDOM Support Act. Section 907 of this act is meant to ban security assistance to Azerbaijan until it is "taking demonstrable steps to cease all blockades and other offensive uses of force against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh."

That is the end of the quote from section 907. But still, the Department of State has waived section 907 over and over and over again.

Suffice it to say, I am strongly opposed to having any aid going to a fighting force known for war crimes and the violation of human rights. I understand the dynamics of the broader region are complicated, but our fun-

damental principles underlying security assistance should not be.

When the United States untethers our security assistance from human rights and American values to focus on short-term tactical military assistance, it not only damages long-term American national security interests, it flies in the face of our duty to honor the victims and survivors of the Armenian genocide and our duty to ensure that history does not repeat itself.

We cannot look away from a systematic attempt to eradicate and erase an entire people from the face of the Earth.

In 2021, as my colleagues witnessed here on the Senate floor, I was overcome with emotion to see President Biden join us in recognizing—for the first time of any American President—the Armenian genocide.

More than a century ago, Ottoman Turks perpetrated a systematic campaign to exterminate the Armenian population through killings, through forced deportation, and, yes, through starvation.

What the Turks did is an irrefutable historical fact. The recognition of this fact was a huge step forward, and I am proud to have played a role in that effort. I am proud that I spoke up as many American leaders stayed silent; proud that I pressured State Department nominees and officials to acknowledge this historical reality; proud that I introduced or cosponsored resolutions recognizing the Armenian genocide since before I came to the Senate in 2006.

Make no mistake, fighting the denial of Armenian genocide is not only about the past, it is also about the present.

That is why I am calling on Aliyev to immediately release the Armenian prisoners of war. It is why I have been working on legislation to address the current humanitarian crisis in Artsakh. And it is why when USAID Administrator Power came before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee earlier this year, I pushed her to get humanitarian assistance to the people of Nagorno-Karabakh.

I believe the United States can—and must—play an active role in addressing this conflict because the so-called Russian peacekeepers, who have supposedly been enforcing a ceasefire following Azerbaijan's 2020 invasion, have been—to no one's surprise—wholly ineffective. As Azerbaijani forces began an incursion in September of 2022, these Russian forces stood idly by. Moscow will, no doubt, exploit any instability to its advantage, but they have also proved their lack of worth, which is all the more reason that the United States must continue to play a role.

Now, we have been facilitating talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan, but we need to change our approach. We cannot continue to simply facilitate talks. We have a responsibility to mediate, to pursue a meaningful enforceable agreement with the guaranteed

rights, security, and dignity of Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh as a central tenet. We must also encourage—and if necessary—broker direct discussions between political leaders in Stepanakert and Baku.

Of course, to be an honest broker means we need to tell the truth about Azerbaijan's atrocities. We need to call out those individuals perpetrating this campaign of ethnic cleansing. We need to target them—including President Aliyev—with sanctions. We need to be cutting off their access to the wealth and oil money they have stashed away in financial institutions around the world, to their yachts and mansions across Europe.

The evidence is there, and we must preserve it so Aliyev can be held accountable for these atrocities.

I have called on the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations to introduce a resolution at the UN Security Council enforcing an end to Aliyev's blockade.

I am pleased to see that Secretary Blinken is personally engaging in the crisis now, but the message he delivers must be crystal clear. At the same time, the EU needs to step in too.

Now, I was pleased to see the High Representative Borell's statement in July that the EU is "deeply concerned about the serious humanitarian situation" in Nagorno-Karabakh. But I hope that actions accompany those words. Instead of just taking Azerbaijani gas and praising the country as a "crucial energy partner," they must also bring pressure to end this blockade.

How many leaders have solemnly promised to learn history's lessons and prevent future genocides?

How many people have come to the floor of the Senate and said: Never, never again?

How many people will have to die of starvation before we act?

With Aliyev potentially moving troops along the border, we cannot say we didn't see it coming.

This time must be different. In the past, plans to carry out genocide were clouded by distance or geography. But this time we know. We know Aliyev is doing it right now. We must not only hold him accountable for his actions, we must stop him from succeeding in erasing this Armenian community.

We must stop him from starving these Armenians to death or imposing political control by opening only the Aghdam corridor. This is not a substitution for opening the Lachin corridor. It is not upholding the commitments of the 2020 agreement. Using basic humanitarian food and medical supplies as a political weapon is not acceptable. We have the power to do it—if we act now.

Given the chance, who here among us would not go back and stop the Turks from rounding up the first Armenian victims of the genocide who were hung in the streets of Istanbul or the Serb forces who gave Bosnian Muslims a 24-hour ultimatum to surrender or the Rwandan radio broadcasts inciting violence?

Unlike those times in the past, we are living on the brink right now.

So to the Biden administration, I would say, now is the time to step up and protect this vulnerable population; to the international community, now is the time to work together to bring pressure to stop this tragedy from unfolding in front of our very eyes.

To the Armenian people trapped in this blockade with no food as winter approaches, know that you have friends and allies here in the U.S. Senate and around the world who will not rest until you are safe and secure. Hang on. Hang on.

And to the men organizing and carrying out this brutal campaign, we will hold you accountable for your crimes even if it takes a lifetime. You will pay a price. You will face justice, and I certainly will not rest until you do so.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Washington, DC.

Hon. ROBERT MENENDEZ,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(5)(C) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), as amended, we are forwarding Transmittal No. 23-0K. This notification relates to enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensi-

tivity of technology or capability described in the Section 36(b)(1) AECA certification 16-59 dated September 8, 2017.

Sincerely,

JAMES A. HURSCH,
Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 23-0K

Report of Enhancement or Upgrade of Sensitivity of Technology or Capability (Sec. 36(b)(5)(C), AECA)

(i) Purchaser: Government of Bahrain.
(ii) Sec. 36(b)(1), AECA Transmittal No.: 16-59; Date: September 8, 2017; Implementing Agency: Air Force.

Funding Source: National Funds.

