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No. 8

Senate

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.

Almighty God, Lord of history, lead our Senators above all irrelevancies and trivialities to a unity of passion and purpose. Create in them an elevated and refined patriotism that will make them eager to know and do Your will. May the words of their mouths and the meditations of their hearts receive Heaven's approval. In the awareness that "without a vision the people perish," give our lawmakers a fresh revelation of the United States of America. Also, keep ever before them the dream of a better world that is yet to be.

We pray in Your marvelous 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 senior assistant executive clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 16, 2024.

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.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

AMENDING THE PERMANENT ELECTRONIC DUCK STAMP ACT OF 2013—Motion to Proceed—Resumed

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 2872, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant executive clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 243, H.R. 2872, a bill to amend the Permanent Electronic Duck Stamp Act of 2013 to allow the Secretary of the Interior to issue electronic stamps under such Act, and for other purposes.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, as of today, over 200 million Americans remain on alert as heavy snow and sub-zero temperatures persist across the country. As far south as Texas, Americans are seeing snow, ice, and dan-

gerous road conditions and power outages by the hundreds of thousands.

On Friday, Governor Hochul declared a state of emergency for western New York and warned residents to stay off the roads. Of course, I might say, though, the cold did not stop the Buffalo Bills. Go Bills.

And, last week, Senator GILLIBRAND and I sent a "stand ready" letter to FEMA, urging them to remain at the ready to assist our State officials with whatever support they request.

Thankfully, snowfall in New York has slowed today compared to over the weekend, but we are not out of the woods yet. Yet another wave of lake-effect weather is set to pass through our State in the coming days.

My office will continue to remain in touch with State officials, and I urge everyone to continue to exercise caution.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. President, now, on the CR, over the weekend, Congressional leadership reached a bipartisan agreement on a clean extension of government funding until March 1 and March 8, which will prevent a government shutdown.

The focus of this week will be to pass this extension as quickly as we can. Time is of the essence. If we don't act soon, the government will run out of funding at midnight this Friday, January 19, just a few days away.

So, today, the Senate will take the first vote to move forward on a clean CR, putting the Senate on a path to pass the CR before Friday's deadline. If both sides continue to work in good faith, I am hopeful that we can wrap up work on the CR no later than Thursday.

The key to finishing our work this week will be bipartisan cooperation in both Chambers. You can't pass these bills without support from Republicans and Democrats in both the House and the Senate.

And passing a clean CR this week is important for two main reasons: First,

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



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passing the CR, of course, will avert a harmful and unnecessary government shutdown. No reasonable Member on either side, Democrat or Republican, wants a government shutdown. Both sides recognize that a government shutdown would mean crushing delays to veterans programs; nutrition programs for women, infants, and children; delayed benefits for our military; and so much more.

Second, passing the CR will give our appropriators time to finish drafting all 12 bills to reflect our bipartisan agreement. Congressional leaders have already agreed to a top-line number that will protect critical priorities like housing, veterans' benefits, healthcare, nutrition programs, and more. We want to move forward as quickly as we can to turn this top-line number into legislation, but everyone knows we need more time.

Now while most Democrats and Republicans want to avoid a shutdown, a small group of hard-right extremists seem dead set on making a shutdown a reality. With little leverage to actually enact their agenda, these extremists have tried again and again to bully the Speaker, bully their own Republican colleagues, and bully the country into accepting their hard-right views. That is it. The only tactic the hard right has in its playbook is to bully everyone else into submission, just like Donald Trump does. And the reason is simple: Most Senators, most Congressmen—Democrat and Republican—do not accept that their draconian cuts will be good for America. So the only thing they can do is bully because they can't convince, they can't win over people by argument, so bullying seems to be their way to go.

Even now, the hard right, amazingly, is demanding that the Speaker walk away from the agreement that the four corners made on the appropriations top lines. That is simply ridiculous, as even many Republicans recognize, and it goes to show you how unserious, how incapable the hard right is of doing the hard work of governing.

But if the hard right's tactics in the House have proved one thing, it is that bullying almost never works—and it ain't working for them. Bullying didn't work during the default; it didn't work during previous shutdown threats; and it is certainly not going to work now.

I hope that both sides can continue working together this week to move forward with the CR quickly to prevent a government shutdown before the Friday deadline.

TAX FRAMEWORK

Mr. President, now on the tax framework, this morning, Senate Finance Chairman WYDEN and House Ways and Means Chairman SMITH announced a bipartisan, bicameral agreement on a tax framework that will significantly improve the lives of millions of working families and help Main Street businesses growing in today's economy. It has taken a lot of hard work to come up with this framework, and I applaud

the good work done by Chairman WYDEN, Chairman SMITH, and everyone on both sides who made this agreement possible.

I support this bipartisan tax framework because it makes important progress to expand the child tax credit, helps address our affordable housing crisis, and helps keep U.S. businesses competitive against the Chinese Communist Party. As everyone knows, it takes bipartisan support to get things done, so I hope our Republican Senate colleagues are willing to work with us to keep this process going.

Now, this tax package has a great many provisions, but there are two that I think distill why it is so important an achievement. The first number is 16 million; that is the number of children from low-income families who would benefit from this tax package's expansion of the child tax credit. It goes a good part of the way toward restoring full refundability to the CTC, and largest tax credits will go directly to families who earn the least. For instance, under this tax package, a family with three kids where one parent earns \$32,000 a year will receive almost a thousand dollars more from the CTC in the first year alone, and a single parent with two children earning \$13,000 part time would see their credit double, a gain of over \$1,500 in the first year. That is more money for parents to pay for groceries, diapers, baby formula, clothes, toiletries—the things parents absolutely need but, in many cases, struggle to afford.

Now, the second—the first number was 16 million—the second number of significance is 200,000. That would be the number of new affordable homes that will be made possible because of this agreement through the expansion of the low-income housing tax credit. I pushed very hard to make sure that strong, low-income housing tax credit provisions were included in this tax agreement. I made it public that omitting it would be unacceptable, and I could not support the package without it.

The housing shortage is one of the biggest issues we face in this country. It affects urban, suburban, and rural areas. It is one of the biggest issues we face in New York where we need to build more affordable housing.

The low-income housing tax credit is one of the most effective tools in existence to increase the supply of affordable housing, and this package will make this credit far more generous and far more easy to access.

So, once again, I commend Chair WYDEN and Chair SMITH for all of their hard work in making this framework possible.

Again, it will take bipartisan support in both the House and Senate if we want to take the next steps forward. I hope Members of both parties are willing to work with us on this package because there are many things in it that both sides can celebrate. It represents a great opportunity to help working

families, help Main Street businesses, and lower costs for people across the country.

SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

Mr. President, on the supplemental, as we continue to work to fund the government, Senate negotiators remain hard at work finalizing an agreement for a national security supplemental. As I have said repeatedly, it is a matter of the highest national urgency that we pass the supplemental. At stake is the security of our country, the security of our friends abroad—including Ukraine and Israel—and nothing less than the future of Western democracy. We cannot afford to let these issues go unaddressed.

Passing the supplemental is one of the hardest things the Senate has done in a very long time. But for the sake of our national security, of our friends abroad, of our fundamental values, and of the strength that this country is regarded in in the rest of the world, we must stay the course.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

HONORING DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday, our Nation honored one of the most consequential lives in American history. The America in which Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., labored for change was the same America in which I grew up.

I was fortunate to be raised by parents who believed deeply in equal rights, but the scourge of segregation was not unfamiliar in the places I spent my formative years.

As I have shared with some of our colleagues before, I was especially lucky to witness one of the most climatic moments of the civil rights movement as I was a congressional intern here in Washington. I remember stepping outside my office on August 28, 1963, and taking in the enormous crowds that had flocked to participate in the March on Washington. I remember looking down toward the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial beyond.

I was too far away to hear Dr. King's immortal words with my own ears, but I was proud to be a witness to that remarkable history he wrote that day and throughout his extraordinary life.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. President, now an entirely different matter, House and Senate negotiators worked hard and reached an agreement on top-line government funding levels for the current fiscal year, and work continues to deliver full-year appropriations through regular order. Shutting down the government, even part of it, would interrupt this important progress. That is why, today, the Senate will begin the process of passing a short-term extension of government funding to allow this work to continue.