(iii) Description: On September 8, 2017, Congress was notified by congressional certification transmittal number 16-59 of the possible sale under Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act of the possible upgrade of Bahrain's existing twenty (23) F-16 Block 40 aircraft to the F-16V configuration. The requested sale was comprised of twenty-three (23) F110 GE-129 engines (includes 3 spares); twenty-three (23) APG-83 Active Electronically Scanned Array Radars (includes 3 spares); twenty-three (23) Modular Mission Computers (includes 3 spares); twenty-three (23) Embedded Global Navigation Systems/LN260 EGI (includes 3 spares); forty (40) LAU-129 launchers; twenty-three (23) Improved Programmable Display Generators (IPDGs) (includes 3 spares); twenty-five (25) AN/AAQ-33 SNIPER Pods; two (2) AIM-9X Sidewinder Missiles; two (2) AGM-88 High-Speed Anti-Radiation Missiles (HARM); two (2) WGU-43 Guidance Control Unit (GBU) Guidance Control Unit (GCU) (for GBU-24 Paveway III); two (2) BSU-84 Air Foil Group (AFG) (for GBU-24 Paveway III); five (5) KMU-572 Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) Tailkits (for GBU-38 JDAM and GBU-54 Laser JDAM); two (2) GBU-39 Small Diameter Bombs (SDB) Guided Test Vehicles (GTV); two (2) AGM-84 Harpoon Missiles; three (3) MAU-210 ECCG (for GBU-50 Enhanced Paveway II); three (3) BLU-109 Inert Bomb Bodies; four (4) MK-82/BLU-111 Inert Bomb Bodies; and two (2) FMU-152 or FMU-139 Fuzes. Also included were one (1) Joint Mission Planning System; one (1) F-16V simulator; twenty (20) AN/ALQ-211 AIDEWS Systems; one (1) avionics level test station; six (6) DB-110 Advanced Reconnaissance Systems; two (2) LAU-118A Launchers; forty-five (45) AN/ARC-238 SINGARS Radio or equivalent; twenty-three (23) AN/APX126 Advanced Identification Friend or Foe (AIFF) systems or equivalent; twenty-three (23) cryptographic appliques; two (2) CATM-9L/M; two (2) AIM-120C-7 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM) Captive Air Training Missiles (CATM); three (3) MXU-651 AFG (for GBU-50 Enhanced Paveway II); four (4) DSU-38 Precision Laser Guidance sets (PLGS) (for GBU-54 Laser JDAM); four (4) AGM-154 Joint Stand-Off Weapon (JSOW) Captive Flight Vehicles (CFV); three (3) MK-84/BLU-117 Inert Bomb Bodies; two (2) FMU-152 D-1 Inert Fuzes; three (3) BRU-57 Bomb Racks; two (2) BRU-61 Bomb Racks for SDB; two (2) ADU-890 SDB adapter cable for CMBRE; two (2) ADU-891 AMRAAM/AIM-9X adapter cable for CMBRE; telemetry for all flight test assets secure communication equipment; personnel training and training equipment; publications and technical documentation; U.S. Government and contractor technical support services; containers; missile support and test equipment; integration test; site survey; design; construction studies/analyses/services; associate operations, maintenance, training; support facilities; cybersecurity; critical computer resources support; force protection; and other related ele-

ments of logistics and program support. The estimated total cost was \$1.082 billion. Major Defense Equipment (MDE) constituted \$406 million of this total.

On September 28, 2018, Congress was notified by Congressional certification transmittal number 18-0C of the possible sale, under Section 36(b)(5)(C) of the Arms Export Control Act, of:

1. The inclusion of twenty-three (23) Multi-function Information Distribution System Joint Tactical Radio System (MIDS-JTRS) Concurrent Multi-Networking-4 (CMN-4) which are MDE;

2. The inclusion of an additional nineteen (19) AN/ALQ-211 Advanced Integrated Defensive Electronic Warfare Suite (AIDEWS) Systems (non-MDE), which will increase the number from twenty (20) to thirty-nine (39). These additional nineteen (19) were not included in the total value of the AIDEWS systems previously notified. This change was due to a change in system requirements and a desire to prioritize system components with long lead procurement timelines; and

3. The inclusion of additional test weapons quantities and MDE designations outlined below:

a. BLU-109—Increase from quantity of three (3) to four (4).

b. Bomb Practice GBU-39 Guided Test Vehicle (GTV)—MDE item not on original notification.

c. MK-82 Inert Filled Bomb Body—Increase in quantity of four (4) to six (6)—MDE not on original notification.

d. KMU-572 JDAM Tail Kit—Quantity of five (5) not included on original Congressional Notification and MDE designation not on original notification.

e. MXU-650 Air Foil Group—Quantity of two (2) not included on original Congressional Notification and MDE designation not on original notification.

f. MXU-651 Air Foil Group—MDE designation not on original notification.

g. MAU-210 Enhanced Computer Control Group—Increase in quantity of three (3) to four (4) and MDE designation not on original notification. Also, correct that this MAU is for the GBU-49, not the GBU-50 as outlined in the original notification.

h. FMU-152—Quantity of six (6) not included on original Congressional Notification and MDE designation not on original notification.

These changes were due to unit pack minimum required quantities, items not properly identified as MDE on the original notification, and errors in requirements identification by the procuring office.

The inclusion of these MDE items did not increase the value of MDF beyond what was originally notified. The inclusion of AIDEWS caused the total case value to rise from \$1.082 billion to \$1.292 billion.

On October 1, 2019, Congress was notified by Congressional certification transmittal number 0T-19, under Section 36(b)(5)(A) of the Arms Export Control Act, of the inclusion of an additional five (5) AN/AAQ-33 SNIPER Pods, which increased the number from twenty-five (25) to thirty (30). These additional five (5) were not included in the total value of the SNIPER Pods previously notified. The addition of these items resulted in a net increase in cost of MDE of \$11.6 million. The revised MDE total value was \$417.6 million. The total case value remained \$1.292 billion.

This transmittal notifies the following change in MDE items: the "twenty-three (23) Embedded Global Navigation Systems/LN260 EGI (includes 3 spares)" previously notified will be changed to "twenty-three (23) Embedded Global Navigation Systems/LN260 EGI (includes 3 spares) and/or EGI devices with M-code technology." The following non-MDE

items will also be included: MS-110 Reconnaissance Pod Retrofit Kits; additional spare parts and repair and return support; and additional integration, training, and sustainment equipment and support. The estimated total value of new MDE items is \$7 million but will not result in a net increase in the total MDE cost. The total MDE value will remain \$417.6 million. The total cost of added non-MDE items is \$139 million. The total estimated case value will increase by \$139 million to \$1.431 billion.

(iv) Significance: This notification is being provided as the included replacement and additional items represent in an increase in capability over what was originally notified. The proposed sale increases Bahrain's F-16 fleet's reconnaissance capability and contributes to greater interoperability with the United States. Bahrain is upgrading its F-16 program as a deterrent to regional threats and to strengthen its homeland defense.

(v) Justification: This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a Major Non-NATO Ally in developing and maintaining a strong and ready self-defense capability. This proposed sale will enhance U.S. national security objectives in the region.

(vi) Sensitivity of Technology: The MMcode capable Embedded Global Positioning System (GPS) Inertial Navigation System (INS) (EGI), with an embedded OPS Precise Positioning Service (PPS) Receiver Application Module-Standard Electronic Module (GRAM-SM), is a self-contained navigation system that provides acceleration, velocity, position, attitude, platform azimuth, magnetic and true heading, altitude, body angular rates, time tags, and coordinated universal time (UTC) synchronized time. The embedded GRAM-SIM enables access to both the encrypted P(Y) and M-Code signals, providing protection against active spoofing attacks, enhanced military exclusivity, integrity, and anti-jam.

The MS-110 is a tactical reconnaissance pod with long-range, day/night, multi-spectral sensor technology. The multi-spectral sensor lets the end user see color and better distinguish subtle features than a DB-110 pod's dual band imagery. The pod can transmit imagery via a datalink to ground-stations for near-real time analysis and exploitation. The MS-110 Retrofit Kit converts a DB-110 pod into an MS-110 pod.

The Sensitivity of Technology Statement contained in the original notification applies to additional items reported here.

The highest level of classification of defense articles, components, and services included in this potential sale is SECRET.

(vii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: September 6, 2023.

REMEMBERING FRANK SULLIVAN

Mr. REED. Mr. President, it is my privilege to honor a request from the former chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senator Sam Nunn.

I request unanimous consent that the following statement by former Senator Sam Nunn regarding the passing of Mr. Frank Sullivan, who was staff director of the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Senate Committee on Appropriations, be printed in the RECORD. I also ask unanimous consent that Mr. Sullivan's obituary be printed following Senator Nunn's statement.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STATEMENT BY FORMER SENATOR SAM NUNN IN MEMORY OF FRANK SULLIVAN

I have lost a close friend and a wonderful colleague who made major contributions to the effectiveness of the U.S. Senate and its key committees and to our nation's security for many years. Frank Sullivan loved his wonderful wife, Patricia, and their family, and he loved his country.

Frank, who passed away on August 16, was a champion of the role of the United States Senate under our constitution. He was the trusted Staff Director of the Senate Armed Services beginning in the mid-70's, until he joined Senator John Stennis at the Senate Appropriations Committee, where he served as either Minority Staff Director or Majority Staff Director from 1980-1989. Frank made an indelible imprint on U.S. national security—beginning with his service in the United States Army and continuing through his time in the Senate and his work on behalf of the John Stennis Center for Public Service.

I met Frank when I joined the Senate Armed Services Committee shortly after my election in 1972. We were both new to the Committee, and my lucky break came when Senator Stennis designated Frank to work with me on issues related to the NATO alliance and the wind-down of the American presence in Vietnam. This was the beginning of a long and productive partnership and a close friendship.

In early 1973, Senator Stennis was tragically shot in a robbery attempt in front of his home. While he was undergoing a long recovery, his ability to travel was limited, and he asked me to lead a fact-finding mission to visit our NATO bases in Europe and report back to the Committee with our findings and recommendations. Senator Stennis asked that Frank and I pay particular attention to our troop levels in Europe and the morale of our men and women in uniform as we were withdrawing from Vietnam. He also asked us to pay close attention to the level of contributions to our joint defense efforts by our European allies.

Frank helped me undertake the necessary homework for this important trip. I recall that we spent at least 100 hours preparing for it, including meetings with military and national security experts.

After we returned from our European trip, Frank and I were partners in writing the resulting report: "Policy, Troops, and the NATO Alliance." The report "startled specialists with its freshness and command," wrote Steve Rosenfeld in a column for *The Washington Post*. This was during the final stages of U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. Soon after our trip, the Senate was set to debate a legislative effort to bring our troops home from around the world, including a very significant portion of our Army, Navy and Air Force personnel stationed in Europe. During an intense debate on the Senate floor, Frank's wisdom and advice played a pivotal role in the Committee's success in providing a constructive alternative to withdrawing our troops from Europe—an alternative that would not damage the NATO alliance, but pressure our allies to increase their contributions. The report also pointed out the need to pay increased attention to the risk and the required security of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons stored in Europe.

As historian Dr. James H. Wilbanks wrote later, "Although it would not happen overnight, the subsequent buildup of U.S. forces and its NATO partners no doubt contributed greatly to the fall of the Berlin Wall, the demise of the Warsaw Pact and the shortening of the Cold War." When Senator Stennis gave me the responsibility of chairing the Subcommittee on Manpower and Personnel, Frank was assigned as my lead professional

staff member. He cared deeply about the morale and well-being of our men and women in uniform and worked tirelessly to understand and improve their lives throughout his entire career.

Frank was a key player in all of the Senate Armed Services Committee's legislative activities and was instrumental in a range of important work conducted by the Committee, including:

—The report "Vietnam Aid: The Painful Options" (1975) about the hard choices in continuing U.S. aid to Vietnam;

—The report that I co-authored with Senator Dewey Bartlett on "NATO and the New Soviet Threat" (1977);

—The Nunn-Warner legislation in 1980 which restructured military pay, benefits and incentives to move the All-Volunteer Force to a sound footing;

—The shaping legislation that modernized the Defense Department's officer personnel management policies—a four-year effort.

These are the ones where Frank and I worked together directly. He made many more contributions to a sound and effective national security policy.

In the Senate, Frank was known for his intellectual curiosity, his analytical thought process, his unquestioned integrity, and his profound knowledge of the Senate process. He never sought the spotlight, but he usually deserved it.

Above all, he was an outstanding public servant who served his country with great effectiveness. We will always cherish Frank Sullivan's memory and his indelible contributions to our nation's security.

We thank Frank's wife Patricia and their five children, eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren for sharing him with us and with our nation over so many years.

FRANCIS "FRANK" JOSEPH SULLIVAN

Francis "Frank" Joseph Sullivan, a dedicated family man and public servant, died on August 16, 2023 in Alexandria, Virginia.