I am grateful that the Speaker of the House was able to secure serious rollbacks on reckless spending, but it remains to be seen whether the Biden administration can get serious on its responsibility to provide for the common defense. For 3 straight years, the President has turned in budget requests with real dollar cuts to funding America's Armed Forces. Even a quick glance around the world shows how little we can afford to shortchange the men and women defending the United States and our interests. We need to take this responsibility seriously.

IRAN

Mr. President, now, on another matter, 3 years ago, I warned the Biden administration that it needed to take a tougher approach to growing threats from Iran and its terrorist proxies. I warned against removing the Houthis from the Terrorist Watchlist, and I called attention to how, even then, Iran was increasing its shipments of ever deadlier and longer range weapons to the terrorists in Yemen.

But from the beginning, the administration chose to meet Iranian aggression with accommodation. The President's team operated on a profoundly naive assessment of the threat that we face. They abandoned pressure and squandered leverage in an attempt to revive a failed nuclear deal.

They hectored regional partners under attack, as if their defensive actions against Houthi terrorists had provoked these Iranian proxies in the first place. And then they trumpeted the utterly fictional successes of their approach.

Remember how the President's National Security Advisor described the state of the world last September—just last September—in an incredibly timed essay in *Foreign Affairs*. Just weeks before Iran-backed terrorists would slaughter 1,200 Israelis on October 7, he claimed the United States had an “enhanced deterrence” to deter “further [Iranian] aggression” and that the Middle East was “quieter than it has been for decades.”

And 3 years in, the price of these delusions has become inescapably obvious. To the extent that President Biden sought detente with the world's most active state sponsor of terrorism, he was woefully ill-advised about the nature of the Iranian regime. To the extent that this administration ever seriously sought to deter Iran and its proxies, their efforts have demonstrably failed.

So let's be absolutely clear. The United States is capable of destroying those who threaten our allies, our interests, and American lives. A global superpower is equipped to bring enormous force to bear against its enemies. But deterrence isn't just about capabilities. It is not enough for Iran to know that America has the means to demolish its military and its network of terrorists. No. Deterrence requires that our adversaries actually believe we are willing to use these capabilities.

It requires credibility. And when credibility is eroded, it is not easily restored.

It will be difficult for the Biden administration to convince Tehran and its agents that after 3 years spent scolding our partners for wanting to defend themselves from Houthi terrorist attacks, America now intends to do the same thing.

It will be difficult for the administration to convince our adversaries that, after years of bending over backwards to accommodate Iran and wringing our hands over the use of military force against its proxies, we are now prepared to respond directly against Iranian targets.

Restoring credible deterrence means identifying what our adversaries hold dear and proving we are willing to hold it at risk.

Now, I am certain, Mr. President, that there are things Tehran considers more precious than empty terrorist warehouses in Syria or Houthi radar systems in Yemen. Iran uses proxies precisely because they consider them expendable. Taking pains to avoid killing these proxies or targeting Iranian forces and interests themselves tells Tehran that its strategy is actually working.

President Biden owes it to the American people to explain how, exactly, he intends to compel Iran and its proxies to actually change their behavior.

He owes it to the Nation to start explaining how the stakes of conflict in the Middle East ripple across the world; how the challenges we face in the Red Sea, Ukraine, and the Indo-Pacific are all connected; and how the cost of failing to meet them compounds.

Unfortunately, the Biden administration is not alone in its failure to take its responsibility seriously. This afternoon, the Senate must take it upon ourselves to reject an attempt to degrade our Nation's credibility even further.

The resolution brought forward by Senator SANDERS is little more than performative leftwing politics. It is not, as our colleague would suggest, about authorizing a report on aid to Israel. It is not even about human rights. It is about tying the hands of a close ally locked in a necessary battle against savage terrorists.

It is a gift to the leftwing anti-Israel activists.

So colleagues who share a concern about the plight of innocent people in Gaza should set their attention on the Hamas terrorists who orchestrate their suffering—the terrorists who take hostages, steal humanitarian aid, and use their own citizens as human shields; the terrorists who go to loathsome extremes to imperil innocent human life.

America's ally Israel takes extraordinary risks to minimize civilian casualties. Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and Iran's other proxies across the region go to extraordinary lengths to maximize senseless death. We must

not confuse one for the other. The distinction here is clear and boldfaced.

Any colleague considering a vote for the Sanders resolution ought to consider what message they would like to send to America's allies and partners facing shared threats around the world and what message they would like to send our adversaries who doubt our resolve.

Israel deserves America's firm support as it roots out terrorist killers and restores its security.

Soon, the Senate will have an opportunity to make necessary investments in our capacity to support Israel and other threatened partners from Ukraine to Taiwan or the Philippines. As the threats to our interests grow, so do the costs of defending them.

In just the time the Senate has been working on the national security supplemental, operational costs for U.S. forces in the Middle East have risen. As I have warned for weeks, using million-dollar missiles to defend against thousand-dollar drones strains an already insufficient inventory of long-range capabilities.

The supplemental is our chance to expand our capacity to meet the national security challenges we face. The American people deserve leaders who are willing to take these challenges seriously.

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. DURBIN. 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.

POLITICAL VIOLENCE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, when is enough enough?

At the start of 2024, we find ourselves in another Presidential election cycle, and as we move closer to election day in November, we can expect political tensions to rise. But, as the new year begins, a rise in political violence threatens to overshadow the traditional Presidential process.

Across the country, at every level of government, we are experiencing a surge in violent threats against public officials and government workers. Some officials have been victims of swatting incidents, in which false 9-1-1 calls lead to law enforcement swarming the homes of targeted individuals. In other cases, officials have received death threats or bomb threats where they live or work, and in some tragic instances, violent threats have escalated into violent acts.

It should go without saying, but it is worth repeating: Political violence in furtherance of any cause—any cause—is unacceptable. But it is undeniable that the recent spike in violent threats and acts has one major source: the grievances of former President Trump.

Just over 3 years after President Trump called his supporters to Washington, DC, and directed them to this

Senate Chamber and Capitol Building, where they staged a violent insurrection, his calls for retribution against his perceived enemies continue on an almost daily basis. Recent victims have included the secretary of state in the State of Maine, the former speaker of the Arizona House of Representatives, and the employees of the Georgia secretary of state's office—all of whom were targets of swatting and violent threats. These individuals were targeted for their roles in upholding the lawful result of the 2020 Presidential election or for their involvement in the upcoming election. Many election workers at lower levels have also been threatened, especially women and people of color.

Just this morning, POLITICO published an article about the fears and concerns of local election workers and the conspiracy theories and threats they face. These threats deter Americans from engaging in civic life or even seeking public office.

The recent rise in political violence has not just affected those who run for office or help to run our elections; judges, jurors, and officers of the court have also faced threats. Just last week, Justice Arthur Engoron—the New York State judge presiding over the former President's civil fraud trial—had his home swarmed by police after someone called in a fake bomb threat. This occurred hours after Trump took to his now favorite social media platform, Truth Social, and called Judge Engoron “a Trump-hating judge.”

This came on the heels of similar swatting, targeting the homes of Jack Smith and Judge Tanya Chutkan—the special prosecutor pursuing criminal charges against the former President for election interference and the judge overseeing the case. The former President has repeatedly attacked both of these public servants by name.

Last August, Judge Chutkan received a voice mail saying:

If Trump doesn't get elected in 2024, we're coming to kill you, so tread lightly.

On Christmas Eve, Trump called Special Counsel Smith “deranged” and claimed he was one of President Biden's “misfits and thugs.” The very next day, the special counsel's home was targeted with a swatting call.

The justices of the State Supreme Courts of Colorado and Wisconsin, along with staff, jurors, and prosecutors, have also faced threats due to their involvement in the former President's legal case. All of these individuals have been targeted simply because they continue to fulfill their duties to uphold the law.

All the while, former President Trump has refused to condemn the actions of his supporters, and at times, he clearly encourages it. Yet we rarely hear any of our Republican colleagues criticize their de facto leader for his public threats of violence or his encouragement of his most extreme supporters.

Threats of violence and violence are antithetical to our democracy, what-

ever their political source. In a free country, there are countless ways for people to legitimately and peacefully react and respond to political events and outcomes with which they disagree. People can vote as they choose. They can encourage their fellow citizens to do likewise. They can organize and advocate whether by knocking on doors, speaking at rallies, or posting on social media. They can peaceably assemble and protest public officials and the policies they pursue.

In the United States, these kinds of political activities are not merely tolerated; they are encouraged, and they are protected by the Constitution and the force of law. But we cannot as a nation tolerate, let alone encourage, threats of political violence by anyone, including the former President of the United States.

The recent rise in political violence marks a renewed attempt to use violence and the threat of violence to intimidate public officials, election workers, and our fellow American voters.

Sadly, the specter of political violence is not new. In 1968—another Presidential election year, one marred by heinous acts of violence—Robert Kennedy gave remarks the day after Martin Luther King was assassinated. He spoke about the mindless menace of violence in America, and he quoted Abraham Lincoln, who more than a century before wrote:

Among free men, there can be no successful appeal from the ballot to the bullet; and [those] who take such appeal are sure to lose their case, and pay the cost.

Today, I am calling on my colleagues in both political parties to publicly condemn the state of violence which is dominating in this country. We have come to accept it as commonplace. Shame on us in that regard. If this true democracy is to succeed, we all have to speak out against violence on both sides of the equation. We must stand together in opposing violence and threats of violence. Our democracy is strong, but it is only as strong as the people who participate in it, who protect it, and who serve it.

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. CORNYN. 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.

ISRAEL

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, we are all returning to a snowy Washington, DC, but it never ceases to amaze me, when I come back to the Nation's Capitol from home, back in Texas, the disconnect between what people are focused on back home—namely, their jobs, their family, and, well, football. That didn't turn out so well for us this

weekend. But the mainstream media and, of course, social media, which amplifies what people are talking about or the message that they want to convey—the so-called influencers, which are, really, in some instances, no more than propagandists—and even our foreign adversaries are engaging in a non-stop battle to control the narrative here in Washington, DC, on a variety of issues, including the terrorist attack that occurred in Israel on October 7 of last year.

Yesterday marked 100 days since Hamas terrorists murdered more than 1,200 Israelis and took about 240 hostages. I traveled to Israel with several of my Senate colleagues on the Senate Intelligence Committee last week, and we witnessed the grief and the fear that has gripped the Israeli people over the last few months. It was a familiar feeling because it seemed very much like where the American people were 3 months after the attacks of 9/11/2001, when al-Qaida killed 3,000 Americans.

In Tel Aviv, photos of the hostages who were still being held captive by Hamas lined the walkway. The photo of a 9-month-old baby held hostage literally stopped me in my tracks, wondering who would it be, what kind of person would take a 9-month-old baby and hold it hostage.

In the face of every person I spoke with, from families of hostages to senior government officials, there was, understandably, a deep sense of shock, mourning, and anger. Again, it reminded me of how we felt after 9/11. We were grieving, we were shocked, we were angry, and we were absolutely committed to holding those responsible accountable.

Our shared sense of purpose extended far beyond the borders of the United States. Our friends and allies around the world said: We have America's back. And they have supported our mission to destroy the al-Qaida threat.

That is exactly the kind of response you would expect when a terrorist group viciously attacks a friend—solidarity. Sadly, Israel has not received the overwhelming support that our country did in the wake of 9/11. In the more than 100 days since this war began, Israel has been criticized for defending itself. It has been villainized for going after the terrorist group that murdered, raped, and kidnapped its people.

This is not a view just held by a few people. Anti-Israeli rhetoric has spread like wildfire across social media. It has taken root at elite college campuses and even here in the Halls of Congress.

This past weekend, we saw the latest chapter in blaming the victim, as thousands of protesters gathered in downtown Washington, DC, to demand a ceasefire in Gaza. I would say a ceasefire would be great, but there is no guarantee Hamas won't continue to kill innocent men, women, and children. So it is just not feasible.

Protesters chanted: “Ceasefire now.” “End the war in Gaza.” They carried

signs that said “Free Palestine” and “Let Gaza live.” They accused Israel of being an apartheid government and outrageously said the United States was supporting genocide.

Again, this was not a small protest. Thousands of people lined the streets of our Nation’s Capital, and countless others protested around the world as part of a “Global Day of Resistance,” as it was called.

I find it deeply disturbing to see this view shared by so many because it is completely divorced from reality. These protesters have the entire problem completely backward. Hamas is not a victim; Hamas is the aggressor in every possible sense, along with its state sponsor, Iran.

While we were in Israel, my colleagues and I were shown footage of the October 7 attack, which was captured by Hamas terrorists. In other words, they were taking video of themselves killing innocent men, women, and children. They intentionally filmed all of these atrocities they committed so the entire world could see. But what we saw affirms that these are not victims in any sense—Hamas, that is. They are murderers. They are rapists. They are kidnappers, and they are terrorists.

Hamas carried out the most gruesome atrocities I have ever seen, and I hope to never see those again. But we cannot, under any set of circumstances, allow them to be viewed as the victim in this war.

This is not only Israeli blood on the hands of Hamas. Hamas is also responsible for immense suffering by civilians living in Gaza. Hamas raises vast amounts of money from the Palestinian people and outside donors, but that money does next to nothing to support a better quality of life for Palestinians. It isn’t invested in schools, hospitals, or housing. Instead, it is used to arm Hamas’s wartime operations.

This terrorist group spends vast amounts of money building tunnels beneath the streets of Gaza—some 500 kilometers. It is a virtual city under a city. It allows it to hoard weapons. We literally saw manufacturing facilities for weapons and ammunitions in the tunnels. And, of course, it is used to keep food and fuel and to shield themselves from the violence above ground. Unfortunately, these tunnels are also used to hide the hostages, more than 100 of whom are still in Hamas captivity.

Hamas builds these tunnels beneath hospitals and schools and other vulnerable locations in order to give credence to Hamas’s lie that it is the victim, not the aggressor.

Here in the United States, we are thousands of miles away from this war. Hamas didn’t invade our neighborhoods. They didn’t murder and kidnap our family or friends. And they aren’t launching rockets that threaten us each night. But just because we aren’t living with the daily realities of this war doesn’t mean that we can be di-

vorced from it. War is not just a battle of brute force; it is also a contest for public opinion.

Hamas goes to great lengths to shift the narrative and build sympathy. It is not a new strategy, but it is deeply disappointing to see how many Hamas sympathizers are found on American soil. It is disheartening that scores of Americans are lapping up Hamas’s lies. By claiming that Israel is the aggressor, they are playing directly into these terrorists’ hands.

We know war is ugly. It is tragic. It hurts innocent people and punishes the most vulnerable. William Tecumseh Sherman, a Civil War general said:

War is hell. You cannot qualify war in harsher terms than I will. War is cruelty, and you cannot refine it.

The realities of this war are nothing short of devastating. I understand the desire for the violence to end, and I hope and pray that it will soon. But we must remember this can only happen when the Hamas threat is defeated.

The ultimate goal of Hamas, along with its state sponsor Iran, is to end the Jewish State, to wipe Israel off the map. That is the only risk of genocide in this war.

We have a responsibility to call out and correct the falsehoods and mischaracterizations that are spreading in our own country. We have a responsibility to do our best to inform the American people about the facts and to make sure they understand who is the aggressor and who is the victim. And, in the end, I believe we have a duty to stand with our ally Israel as it does what is needed to root out the terrorist threats in its own country.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Virginia.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM DAY

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise today to commemorate Religious Freedom Day, recognized by Presidential proclamation since 1993. The day is timed to honor the passage of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom on January 16, 1786. This statute became the basis of the First Amendment’s protection of religious freedom for all Americans.

I was inspired to offer these thoughts by the moving address on anti-Semitism delivered in this Chamber by Majority Leader CHUCK SCHUMER a few weeks ago. His powerful comments addressed the fears felt today by so many Jewish Americans, the connection between those fears and the tragic global history of anti-Semitism, and how Americans can come together to reject religious bigotry against Jews.

As a person who takes my own Catholic faith seriously, it is important to listen to those who feel discriminated against due to their religion. During our history, Catholics have often been targeted by groups like the Ku Klux Klan. I am fortunate to say that I have never faced anti-Catholic bigotry, but those who haven’t faced religious discrimination need to

be sensitive to the real fears of those who face it every day. All of us are God’s children—brothers and sisters meant to dwell together in unity.