Frank was born on October 8, 1932 in Boston to Otilly and Francis Joseph Sullivan. Frank is survived by the love of his life, Patricia Hogan Sullivan, his wife of 68 years, as well as his five children: David Sullivan, Kathy (Lee) Terry, Martha (Robert) Jones, Patrick (Teresa) Sullivan, and Peter (Sheila Herriott) Sullivan. He was also the beloved "Papa" to eight grandchildren: Syd (Larkin Parker) Terry, Elizabeth (Ryan) Dolan, Sarah Terry, Christopher Jones, Carolyn (Jonathan) Rhea, Cathryn Jones, Nicholas Sullivan and Kathleen (Travis) Jones and two great-grandchildren Patch Dolan and Audrey Rhea. Besides his wife and family, Frank loved fishing, the Boston Red Sox (his first employer) and everything Irish. Frank was a lifelong Catholic with great faith in the hope of eternal life.

Frank attended Boston Latin School and received a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics from Boston College. His lifelong service to his country started with the U.S. Army, followed by work on the first use of military digital computers at Western Electric. Frank continued his public service with the U.S. Army Management Logistics Center, the Department of Defense and the United States Senate. He retired from Capitol Hill in 1989 after having served as Staff Director of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee and then the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee. He then served as a member of the Executive Panel for the Chief of Naval Operations, The Defense Science Board, the Defense Practices Board, the Board of Directors of the Stennis Center for Public Service and was a Senior Fellow with the Center for Naval Analysis. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests a donation to a charity of your choice.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN MCKENZIE

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the career and achievements of John McKenzie, owner of the McKenzie Apartment Company. Throughout his career, John has fused together his work in home construction with his passion for community service to establish the next generation of leaders in the housing industry.

Born and raised in Madison, WI, John got his start in business working with his father in real estate. After graduating from UW-Madison as a business major in 1971, he began his career in real estate development around the country, working from Cincinnati to San Francisco. In 1989, he returned to Madison where he had a significant impact on the region's real estate development and revitalization. During this period, he cofounded his family business, the McKenzie Apartment Company.

John is somebody who takes deep pride in his work, creating both homes and opportunities to improve the lives of others. With this mission, John began working with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dane County. He recognized that, by working with the Boys and Girls Club, he could have a remarkable and lasting impact on the community by introducing skilled trades to the young people in the program. Having been a Madison Area Builders Association—MABA—member for 30 years, John connected the Boys and Girls Club with the MABA, and a lasting partnership has resulted.

In collaboration with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dane County and the Madison Area Builders Association, John raised the significant funds needed to build and sustain a facility that provides space for youth ranging from elementary school to high school to participate in introductory trade activities. This year, the McKenzie Regional Workforce Center opened to train and connect a new generation of young people of diverse backgrounds to the skilled trades. A first-of-its-kind project for the Boys and Girls Clubs of America and a National Association of Home Builders—NAHB—affiliated local home builders association, the center will serve as a national template, preparing young people in Dane County for quality, family-sustaining jobs at a time when the skilled trades are facing a labor shortage. Due to John's innovative idea, a national movement was sparked to partner local Boys and Girls Clubs with the construction industry around the Nation. John's impact will be felt nationwide through 10 local partnerships that began in 2023 and another 20 beginning in 2024.

With John's persistence, leadership and dedication to his community, he has impacted so many lives in our State. I am so pleased to join others in recognizing his success and accomplishments. I wish him and his family all the best and applaud his continued efforts in the skilled trades.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRANE FOUNDATION

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I rise to recognize the International Crane Foundation's 50th anniversary. I am delighted to recognize this global conservation organization with Wisconsin origins.

While the efforts of the International Crane Foundation now reach across the world, its story began in 1971 at Cornell University. This was where two ornithology students, Ron Sauey and George Archibald, bonded over their shared appreciation for cranes. They imagined an organization that could combine their work on captive breeding, research, restoration, and education to protect the 15 different crane species on Earth. In 1973, Sauey and Archibald's vision became a reality when the International Crane Foundation was founded out of the Sauey family farm in Baraboo, WI.

Over the last 50 years, the foundation has used dynamic methods and community-oriented approaches to conserve cranes and the ecosystems, watersheds, and flyways they depend on. The foundation fosters the international cooperation of crane protection by providing knowledge, leadership, and inspiration to people in the communities where cranes live, engaging them to resolve threats to these birds and the landscapes they call home.

Today the International Crane Foundation has grown to a staff of more than 125 people, with a network of hundreds of specialists in over 50 countries on the five continents where cranes live. The organization moved from the humble Sauey farm where it was born, to a nearly 300-acre headquarters in Baraboo, complete with live crane exhibits, guided tours, a research library, and 4 miles of nature trails. While the reach of the foundation has greatly extended over the past 50 years, their mission remains the same: to protect and restore wild crane populations and the landscapes they depend on.

On the 50th anniversary of this remarkable organization, I am proud to recognize the International Crane Foundation and look forward to its continued success and conservation efforts.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING LUTHERIDGE FARMS

• Mr. BUDD. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Lutheridge Farm and celebrate its nearly six decades of success.

In 1965, brothers Ted and Ben Luther purchased the land where they established the family-owned dairy operation today known as Lutheridge Farm. For many years, Ted, his wife Dot, Ben, and his wife Margaret worked diligently to grow the farm from a single cow to a herd of about 150 cattle. Word of their ranch began to

spread, and in 1981, they were named the Farm Family of the Year by their soil and water conservation district. Due to their love of Jersey cows, the family became involved in the American Jersey Cattle Association, with Ted ultimately being presented its National Distinguished Service Award in 2006 after many years of service as its president and member of its board of directors.

After Ted passed away in 2013, the cattle operation began to wind down. However, desiring to keep the family business alive, his children purchased Ben's shares of the farm to keep it running for a new generation. Richard Luther and his wife Robin, along with Leigh Anne Wetmore and her husband Mark, worked to continue the legacy of their father and uncle. Ted's grandson Steven Wetmore returned to the family farm to manage the operation with his wife Kira, where they were joined by his cousins Jonathan and Lauren Luther. This new generation of family farmers revived the ranch and diligently worked to expand the operation. In 2016, they began selling dairy to local, family-owned cheese manufacturers.