The final part of Senator SCHUMER’s address regarding what we can do as Americans to reject anti-Semitism or any discrimination based on religious beliefs reminded me of the principles imbedded in the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, and I am convinced that part of the solution to the rise in anti-Semitism is to go back to first principles and remind ourselves of the values that we have long proclaimed as Americans.

The Virginia statute was first drafted by Thomas Jefferson in 1777. Its purpose was simple and powerful—to declare that a person could freely choose whether and how to worship and would neither be preferred nor punished for that choice. This was at stark odds with prevailing English practice, in which the Church of England was the state-sponsored church, and other Christian sects and non-Christian religions were discouraged, punished, or outlawed. Official discrimination against Jews in English law persisted well into the 19th century, and life in the American Colonies of England before the Revolutionary War showed the continuation of this preferential treatment for certain religious practices over others.

The operative clause of the Virginia statute is as follows:

[N]o man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to protest, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities.

We complain that things move slowly in the U.S. Senate. This is not a new complaint about legislative bodies. It took 9 years for the Virginia General Assembly to take up and pass Jefferson’s statute, and the State legislative leader who finally gained passage of the measure was Madison. Madison witnessed discrimination against Baptist ministers in Virginia by those associated with the Church of England, and he believed deeply that religious liberty needed protection.

The Virginia General Assembly passed the statute on January 16, 1786, in a building at the corner of 14th and East Cary Streets in downtown Richmond, a few blocks from where I live. Today, that site is a small museum, the First Freedom Center, highlighting the idea of religious freedom and how it became a bedrock principle of American law.

Madison was soon charged with drafting the Bill of Rights to the American Constitution. He used the Virginia statute as the basis for the religious protections of the First Amendment:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

The statute also informed article VI, clause 3 of the Constitution:

[N]o religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States.

These provisions demonstrate a powerful intent to form an America where all can worship as they please without fear. The meaning of these clauses was well understood at the time.

Early in his first term as President, George Washington corresponded with the Jewish community of Newport, R.I. In his beautiful letter from August 1790—he had been President a little bit over a year—he described an America that was not merely tolerant of religious pluralism but where all could equally claim the blessings of citizenship. Here is what he wrote:

All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people, that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. For happily, the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens.

He concluded with a wish specifically directed at American Jews:

May the Children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of other inhabitants; while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree, and there shall be none to make him afraid.

“[A]nd there shall be none to make him afraid.” This is our birthright as Americans. Those of us who take an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States have pledged to act in way to make these words real. We have to guard, protect, and celebrate—not merely tolerate—a society where people of different religious faiths can live in the same neighborhoods, attend the same schools, work side by side, and do so as friends.

When we live up to this promise, it is not only for the benefit of those living here. There are many places in the world where this protection of religious freedom is nonexistent, barely possible to even imagine. Yet, if people around the world can see America as a place where people of different faiths live together in respect, equality, and friendship, they can at least believe in that as a possibility for their own societies.

We need a recommittal to the first freedom—religious liberty.

While comprehensive statistics on religiously motivated harassment are not complete, there is a disturbing spike in anti-Semitism as well as harassment directed at Muslims or people of Arab descent, who are targeted either for religious or ethnic reasons. We have seen Jewish students harassed on campuses in recent months, following upon horrific violence directed against Jews in Charlottesville in 2017 and Pittsburgh in 2018. We have seen the bigotry-fueled murder of a 6-year-old Muslim boy in Illinois and the heartless shooting of three Palestinian college students in

Burlington—Mr. President, the State you represent—just within the last few months.

One troubling form of discrimination is targeting Americans for events occurring elsewhere in the world. In Williamsburg, VA, just a few weeks ago, a Jewish group was denied the ability to display a menorah at a local festival because organizers claimed that they didn’t “want to make it seem like we’re choosing a side” in the ongoing war in Gaza. American Jews celebrating Hanukkah here should not be blocked from a celebration of the season because of a war thousands of miles away. Arab and Muslim Americans have long faced fear and discrimination because of the ignorant assumption that the horrific actions of extremists in the Middle East, operating on the margins of society, somehow reflect the views of an entire faith or community.

That we have strong and diverse views about events happening around the world is natural. Events in the Middle East have long caused heartbreak, and the current war in Israel-Gaza is tragic. But events elsewhere give no cause for bigotry or violence against fellow Americans.

Organizations monitoring hate crimes have seen significant spikes in attacks on American Jews and American Muslims and Arabs since the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7. At the very time when we should be showing the world that there is a different way, that religious pluralism can actually work, we are seeing tears in the social fabric we have worked so hard for so long to stitch together.

While religious bigotry can affect any group, recent statistics indicate that the most frequent targets in America today are Jews. Jews make up only 2.4 percent of the American population, but statistics in recent years have shown that the overwhelming majority of hate crimes committed out of religious animus—nearly 60 percent—are driven by anti-Semitism. Instances of anti-Semitism between October 7 and January 7 increased by 360 percent over the same period a year ago. We also see rising anti-Semitism around the world. And increasing anti-Semitism is often an early warning sign of the fragility of a democracy.

My conversations in recent months with Jewish friends and acquaintances have been saddening. Some are worried about their own safety and, even more painfully, the safety of their children and grandchildren. Some even wonder whether they might need to leave this country one day, just as Jews have been forced out of many other countries over time due to bigotry.

One expressed to me the powerful feeling of wanting to belong to the American family, to be truly welcomed and safe after a history of global anti-Semitism but now feeling pushed aside. He recounted standing up for so many excluded groups over the course of his life but sadly wondered why more are not standing up for Jews now.

Another friend recounted growing up in a mixed household with a Jewish father who would often say, “The world has always hated Jews, and you think you are accepted here? You’ll learn different one day.” She told me that she and her siblings would roll their eyes at their dad when he would say this when they were kids. Now she says, “For the first time in my life, I begin to understand what he meant.”

A third friend told me something that really shocked me. Some family members are deciding to remove the mezuzahs placed on the doors of their homes. A mezuzah is a small cylinder with a sacred Hebrew text inside, placed on the door of a home and sometimes on interior doors as well, to provide a blessing and protection to those within. My friend told me that it is an obvious—perhaps too obvious—sign that it is a Jewish household. So while this tradition dates back centuries, people are tempted to avoid it just out of fear that the presence of a mezuzah may lead them to be targeted for discrimination.

I researched this a bit and found that my friend’s fear was well-founded. There are many examples of people facing harassment or having their homes vandalized merely because of their mezuzah. In 2022, for example, Jewish students at the University of Indiana found that their mezuzahs were being stolen or defaced. This instance followed others on or near the campus in which swastikas and other anti-Semitic phrases appeared.

Senator SCHUMER laid out the prevalence of anti-Semitism throughout global history. We have never been immune to it here even as we profess the freedom of each person to worship as they choose. So how should we deal with this blight on our values and recommit to respecting the religious beliefs of each person?

First, let’s take pride in our tradition of religious freedom and celebrate it today and every day. It has made our society rich in faith traditions. By being authentically who we are, we can educate each other about religious beliefs and grow deeper in our own spiritual understanding.

I am a better Christian because of things that I have learned from friends who are Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Jain, and from those who have deep ethical and spiritual grounding, though not expressed as religious faith at all. And I hope that living my own Christianity may have a positive influence on others’ spiritual beliefs as well.

Second, let’s get better at tracking hate crimes and other forms of discrimination committed on the basis of religion. We passed the Khalid Jabara and Heather Heyer NO HATE Act. Heather Heyer was the very, very remarkable young woman who was killed by neo-Nazis in Charlottesville in August 2017. I was proud to cosponsor that bill. We passed it in 2021 to provide training and implementation grants to

help law enforcement agencies report and respond to hate crimes.

This will solve gaps in reporting. Eighty percent of law enforcement agencies participating in national crime databases reported no hate crimes between 1996 and 2020. This is likely a serious underreporting problem rather than an indication that hate crimes don't happen. Better measurement alone will not solve the problem, but the failure to accurately measure religious discrimination renders improvement very difficult.

Third, let's commit to increasing education about religious discrimination throughout our history and the reasons why America embraced the guarantee of religious freedom as our Nation was founded. I am gratified, for example, that Virginia has made education about the Holocaust an important part of our social studies curriculum. In a recent hearing on anti-Semitism before the HELP Committee, a key fact that emerged was just how poorly informed many are about this topic. And the plethora of misinformation spread by irresponsible social media platforms makes the need for better education even more urgent.