Although the family has recently decided to downsize the operation due to rising costs, the family still provides fresh dairy to families across the region. Bottled milk, both white and chocolate, is delivered to local markets in Rowan, Iredell, Cabarrus, Davidson, and Davie Counties.

Please join me in celebrating Lutheridge Farm's many years of success. Small businesses are the backbone of our Nation's economy, and it is family operations like Lutheridge Farm that enrich communities for years to come.●

RECOGNIZING THE 2023 ROWAN LITTLE LEAGUE 10U SOFTBALL TEAM

• Mr. BUDD. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the members of the 2023 Rowan Little League 10u Softball team for their recent victory in the Southeast regional championship. After winning the North Carolina State Championship, the team was provided the opportunity to compete in the highest competition in the 10u system. Over the regional championship weekend in late July, coaches Brett and Jacqueline Mulkey and Greg Deal took the 12-member team to Clarksville, TN, where the Rowan team demonstrated the hard work and sportsmanship its members had developed throughout the entire season. The teamwork and dedication put in by Graci Cooper, Zoey Correll, Peyton Mulkey, Stella Drew Smith, Abby Miller, Harper Deal, Jaylee Nixon, Jenna Smith, Kristen Johnson, Jaklyn Cottone, Kallie Clawson, and Nelson Leonard bring pride to their entire Rowan County community.

Please join me in congratulating the 2023 Rowan Little League 10u Softball

All-Stars on their remarkable accomplishment and wishing them many future successes.●

RECOGNIZING KPI CONCEPTS

● Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week it is my privilege to recognize KPI Concepts of West Burlington, IA as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

KPI Concepts was founded by Craig Upton in 1984 out of his garage in Burlington, IA, building cabinetry for local businesses. Two years later, KPI Concepts moved to a 4,200 square foot building with a workshop. The original building was expanded to 42,000 square feet between 1986 and 2006, and in 2007, they purchased an additional 65,000-square-foot location. The second location expanded a few years later. After starting as a commercial cabinetry business, they evolved to manufacture wind turbine blade components in 2008 with the KPI Composites division. In 2013, they added a west coast location in Hurricane, UT, while maintaining their West Burlington headquarters. Over the years, KPI Concepts has grown to include the KPI Metals division as well.

Craig Upton attributes his success to his father and the Southeastern Community College for his successful business career. After graduating from Burlington High School in 1973, he went on to attend Southeastern Community College where he earned an associate's degree in mechanical technology. He later went on to work as a design draftsman, welder, and in the data processing department. When he lost his job, his father, who had a passion for woodworking, urged Craig to pursue his dream and start KPI Concepts. Because he pursued his dreams, KPI Concepts celebrated its 39th business anniversary in 2023.

In addition to being the president and founder of KPI Concepts, Craig Upton gives back to the community. In 2014, he was recognized by Southeastern Community College with the Distinguished Alumnus Award. Earning further accolades, the KPI Metals team was awarded the Manufacturer of the Year Award by the Greater Burlington Partnership in 2017.

KPI Concept's commitment to providing high-quality commercial cabinetry, wind turbine parts, and metal manufacturing services to customers throughout the United States while maintaining their Iowa roots is clear. I want to congratulate Craig Upton and the entire team at KPI Concepts for their continued dedication to providing industrial services to Iowans. I look forward to seeing their continued growth and success in Iowa.●

RECOGNIZING JEFFERSON COLLEGE

● Mr. SCHMITT. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Jefferson College in Hillsboro, MO, for 60 years of academic excellence and accomplishment.

Founded in 1963, Jefferson College is the "Jewel of Jefferson County." The college has contributed to the development and progress of Jefferson County and the surrounding region, equipping thousands of students each year with the tools to be successful in a variety of academic disciplines. The college's programs are instrumental in raising up the next generation of teachers, police officers, nurses, and citizens. The college remains devoted to providing high-quality academics at an affordable price, making it a great option for students in any stage of life. Communities are built upon the collaboration of men and women who have been properly trained in their designated fields, and Jefferson College continues to assemble communities of qualified workers and strengthen Missouri as a whole.

I ask my Senate colleagues to join me in recognizing Jefferson College's diamond anniversary, 60 years of scholarship. I hope all my colleagues will join me in celebrating the important work being done at Jefferson College and all the work it will accomplish in the future.●

TRIBUTE TO LAND TAWNEY

● Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a great Montanan, and a national champion for our access to public lands.

For his entire life, Land Tawney has fought to ensure that every Montanan and every American is able to experience the joys that our rivers, streams, and public lands have to offer. For the last 10 years he has led this charge from the helm of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, an organization that was once volunteer based and local, but is now a leading advocacy group for hunters and anglers in 48 States and two Canadian provinces. But unfortunately for us, Land recently announced that he will be leaving Backcountry Hunters and Anglers for greener pastures and wider trails.

While I am sure that we haven't heard the last of Land Tawney he will certainly be missed by many Montanans and sportsmen and women across the Nation. In his tenure as president and CEO, Land was able to grow BHA to a community with more than half a million members. He played a key role in helping pass my Great American Outdoors Act and permanently reauthorizing and fully funding the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

I am proud to call Land a friend, but more importantly, I am proud of the things we have accomplished in Congress with the support of Land and the BHA. He is a fierce advocate for preserving access. He is a builder of broad

coalitions. And he is someone that you always want on your team.

I am going to miss Land at BHA, but I am looking forward to seeing what is next.

Thank you, Land.●

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF KOCH ENTERPRISES

● Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Koch Enterprises, a fifth-generation Hoosier company, on its 150th anniversary.

Founded in 1873 as a tin shop, the Evansville-based company now employs more than 2,600 people in 13 States and four countries. The George Koch Tin Shop stayed afloat in the early years by doing repairs and manufacturing cookware, but soon, the business grew and diversified. When George Koch died in 1903, his three sons took over and renamed the business George Koch Sons. During World War II, the company supported the war effort by building a new manufacturing facility and fabricating parts for LST ships and aircraft wings and engines. In 1999, the company reorganized to Koch Enterprises, Inc. The organization currently has eight subsidiaries and is the ninth largest private company in Indiana.

Koch Enterprises' core values include integrity, respect for people, customer focus, continuous improvement, and community involvement. Indeed, the Evansville area and the State of Indiana as a whole has benefited from that spirit of community involvement. Koch employees are encouraged to volunteer for local charities and have logged more than 20,000 hours annually in recent years. Additionally, company Chairman Bob Koch has been a driving force behind the completion of Interstate 69 and helped establish Signature School, which is consistently ranked as one of the top high schools in the country.