If we just count on the criminal justice system to deal with this topic, we will never be successful. We need to inculcate a curiosity about spirituality and a love for religious pluralism in our young people. This is not about indoctrination; it is about respect.

Fourth, let's embrace a whole-of-government response to anti-Semitism by working to implement the recommendations contained in the "U.S. National Strategy to Counter Anti-Semitism" announced by the Biden administration in June 2023. This comprehensive approach is built around four key pillars: education, safety, fighting the normalization of anti-Semitic words and actions, and building solidarity. It can be a model for similar work at the State and local levels. We can do more in Congress and in communities across America to make this strategy visible and meaningful.

Finally, there are acts that we can each take as individuals to show we respect the religious beliefs of all. There have been powerful examples throughout history of actions of solidarity against anti-Semitism.

I am pleased to partner with my Republican colleague Senator BILL HAGERTY of Tennessee to recognize forgotten heroes of the Holocaust with the Congressional Gold Medal. These were diplomats from over two dozen countries who took grave personal risks to help Jews escape Nazi-occupied Europe. Their actions show us the power of an individual to be a light in the darkness, to say: I am not Jewish, but I see what is happening to Jews, and I will do what I can to help.

When students at the University of Indiana confronted anti-Semitism on campus in 2022, they came up with a novel solution. Noting that the desecration of mezuzahs made Jewish stu-

dents afraid to display them, a campus organization produced and then distributed mezuzahs across the campus to Jewish students and non-Jewish students alike. They reasoned that a massive display of mezuzahs on the community's doors would send a message of solidarity and render it less likely that a Jewish student would fear being targeted for bigotry.

I will follow the creative idea of the Indiana students by installing a mezuzah at the entrance to my home. I want to send a message to Jews and all people that they will always be welcome. I won't put Hebrew Scripture inside of the mezuzah because I don't feel that, as a Catholic, I should appropriate that particular religious tradition, but I will put these words on a small message inside: "None shall be afraid"—echoing the letter George Washington wrote more 230 years ago. That message applies not just to American Jews but to all who seek to live in harmony with others of diverse spiritual views.

I encourage others to follow the inspiration of these young people. Find a mezuzah at a local synagogue or Judaica shop and install it on the door of your home. Place within it a message of hope and acceptance—Washington's words or the First Amendment or another message meaningful to you. Or take other steps to demonstrate that you celebrate our religious freedom and offer welcome to all. Stand together with those of all spiritual traditions against forces that would divide or harm us. By doing so, let's move closer to the ideal that America professed at our founding.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined today, Senator SANDERS be recognized to make a motion to discharge S. Res. 504; and that if the motion is made and upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote in relation to the motion to discharge; further, that the cloture motion with respect to the motion to proceed to H.R. 2872 ripen upon disposition of the motion to discharge.

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

Mr. DURBIN. For the information of the Senate, Senator SANDERS had a flight delay and is still expected to make the motion to discharge his resolution and speak prior to this evening's votes. Senators should expect votes to start at approximately 6:45 p.m.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator from South Carolina.

ISRAEL

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I want to speak a few minutes on the business before the Senate here. Apparently, S. Res. 504 will be taken up in about an hour or so. And this resolution basically requires the Secretary of State to submit a report to the Foreign Relations Committees of the House and Senate regarding human rights practices and violations against the State of Israel regarding their operations in Gaza.

I can only imagine how this is playing in the Middle East. I can only imagine the joy that terrorist groups throughout the world have that we are even talking about such a proposal.

The question, I think, for this body—certainly, for me—is, what was October 7? Was it just a continuation of a tit for tat between Israel and Hamas, or was it an effort by Hamas—a terrorist organization under United States law—an effort to kill innocent civilians in Israel at a rate we haven't seen since the Holocaust?

I just got back. I would urge everybody in the body to go over there and take some time to visit the kibbutz—the kibbutzes in question, where Hamas came en masse, took over kibbutzes, cut the heads of children off, slaughtered people in front of their parents and their children, committed atrocities on par with the Nazis, if not beyond, and recorded them for posterity. So the response is, the U.S. Senate is going to ask for a report about how Israel is conducting military operations. Wow.

Again, to the terrorists who are emboldened, maybe, by this discussion—this is going to go down in flames. The Senate is going to reject this big time. And here's why: I think most people—at least on my side—see October 7 as Pearl Harbor on steroids.

What would happen after Pearl Harbor if some Senator or Congressman did something like this to America?

Did anybody in America believe that the response after Pearl Harbor was anything but total war?

The Japanese Empire and Nazi Germany were in league with Mussolini in Italy to destroy the world as we know it. A surprise attack against our forces on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, awakened this country, and we embarked on "a noble crusade." I think as General Eisenhower—eventually President Eisenhower—described, in destroying the Nazi regime and Imperial Japan. Nobody during those times would have suggested anything like this, because the only way you could

destroy those regimes was to destroy the infrastructure around the regimes.

The problem I have with this—not only does it empower the terrorists, it is the most tone-deaf thing maybe in the history of the Senate—is that it ignores the fact that Hamas has tunnels under hospitals, under schools. They use civilians as human shields. They routinely violate the law of war—and there is nothing in here about that. So all I can say is that the Senate will reject this idea.

And to the left, what are you thinking? To the people who go in and try to interrupt cancer treatments in New York at a cancer hospital, what are you thinking?

A ceasefire with Hamas only allows Hamas to regroup. Do you not see Hamas for who it is? It is a terrorist organization. They are religious Nazis.

They are not taking up the cause of the Palestinian people. They are abusing the Palestinian people probably greater than anybody. A Hamas spokesperson said a few weeks ago that there will be another October 7, another October 7, and another October 7.

Probably the biggest mistake Israel made was withdrawing from Gaza, because when they did, the Palestinians took over.

To the Palestinians who want to live in peace with Israel, Hamas throws them off the roofs of buildings in Gaza.

So we are dealing with the most barbaric organizations in the history of the world who are bent on destroying the Jewish people, are calling for attacks on the United States, and we have a resolution in front of us asking the Secretary of State to investigate the Government of Israel for war crimes.

You talk about upside down and backwards.

Just having been back from Israel, I can assure you the IDF is spending more time trying to protect innocent Palestinians than Hamas. What is odd about this whole thing is that Hamas is doing everything they can to expose civilians to military action, and Israel is trying—I think in a reasonable way—to lessen the exposure.

What do you call a group of people that build tunnels under hospitals and have command infrastructure under a hospital? You call them bloodthirsty terrorists who are trying to prey on the rules that exist in the law of war. By being under the hospital and the schoolhouse and firing rockets from apartment buildings, they have militarized these locations.

So here's what I would tell our friends in Israel: This effort to have you investigated will fail in the U.S. Senate. Keep doing what you need to do to make sure there is no more October 7s. Make sure that Hamas, as we know it, is destroyed. Do the best you can to protect civilians who are in harm's way.

A little bit about Gaza: From the time you are born, you are taught to kill the Jews. The most radicalized na-

tion on the planet, I would say, is Gaza, and a close second would be the West Bank.

When Germany and Japan were destroyed by military force, it took a generation to change the culture. So the Prime Minister of Israel says his goal is to demilitarize and deradicalize. Well, the way you demilitarize is you destroy Hamas as a military power. They have, I think, about 24 brigades.

If we end this conflict with their military capability still standing, we will have made a huge mistake.

The idea of anything but unconditional surrender in World War II was laughable. We used two nuclear bombs, and that is what was required to get Japan to surrender. So when you look back in history, the invasion of Japan that was being planned could have resulted in up to 1 million casualties of American forces. We brought that war to conclusion by using two atomic bombs that eventually allowed unconditional surrender. Anything less than unconditional surrender in World War II would have been a mistake.

Anything short of destroying Hamas militarily would be a mistake for the ages. If Hamas is still standing militarily after this attack of October 7, we will all pay a heavy price.

The world is watching.

To the world: If you see Israel as the bad guy here, you are missing a lot. There is no moral equivalency in play. Hamas goes out of its way to make sure civilians are killed in large numbers. That is part of their strategy, to require Israel to use military force in a way to heighten the likelihood of death by integrating their military infrastructure with civilian infrastructure.

So we will have a vote here soon. This resolution will fail. But the idea behind this resolution is scary to me.