It is my honor to congratulate the Koch family, the company's leadership, and the thousands of Koch employees who have contributed to our State over the years.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Stringer, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with

accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-1914. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of General Counsel, Department of Transportation, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1915. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy for the position of Assistant Secretary for Governmental Affairs, Department of Transportation received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 23, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1916. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy for the position of Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology, Department of Transportation received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 23, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1917. A communication from the Attorney Advisor of the Regulatory Affairs Division, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pipeline Safety: Requirement of Valve Installation and Minimum Rupture Detection Standards: Technical Corrections" (RIN2137-AF06) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 23, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1918. A communication from the Fishery Management Specialist, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Species; Critical Habitat for the Threatened Caribbean Corals" (RIN0648-BG26) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1919. A communication from the Senior Trial Attorney, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Accessible Lavatories on Single-Aisle Aircraft" (RIN2105-AE89) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1920. A communication from the Bureau Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Wireline Competition Bureau released a Sixth Report and Order entitled Affordable Connectivity Program High-Cost Benefit" ((RIN3060-AL16) (FCC 23-62) (WC Docket No. 21-450)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1921. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Parts 73 and 74 of the Commission's Rules to Establish Rules for Digital Low Power Television and Television Translator Stations" ((MB Docket No. 03-185) (FCC 23-58)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1922. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Television Broadcasting Services; Elko, Nevada" (MB Docket No. 23-78) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 23, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1923. A communication from the Program Analyst, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Order, Empowering Broadband Consumers Through Transparency" (CG Docket No. 22-2) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 23, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1924. A communication from the Division Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Schools and Libraries Universal Service Support Mechanism, Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service Changes to the Board of Directors of the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc." ((FCC 23-56) (CC Docket No. 02-6) (CC Docket No. 96-45) (CC Docket No. 97-21)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 23, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1925. A communication from the Bureau Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Communications Commission released a R&O entitled Connect America Fund; A National Broadband Plan for Our Future High-Cost Universal Service Support; ETC Annual Reports and Certifications; Telecommunications Carriers Eligible to Receive Universal Service Support; Connect America Fund - Alaska Plan; Expanding Broadband Service Through the ACAM Program" ((RIN3060-AK57) (FCC 23-60) (WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 14-58, 09-197, 16-271)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 23, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1926. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Accepted Means of Compliance; Airworthiness Standards: Transport Category Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-1442)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1927. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Prohibition Against Certain Flights in the Kabul Flight Information Region (FIR) (OAKK)" ((RIN2120-AL71) (Docket No. FAA-2023-1415)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1928. A communication from the Commissioned Officer of Marine and Aviation Operations, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Shore Leave for Professional Mariners of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration" (RIN0648-BM21) received in the Office of the President of the

Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1929. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments; Amendment No. 4068" ((RIN2120-AA65) (Docket No. 31495)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1930. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments; Amendment No. 4067" ((RIN2120-AA65) (Docket No. 31494)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1931. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments; Amendment No. 4069" ((RIN2120-AA65) (Docket No. 31496)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1932. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments; Amendment No. 4070" ((RIN2120-AA65) (Docket No. 31497)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1933. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "IFR Altitude; Miscellaneous Amendments; Amdt. No. 573" ((RIN2120-AA63) (Docket No. 31498)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1934. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; Van Horn, TX" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0642)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1935. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revocation of Colored Federal Airway Red 39 (R-39); Bethel, AK" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2022-1796)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1936. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; Carrabasset, ME" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0837)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1937. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class C Airspace; Palm Beach International Airport, West Palm Beach, FL" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2023-1533)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1938. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revocation of Jet Route J-184 and Establishment of United States Area Navigation Route Q-108; Southwest, United States" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0721)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1939. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Very High Frequency (VHF) Omnidirectional Range (VOR) Federal Airways V-6, V-338, V-494, and United States Area Navigation (RNAV) Route T-331" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0501)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1940. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; Sonora, TX" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0732)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1941. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of United States Area Navigation (RNAV) Route T-230; St. Paul Island, AK" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2022-0216)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1942. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class C Airspace; Daytona Beach International Airport, Daytona Beach, FL" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2023-1083)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1943. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to

law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; Devils Lake, ND" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2023-1077)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1944. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; Wabash, IN" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2023-1008)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1945. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class D and E Airspace and Revocation of Class E Airspace; Kalamazoo, MI" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2023-1007)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1946. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Establishment of Class E Airspace; Benton Field Airport, Redding, CA" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2020-0707)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1947. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes; Amendment 39-22446" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2022-1662)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1948. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Canada Limited Partnership Airplanes; Amendment 39-22402" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-1408)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1949. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Canada Limited Partnership (Type Certificate Previously Held by C Series Aircraft Limited Partnership (CSALP); Bombardier, Inc.) Airplanes; Amendment 39-22467" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0654)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1950. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; GE Aviation Czech s.r.o. (Type Certificate Previously Held by WALTER Engines a.s., Walter a.s., and MOTORLET a.s.) Engines; Amendment 39-22483" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-

2023-0664)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1951. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes; Amendment 39-22500" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-1406)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1952. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes; Amendment 39-22501" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-1407)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1953. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes; Amendment 39-22482" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-1304)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1954. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce Deutschland Ltd & Co KG Engines; Amendment 39-22480" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0437)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1955. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce Deutschland Ltd & Co KG Engines; Amendment 39-22474" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0660)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1956. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bell Textron Canada Limited Helicopters; Amendment 39-22485" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-1395)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1957. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes; Amendment 39-22466" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0157)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1958. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to

law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes; Amendment 39-22477” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2022-0816)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1959. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Safran Helicopter Engines, S.A. (Type Certificate Previously Held by Turbomeca, S.A.) Engines; Amendment 39-22499” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-1411)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1960. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes; Amendment 39-22465” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0928)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1961. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes; Amendment 39-22461” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0927)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1962. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Saab AB, Support and Services (Formerly Known as Saab AB, Saab Aeronautics) Airplanes; Amendment 39-22492” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-1401)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1963. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes; Amendment 39-22464” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0662)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1964. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes; Amendment 39-22460” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0169)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1965. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes; Amendment 39-22459” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0669)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1966. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes; Amendment 39-22479” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0025)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1967. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Survitec Group Limited (RFD Beaufort Ltd.) Life Jackets; Amendment 39-22484” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0666)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1968. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Pilatus Aircraft Ltd Airplanes; Amendment 39-22475” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0667)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1969. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Pilatus Aircraft Ltd Airplanes; Amendment 39-22462” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0962)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1970. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes; Amendment 39-22489” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0924)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1971. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes; Amendment 39-22478” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0011)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1972. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; BAE Systems (Operations) Limited Airplanes; Amendment 39-22481” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2023-0929)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. PETERS, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 285. A bill to provide for the perpetuation, administration, and funding of Federal Executive Boards, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 118-95).