You need to go to Israel and get briefed about what happened on October 7—what happened to the women, what happened to the children, and what is happening to the hostages. If you go and have that briefing and you believe that the only response—and if you believe anything less than total war to destroy Hamas is required, I would be surprised.

What would we do if this happened to us? What would we do to any terrorist group or government that brought about such atrocities against the American people?

We would hunt them down. We would make sure they could never do this to us again. That is exactly what Israel has to do.

It will be a long time before the populations of Gaza and the West Bank are going to be capable, I believe, of living in true peace with Israel, because if you have been taught from the time you were born and all through your life to hate somebody and to learn math by the following: "If you had 10 Jews and you killed 6, how many would you have left?" it is going to be a tall order to change that population.

But here is the good news: We have seen from Germany and Japan that it

can change, but it is going to take a lot of effort. I am willing to help the people in the West Bank and Gaza once Hamas has been destroyed. I am hopeful we can do a deal between Saudi Arabia and Israel in normalizing and effectively putting an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

I believe Iran is the root of all evil here and that this attack was partly due to stopping the normalization efforts between Saudi Arabia and Israel. I have been supporting the efforts of the Biden administration, and I want to publicly thank them for continuing to push. I will do all I can as a Republican to help President Biden bring about the normalization between Saudi Arabia and Israel. That would isolate Iran, and it would effectively end the Arab-Israeli conflict. One of the benefits of that deal would be to give the Palestinian people a better future.

This resolution is not only off base; it is dangerous. It is doing harm. It sends absolutely the wrong signal at the wrong time.

So, to the people who believe this is a good idea for the United States to launch an investigation of Israel as a potential war criminal after October 7, you have learned very little from history. The proper response by Israel is to destroy Hamas. The problem Israel has in that task is that Hamas is trying to make sure Israel kills as many innocent people as possible. Therein lies their dilemma. So this is a horribly bad idea.

To the American people, put yourselves in the shoes of Israel: an attack, barbaric in nature, that is designed to destroy you. Hamas's goal is not to liberate the Palestinian people; it is to kill the Jews. Hamas's goal is not to bring about a better life for the Palestinian people but to destroy the lives of the Jewish people.

They are religious Nazis. If you don't believe me, listen to them. They will not hide their agenda. They celebrate it. The SS tried to hide their war crimes. They tried to rebury bodies and destroy the concentration camps, but they were unable to hide their crimes. Hamas filmed their crimes. They want you to see what they were willing to do to babies and to women.

The question for the world is, What is the right response?

The right response, ladies and gentlemen, is, when you see evil, confront it. When you deal with people who are willing to destroy children or to rape daughters in front of the mother and father, you need to destroy them.

So, not only will this resolution fail, I believe the U.S. Senate will ensure that Israel has the latitude it needs to destroy not only an enemy of the Israeli people—Hamas—but the enemy of mankind itself.

I look forward to voting this resolution down, and I will be coming up with one of my own to try to correct the record.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MOTION TO DISCHARGE—S. RES.
504

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, under section 502B of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, I move to discharge the Committee on Foreign Relations from further consideration of S. Res. 504.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to discharge from the Committee on Foreign Relations, S. Res. 504, a resolution requesting information on Israel's human rights practices pursuant to section 502B(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the following Senators be permitted to speak prior to the vote: Senator SANDERS for up to 25 minutes, Senator MERKLEY for up to 5 minutes, and Senator CARDIN for up to 5 minutes.

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

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, let me apologize to my colleagues for being late. It turns out today was not a great day to travel by plane. I thank the leadership for delaying the vote as well.

We will soon be voting on a resolution requesting information on Israel's human rights practices under section 502B(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act.

There has been some confusion as to what this resolution does and does not do. I would like to say a few words about why it is critical that this resolution come to the floor, why it is imperative that this resolution be passed, imperative that we have this debate and recorded vote, and why Congress must have the information requested in this resolution.

Very sensibly, the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, requires that any security assistance or military equipment provided by the United States of America to any country must be used in line with internationally recognized human rights. This is not a radical idea and something I hope that we all agree with. This act prohibits assistance to any government that engages in a consistent pattern of human rights violations.

This is U.S. law established over 50 years ago—not a new idea. The act also provides Congress with several oversight tools to ensure that this law is followed. One such tool is section 502B(c), which allows Congress to direct the State Department to provide information on the human rights

record of any country—any country—receiving U.S. military assistance.

That is what this resolution does, in line with 50-year-old existing law. It directs the State Department to provide any credible information it may have on potential violations of internationally recognized human rights by Israel in its military campaign in Gaza.

It focuses on the denial of the right to life caused by indiscriminate or disproportionate military operations as well as by restrictions on humanitarian access.

It also asks for information on steps the United States has taken to limit civilian risk in this war, a certification that the Leahy laws are being fully applied, and a summary of the arms and munitions provided to Israel since October 7.

This is a simple request for information. That is all this resolution is about. It does not alter aid to Israel in any way; it simply requests a report on how U.S. aid is being used. This is a very modest, commonsense proposal, and, frankly, it is hard for me to understand why anyone would oppose it.

So we will soon be voting on a very simple question: Do we support asking the State Department for information on whether human rights violations may have occurred using U.S. assistance in Israel's military campaign? That is it. That is what this resolution is about. It is noncontroversial, and it should be passed in large numbers. This is not the case today. We don't have the information.

The State Department will provide a report. The information requested in this resolution is straightforward to provide—not hard for the State Department—and it is critical to congressional oversight. The State Department should have it readily available, as required under current U.S. law and policy. Further, in the highly unlikely event the 30-day deadline is not met by the State Department, the law allows Congress to pass a measure continuing aid. After the report is received, Congress may then consider any changes it deems necessary for security assistance to the country in question. Any such resolution must pass both Houses of Congress and be signed by the President.

But, again, what we are voting on today is simply a request for information. Let me say a few words as to why this resolution is necessary, and these rather horrific photographs behind me I think say it all.

First, it is necessary because of the scale of the destruction in Gaza, the indiscriminate nature of the military campaign, the humanitarian catastrophe that is now occurring, and the limits on humanitarian access—food, water, medical supplies, and fuel.

Second, because of the extensive use of U.S. weapons in attacks that have killed thousands of civilians. Much of the destruction that has taken place in Gaza has been done with U.S. weapons.

Thirdly, I am concerned about the implications of some of the very ex-

treme statements and unclear intentions coming out of the Netanyahu government.

(Mr. WARNOCK assumed the Chair.)

It has been more than 100 days since this war began with the horrific Hamas terrorist attack which killed 1,200 innocent men, women, and children in Israel, and which took more than 200 hostages, over 100 of whom are still cruelly being held in captivity as of today.

While there is no question in my mind that Israel has the right to defend itself and go to war against Hamas, who started this terrible situation, Israel does not have the right to go to war against the entire Palestinian people, innocent men, women, and children in Gaza. Tragically, that is what we are seeing right now.

As we all know, the military campaign being waged by the rightwing Netanyahu government has led to massive destruction and widespread civilian harm. This has been far and away the most intensive bombing campaign of the 21st century. As President Biden has said repeatedly and the press and human rights monitors have exhaustively documented, this bombardment has been largely indiscriminate.

The results of this bombing campaign have been catastrophic, and I underline the word "catastrophic."

Since October 7, the start of the war, over 24,000 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli bombs and over 60,000 have been injured and wounded. Seventy percent of these victims are women and children, and it is believed that thousands more victims lie under the rubble of destroyed buildings in Gaza.

Since the beginning of this war, 1.9 million Palestinian men, women, and children have been driven from their homes. That is 85 percent—85 percent of the total population of Gaza has been forced out of their homes. Where are they going? They have been driven here. They have been driven there. They do not even know today whether they are ever going to be able to return to their homes. These are impoverished people who have no idea as to what their future is or will be.

Despite the sharing of coordinates with Israeli forces, 40 United Nations facilities have sustained direct hits, 61 U.N. installations have suffered collateral damage, and 150 U.N. workers have been killed—150 U.N. workers have been killed.

United Nations reports that over 234,000 housing units have been damaged and more than 46,000 homes completely destroyed in Gaza, amounting to nearly 70 percent—70 percent—of the housing stock, a figure confirmed by academic analysis of satellite radar data. That means—and this is rather an incredible reality—that means that the destruction of Gaza after 100 days has surpassed the destruction of Dresden during World War II, where half the homes in that city were destroyed, and is beyond the damage in dozens of

other German cities subjected to years of bombing during World War II.