S. 885. A bill to establish a Civilian Cybersecurity Reserve in the Department of Homeland Security as a pilot project to address the cybersecurity needs of the United States with respect to national security, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 118-96).

S. 2272. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for special base rates of pay for wildland firefighters, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 118-97).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2751. A bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to require issuers to disclose to the Securities and Exchange Commission information regarding workforce management policies, practices, and performance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. LANKFORD:

S. 2752. A bill to establish the position of Country China Officer to monitor and counter financing projects around the world that are backed by the People's Republic of China; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 2753. A bill to prevent the purchase of ammunition by prohibited purchasers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MARSHALL (for himself and Ms. LUMMIS):

S. 2754. A bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to publish all information in the possession of the Department of Health and Human Services relating to the origin of COVID-19, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. KAINE):

S. 2755. A bill to extend the requirement to staff Department of Defense Education Activity schools to maintain maximum student-to-teacher ratios; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. FETTERMAN (for himself and Mr. BRAUN):

S. 2756. A bill to amend the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 and the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 to direct the Agricultural Research Service to expand organic research, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. BOOZMAN):

S. 2757. A bill to limit the Secretary of Veterans Affairs from modifying the rate of payment or reimbursement for transportation of veterans or other individuals via special modes of transportation under the laws administered by the Secretary, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. FETTERMAN):

S. 2758. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 101 South 8th Street in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, as the “Lieutenant William D. Lebo

Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. YOUNG (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. PADILLA):

S. 2759. A bill to authorize additional district judges for the district courts and convert temporary judgeships; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HAWLEY:

S. 2760. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to cap credit card interest rates; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. LANKFORD:

S. 2761. A bill to deter conflict in the Taiwan Strait by establishing conditions for suspending normal trade relations with the People's Republic of China, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. COONS:

S. Res. 334. A resolution recognizing September 11, 2023, as a "National Day of Service and Remembrance"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 91

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the names of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) were added as cosponsors of S. 91, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to 60 diplomats, in recognition of their bravery and heroism during the Holocaust.

S. 95

At the request of Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 95, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to prohibit the approval of new abortion drugs, to prohibit investigational use exemptions for abortion drugs, and to impose additional regulatory requirements with respect to previously approved abortion drugs, and for other purposes.

S. 173

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 173, a bill to amend chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code, to require the safe storage of firearms, and for other purposes.

S. 274

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 274, a bill to provide paid family and medical leave to Federal employees, and for other purposes.

S. 341

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 341, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ex-

clude certain broadband grants from gross income.

S. 414

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 414, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve and to expand eligibility for dependency and indemnity compensation paid to certain survivors of certain veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 514

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) were added as cosponsors of S. 514, a bill to award posthumously the Congressional Gold Medal to Constance Baker Motley, in recognition of her enduring contributions and service to the United States.

S. 610

At the request of Ms. SINEMA, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 610, a bill to amend the Federal Credit Union Act to modify the frequency of board of directors meetings, and for other purposes.

S. 613

At the request of Mr. TUBERVILLE, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 613, a bill to provide that for purposes of determining compliance with title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 in athletics, sex shall be recognized based solely on a person's reproductive biology and genetics at birth.

S. 689

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) were added as cosponsors of S. 689, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to define currently accepted medical use with severe restrictions, and for other purposes.

S. 722

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 722, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permit certain expenses associated with obtaining or maintaining recognized postsecondary credentials to be treated as qualified higher education expenses for purposes of 529 accounts.

S. 740

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) and the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) were added as cosponsors of S. 740, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to reinstate criminal penalties for persons charging veterans unauthorized fees relating to claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of

Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 793

At the request of Mr. LUJÁN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 793, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to add physical therapists to the list of providers allowed to utilize locum tenens arrangements under Medicare.

S. 1183

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1183, a bill to prohibit discrimination on the basis of mental or physical disability in cases of organ transplants.

S. 1294

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1294, a bill to provide for payment rates for durable medical equipment under the Medicare program.

S. 1514

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1514, a bill to amend the National Housing Act to establish a mortgage insurance program for first responders, and for other purposes.

S. 1606

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1606, a bill to end preventable maternal mortality, severe maternal morbidity, and maternal health disparities in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 1837

At the request of Mr. FETTERMAN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1837, a bill to amend the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 to include spotted lanternfly control research and development as a high-priority research and extension initiative, and for other purposes.

S. 1885

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1885, a bill to eliminate employment-based visa caps on abused, abandoned, and neglected children eligible for humanitarian status, and for other purposes.

S. 1943

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1943, a bill to establish the Council on Improving Federal Civic Architecture, and for other purposes.

S. 1976

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1976, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to clarify congressional intent and preserve patient access to home infusion

therapy under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 2018

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2018, a bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct an assessment to identify locations in National Parks in which there is the greatest need for broadband internet access service and areas in National Parks in which there is the greatest need for cellular service, and for other purposes.

S. 2045

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2045, a bill to improve air quality management and the safety of communities using the best available monitoring technology and data.

S. 2210

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2210, a bill to provide for congressional review of actions to terminate or waive sanctions imposed with respect to Iran.

S. 2305

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2305, a bill to improve the requirements for making a determination of interchangeability of a biological product and its reference product.

S. 2327

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2327, a bill to provide support for nationals of Afghanistan who supported the United States mission in Afghanistan, adequate vetting for parolees from Afghanistan, adjustment of status for eligible individuals, and special immigrant status for at-risk Afghan allies and relatives of certain members of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

S. 2413

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2413, a bill to expand and strengthen the Abraham Accords and the Negev Forum, and for other purposes.

S. 2427

At the request of Mr. FETTERMAN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2427, a bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act to require group health plans and health insurance issuers offering group or individual health insurance coverage to permit enrollees to obtain a 365-day supply of contraceptives.