Today, not only are the vast majority of people in Gaza homeless, but they lack food, water, medical supplies, and fuel. A recent U.N. report indicates that half of the population of about 2.2 million people are at risk of starvation, and 90 percent say they regularly go without food for a whole day. Parents there go out of their way to make sure their kids eat first.

The chief economist at the World Food Programme said that the humanitarian disaster in Gaza was among the worst he had ever seen. Aid groups say that in the coming weeks, the entire population of Gaza could face famine.

Let us be clear. The reason as to why this resolution must be passed today is that right now, right now as we speak, hundreds of thousands of children in Gaza, innocent children, are starving right before our eyes. We cannot turn away. We must act.

Tragically, despite the efforts of the U.N. and others, despite the growing humanitarian crisis we are seeing, the situation has actually gotten worse in terms of getting aid to the people in need, to these children. Aid groups say that humanitarian access actually deteriorated in January compared to December. Trucks are crossing the border much too slowly, much too few, but even these trucks can't go beyond the immediate border area because the Netanyahu government won't let them proceed in a way that is safe.

That is the situation as it stands today. Humanitarian workers who have spent decades serving in war zones say that this catastrophe goes beyond anything they have ever seen.

Let me repeat. This is not some tragedy taking place in Asia, in Africa—God knows there are enough tragedies all over the world—but this is a tragedy in which we, the United States of America, are complicit. Much of what is happening, much of the bombardment and the other actions that we are seeing now, is happening right now with U.S. arms and equipment. In other words, whether we like it or not, the United States is complicit in the nightmare that millions of Palestinians are now experiencing.

The Wall Street Journal reported on December 1 that the United States had provided at least 15,000 bombs and 57,000 artillery shells to Israel, including more than 5,400 huge, 2,000-pound bombs that can flatten entire neighborhoods. The Washington Post reported that in just 6 weeks after October 7, Israel dropped more than 22,000 American-supplied bombs on Gaza—22,000 American-supplied bombs. CNN reported that nearly half of these bombs were unguided, so-called dumb bombs.

So that is where we find ourselves at this moment. Mr. President, 24,000 Palestinians in Gaza are dead—70 percent are women and children—and 60,000 have been wounded. Seventy percent of the housing stock has been damaged or destroyed, and almost 2 million people

are trying to survive with inadequate supplies of food, water, medicine, or fuel. And the humanitarian situation is getting worse by the minute. Hundreds of thousands of beautiful children are facing starvation.

Given the scale of the destruction and the extensive use of American arms, military equipment, in this campaign, Congress must act, and that is why we must pass this 502B resolution. We must ensure that U.S. aid is being used in accordance with international human rights and our own laws.

A vote for this resolution is simply to request more information on a tragic situation that the American people care about.

Go back home, I say to my colleagues—red State, blue State, purple State—this issue, this suffering, is on the minds of the American people.

That is all this resolution does.

Now a vote against this resolution—which I have a hard time really understanding—it says: I don't want more information. I am going to vote against this resolution. I don't want a report from the State Department. I don't want to know how U.S. military aid in Israel is being used. I don't want to know what responsibility the United States may have for this humanitarian disaster. I want to keep my head in the sand. I don't want to see what is going on.

And, frankly, no matter what your view on this terrible war may be—agree with me; you don't agree with me—we cannot bury our eyes in the sand.

The truth is that since that terrible day on October 7 when Hamas attacked Israel, the Senate has had little meaningful debate on this war, despite the horrific toll and the deep concerns of many Americans. We have passed symbolic resolutions, but we have not considered a single measure that grapples with the unprecedented destruction, the humanitarian crisis, or the use of American weapons in a military campaign that has left so many dead, wounded, and displaced.

Now, no matter what happens on this vote, I know that this will not be the end of this debate. It is just the beginning.

And, finally, I would like to say a word about this resolution's broader importance. Right now, we are focusing on Israel, as we should, given the situation in Gaza. But, in general, what this provision does is extremely sensible. It demands accountability as to how U.S. military aid is used and whether the recipients of that aid abide by international law and our own human rights standards. This is true for Israel, for Saudi Arabia, and for any country that receives U.S. military aid.

Frankly, I hope this vote is the first of many as we take a hard look at how our military aid is being used.

Therefore, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2304 and in accordance with the provisions of section 601(b) of the International Security Assistance and Arms Export

Control Act of 1976, I move to discharge the Committee on Foreign Relations of the further consideration of S. Res. 504, a resolution requesting information on Israel's human rights practices pursuant to section 502B(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's request is already pending.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I reserve the balance of my time, and I would yield the floor to Senator MERKLEY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, on October 7, Israel suffered a horrific terrorist attack by Hamas. It echoes very much the impact that we felt here in America on 9/11 when we suffered a horrific terrorist attack, and it connected our hearts to the hearts of Israelis in a powerful way. And, certainly, I completely supported and support now the cause of Israel to go after Hamas to stop this terrorist threat. I fully support the grief they feel with the hostages who remain and their desire, their goal, to get those hostages free, and I know that the United States has been working in partnership with Israel toward that objective.

Tonight, we are further into that campaign, and we have before us a request for a report from the administration through the exercise of 502B(c) on any potential violations of internationally recognized human rights that may have occurred in this conflict—a request for a report that would be due in 30 days.

And I am here tonight still supporting strongly Israel's right to go after Hamas, but also saying that we have a responsibility to ask hard questions about how a war is conducted—every war. And we weigh in on human rights all around the world.

I cochair a commission that looks into China's abuses of human rights in all kinds of dimensions, from Tibet to the slavery of the Uighur population.

So why is this request for this information important? There are three reasons. They all relate to the validity of targeting Hamas but the invalidity—potential invalidity—of a strategy that also targets the Palestinian people living in Gaza and understanding this dimension, understanding it in terms of humanitarian aid, understanding it in terms of the huge toll on civilians that the bombing has taken, understanding it in terms of the dimension of displacement, where so many—so many—have been displaced, driven toward the south, crowded into Rafah, along the border with Egypt. So I am going to shortly address—briefly address—each of those.

I was one of the first Members of this Chamber to call for an immediate cease-fire and a massive influx of humanitarian aid because of the enormous calamity that is occurring in Gaza with the strategy that Israel is using of mass bombing and artillery shells. One aspect of this is: How does

one get humanitarian aid in to assist those innocent civilians who have been so profoundly impacted?

So, earlier this month, Senator VAN HOLLEN and I went to the Rafah crossing on the border between Egypt and Gaza. We talked to the governments. We talked to the international aid workers who work through the United Nations—an alphabet soup of organizations. We talked to the seasoned, seasoned individuals who have worked in war conflict zones around this globe, and they all said that getting humanitarian aid in is extraordinarily difficult for two reasons. And the first of those reasons was that it is very hard to get preclearance for the aid.

Trucks filled with food, water, and medical supplies were lined up for miles in the desert, waiting to be granted entry into Gaza. A truckdriver can wait more than a week, even when items are preapproved, to get through the inspection.

The inspection serves the purpose of stopping dual-use items. That is legitimate. But if it takes a week when aid is desperately needed, that means people are greatly short of food, clean water, and medical supplies.

And even when inspected and precleared, they could be rejected, and when an item is rejected, the entire truck is rejected. And we saw a warehouse filled with rejected items, including things like solar-powered refrigerators for medical uses and water decontamination supplies.

And then, if trucks are cleared to get in, it is very hard for them to get in unless there is deconfliction. If there isn't deconfliction, then the drivers risk driving and dying when a bomb or artillery shell drops in their path. And, in fact, so many aid workers have been killed and truckdrivers have been killed.

We know that, before the war, 500 trucks a day were able to get into Gaza. And now, just last week, it was less than an average of 150 trucks when people are absolutely desperate.

So there is the possibility and the hope of the United States working intensely with Israel to dramatically change this situation and to get those trucks into Gaza. But there is also the value of having a report from our government, understanding to which degree they have already worked with Israel.

Mr. President, I ask to complete the balance of my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MERKLEY. Thank you.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, could we just have an estimate of how much longer the Senator is going to be?