S. 2647

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), the Senator

from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2647, a bill to improve research and data collection on stillbirths, and for other purposes.

S. 2662

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2662, a bill to require the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out certain activities relating to research for wood products, and for other purposes.

S. 2736

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2736, a bill to clarify that section 8526(7) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 does not apply with respect to the use of funds for sports clubs, teams, training, or related activities provided for students.

S. 2745

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2745, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to eliminate conflicts of interest in conduct of quality management and administrative investigations by the Veterans Health Administration and to limit the detail of directors of medical centers of Department of Veterans Affairs to different positions, and for other positions.

S.J. RES. 32

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the names of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 32, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to "Small Business Lending Under the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (Regulation B)".

S.J. RES. 43

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 43, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to "Improving Income Driven Repayment for the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program and the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program".

S. RES. 208

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 208, a resolution expressing support for the designation of November 12, 2023, as "National Warrior Call Day" and recognizing the importance of connecting warriors in the United States to support structures

necessary to transition from the battlefield, especially peer-to-peer connection.

S. RES. 260

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 260, a resolution recognizing Tunisia's leadership in the Arab Spring and expressing support for upholding its democratic principles and norms.

S. RES. 306

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 306, a resolution recognizing that the United States needs to support and empower mothers in the workforce by investing in the Mom Economy.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 334—RECOGNIZING SEPTEMBER 11, 2023, AS A "NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE AND REMEMBRANCE"

Mr. COONS submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 334

Whereas, on September 11, 2001, the United States endured violent terrorist attacks and events (referred to in this preamble as the "attacks") in New York City, Washington, DC, and Shanksville, Pennsylvania, leading to the tragic deaths and injuries of thousands of innocent United States citizens and others from more than 90 different countries and territories;

Whereas, in response to the attacks, firefighters, uniformed officers, emergency medical technicians, physicians, nurses, military personnel, and other first responders immediately rose to service in the heroic attempt to save the lives of the individuals in danger;

Whereas, in the immediate aftermath of the attacks, thousands of recovery workers, including tradespeople, iron workers, equipment operators, and many others, joined with uniformed officers and military personnel to help search for and recover victims lost in the attacks;

Whereas, in the days, weeks, and months following the attacks, thousands of individuals in the United States spontaneously volunteered to help support rescue and recovery efforts, braving both physical and emotional hardship;

Whereas many first responders, rescue and recovery workers, volunteers, and survivors of the attacks continue to suffer from serious medical illnesses and emotional distress related to the physical and mental trauma of the attacks;

Whereas hundreds of thousands of brave individuals continue to serve every day, answering the call to duty as members of the Armed Forces, with many having given their lives or suffered injury—

(1) to defend the security of the United States; and

(2) to prevent further terrorist attacks;

Whereas the people of the United States witnessed and endured the tragedy of September 11, 2001, and in the immediate aftermath of the attacks came together under a remarkable and inspiring spirit of unity, service, and compassion;

Whereas, in the years immediately following the attacks, there was a marked increase in volunteerism and national service

among the people of the United States, which continues to this day;

Whereas, in 2009, with the support of members of the communities affected by the attacks, Congress passed, and President Barack Obama signed, the bipartisan Serve America Act (Public Law 111-13; 123 Stat. 1460), which—

(1) established Federal recognition of September 11 as a “National Day of Service and Remembrance” (commonly referred to as “9/11 Day”) as a way to annually and forever encourage all people of the United States to remember and pay tribute on the anniversary of the attacks through acts of service, including volunteerism, and to keep the promise to “Never Forget”; and

(2) charged the Corporation for National and Community Service (commonly known as “AmeriCorps”), the Federal agency for community service and volunteerism, with leading the annual day of service; and

Whereas, since the establishment of September 11 as a National Day of Service and Remembrance, millions of individuals in the United States have observed that date by uniting together across differences and engaging in a wide range of service activities and private forms of prayer and remembrance: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes, commends, and honors the self-less dedication to fellow citizens displayed through the heroic actions of first responders and other citizens in New York City, Washington, DC, and Shanksville, Pennsylvania;

(2) calls on the Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives, and all people of the United States, to observe September 11, 2023, as a “National Day of Service and Remembrance”, with appropriate and personal expressions of service and reflection, which may include performing good deeds, displaying the United States flag, participating in memorial and remembrance services, and engaging in volunteer service or other charitable activities—

(A) in honor of the individuals who lost their lives, were injured, or continue to be medically ill as a result of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001; and

(B) in tribute to the individuals who rose to service—

(i) to come to the aid of those individuals in need; and

(ii) in defense of the United States; and

(3) urges all people of the United States to continue to live their lives throughout the year with the same spirit of unity, service, and compassion that was exhibited through-

out the United States following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1093. Mr. VANCE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1093. Mr. VANCE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division C, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this division may be used to impose a mask mandate.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2023

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, September 12; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Bradsher nomination postcloture; further, that all time be considered expired at 11:30 a.m. and, following the cloture vote on the Cummings nomination, the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings; that if cloture

is invoked on the Cummings nomination, all time be considered expired at 2:15 p.m.; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:46 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

BASIL IVANHOE GOODEN, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT, VICE XOCHITL TORRES SMALL, RESIGNED.

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY

PATRICE J. ROBINSON, OF TENNESSEE, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY FOR A TERM EXPIRING MAY 18, 2028, VICE WILLIAM B. KILBRIDE, TERM EXPIRED.

POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION

THOMAS G. DAY, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A COMMISSIONER OF THE POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 14, 2028, VICE MARK D. ACTON, TERM EXPIRED.

FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY

COLLEEN DUFFY KIKO, OF NORTH DAKOTA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS EXPIRING JULY 29, 2027. (REAPPOINTMENT)

THE JUDICIARY

COLLEEN DANIELLE HOLLAND, OF NEW YORK, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK, VICE FRANK PAUL GERACI, JR., RETIRED.

JOHN A. KAZEN, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, VICE VANESSA D. GILMORE, RETIRED.

RAMONA VILLAGOMEZ MANGLONA, OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS, TO BE JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS FOR A TERM OF TEN YEARS. (REAPPOINTMENT)

MICAH W.J. SMITH, OF HAWAII, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF HAWAII, VICE J. MICHAEL SEABRIGHT, RETIRING.