Mr. MERKLEY. An estimate of 5 minutes.

Mr. CARDIN. I would not object to 5 minutes.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, so our government should work to solve this problem. We have been working to

solve it—so having a report announced by our government: to what degree these strategies of a dysfunctional inspection process and a dysfunctional deconfliction process are a part of a deliberate strategy to create and intensify the shortage of food and water and medical assistance.

The second concern I have is about the bombing and artillery shells which our President has described as an indiscriminate campaign of bombing. We all understand that this terrible attack from Hamas—and Hamas is the enemy. But the Palestinians who live in Gaza and are not part of Hamas, they did not attack Israel. They are not the enemy, and thus it is essential that Netanyahu's government's war strategy against Hamas actually targets Hamas and not innocent Palestinians.

It is estimated that two-thirds of the people killed—two-thirds killed—have been women and children. That is some 8,000 children and 8,000 women. It is a massive toll.

So a report under 502B(c) would be valuable in understanding this strategy. And we are closely tied to it, which is another reason we should want this information. We have supplied over 10,000 tons of military equipment since October 7. We have included 15,000 bombs and 57,000 artillery shells.

It would be useful to have our own government analyze this and understand why we are supplying the very weapons that our government has said Israel should quit using and do a more targeted campaign.

That is the goal of 502B(c): to get a report, to get answers.

My third concern is the displacement. The widespread bombing has produced some 85 percent of the people displaced in Gaza. A leaked Israeli Intelligence Ministry paper said that there are three options, and option C is the preferred option, involving an air campaign in the north, driving people to the south, hopefully displacing them into the Sinai. That has a spooky similarity to the facts on the ground.

And, of course, such a displacement strategy has been called out by some Ministers of the Israeli Government, one of them calling for exactly that strategy, saying: We want a Gazan Nakba, that people will not be able to return.

So we have a government paper. We have the testimony by Ministry officials that that was their goal.

Is that their goal? The Government of Israel has now adamantly said that is not their goal.

That is useful to have our government's best understanding because we should never be complicit in a displacement campaign, if that is, in fact, what is going on.

So, colleagues, we look at conditions around the world, and, normally, it is folks we have little relationship with—although sometimes we have a relationship with them, but it is an “on and off again,” like the situation we have with Saudi Arabia. In this situa-

tion, it is our friend and partner that we have worked so closely with, and it may feel awkward and difficult to say we need to take a close look.

But when there has been this level of casualties and we are this closely tied to it, it is the right thing to do to get the type of information that would come through this request. I encourage my colleagues to support it.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I rise in opposition.

Israel is a long and close ally. And it remains the only democracy in the Middle East. This resolution is a blatant effort to undermine Israel's right to self defense. Let us not forget the facts. Israel has experienced the deadliest massacre of Jews since the Holocaust and the largest hostage crisis—including Americans—since 1979.

The Obama and Biden administrations' failed policies toward the Iranian regime have allowed billions in resources to flow to Iran's terror proxies, including Hamas. We cannot ignore bad U.S. policy that helped create this mess and then sideline our support for the ally who must deal with their consequences.

Instead, this resolution doubles down on those failed policies and represents a troubling Democrat trend: chide our closest allies and fail to confront our most dangerous adversaries. Hamas and Iran are our enemies, not Israel. It is Iran that provides Hamas with weapons, training, and intelligence. It is Hamas that chose to rampage across the border, killing over 1,200 Israelis and 13 Americans. It is Hamas that kidnapped over 240 innocent people for leverage.

It is Hamas that hides its warfighting capability under hospitals, mosques, and other protected sites. And it is Hamas that uses human shields, including women and children. Where is the outrage for this behavior? I find the silence deafening.

I encourage my colleagues across the aisle to focus on Iran, Hamas, and our adversaries and oppose this misguided resolution.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, in the aftermath of the horrific October 7 terrorist attack, Israel not only has the right, but also a duty to its people, to defend itself and pursue the objectives of ending the military threat posed by Hamas and returning all the hostages unharmed. I support those goals and therefore do not and would not support a resolution to terminate all U.S. military assistance to Israel.

That is why I would like to begin by making clear what S. Res. 504 is not about. It is not about cutting off U.S. security assistance to Israel. Anyone who says otherwise has not read the resolution.

So what does this resolution do? The very first line of the resolution states that its purpose is “requesting information on Israel's human rights practices.” The resolution goes on to seek information on “alleged violations of internationally recognized human

rights," including violations related to Israel's military operations and the "denial of basic humanitarian needs" like food, water, medical care, fuel, and shelter.

While these are not simple questions, the resolution simply asks questions. And while I understand that some may be uncomfortable asking questions about the conduct of a close partner, we have a duty to the American taxpayers to get the facts. Israel is the largest annual recipient of U.S. security assistance, totaling more than \$39 billion over the past 10 years alone. The United States is not a bystander to this conflict, and the American people deserve honest answers about how our assistance is being used. The report should provide a full picture of what is happening, including how Hamas's despicable tactic of hiding among the civilian population impacts the prosecution of the war and any other information that the administration deems important.

As I have repeatedly said, Israel's war against Hamas is just, but it must be waged justly. President Biden, Secretary Blinken, and officials across the Biden administration have also made this point clear. For example, Secretary Blinken has repeatedly stated that the "daily toll on civilians in Gaza, particularly children, is far too high" and called upon the Netanyahu coalition to put a "clear plan in place that puts a premium on protecting civilians" and to get "more humanitarian assistance to people who so desperately need it in Gaza."

These entreaties have been rebuffed time and time again by Prime Minister Netanyahu and his ultra-extremist coalition that includes the likes of Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben-Gvir. Despite statements from the Israeli Defense Forces that their operations have shifted to a more "targeted phase," there were still between 112 to 151 Palestinians reportedly killed in Gaza each day last week. This truth is only underscored by the Sunday Washington Post headline: "Despite U.S. pressure on Israel, casualty count in Gaza remains high."

The death toll has now reached over 24,000, two-thirds of them women and children, with another 60,000 wounded. Meanwhile, the humanitarian catastrophe is getting worse, not better. The Netanyahu government initially declared a full siege of Gaza and then, for months, refused to open the main Kerem Shalom crossing. It still refuses to open the northern Erez crossing to get assistance to the desperate people trapped there. Indeed, the water pipeline to northern Gaza has been shut off since October 7.

I visited the Rafah crossing about 10 days ago and witnessed the many obstacles to getting more aid to over 2 million people in desperate need. People in Gaza are on the verge of starvation, children are having limbs amputated without anesthesia, sewage is piling up in the streets, and waterborne

diseases have broken out. International NGOs who have operated in conflict zones for decades have said they have never witnessed a humanitarian disaster as terrible as Gaza.

It is painfully evident that there is a big gap between what U.S. officials have requested of the Netanyahu government and the actions taken by his coalition. This further justifies why we need answers from the administration to the fundamental questions posed by this resolution. We owe it to American taxpayers to better understand how the support we have provided is being used. Some of the very questions raised in this resolution are those we have already sought answers to. While I appreciate the dialogue we have had with members of the administration about the situation in Gaza, to date, we have received no written responses to our letters on the conflict.

If this resolution were to be adopted, the process under section 502B(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 gives the Biden administration 30 days to answer the questions posed. That statute requires the report within 30 days and the only reason for the timetable set forth in statute is to ensure that the Senate gets those answers within a reasonable timeframe. It is simply not credible to say that the Biden administration would fail to meet that deadline and trigger a cut-off of assistance.

Concerns have been raised that, if passed, and once the administration submits the required report within 30 days, the underlying statute, 502B(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act, allows any Senator to file a subsequent resolution to cut off security assistance provided to Israel under the Foreign Assistance Act. While it is worth noting that such a resolution would not apply to air defense systems authorized under the National Defense Authorization Act, like the Iron Dome systems, I would oppose such a blanket attempt to cut off assistance under the Foreign Assistance Act.

I do believe that the United States should require all recipients of U.S. military assistance to abide by certain principles and meet certain standards. That is why Senators KAINE, SCHATZ, DURBIN, and I, together with ten of our Senate colleagues, have proposed an amendment to President Biden's national security supplemental request that would apply equally to Ukraine, Israel, and any other recipient of such assistance and require that each recipient: No. 1, use any U.S. weapons provided with these funds in accordance with international humanitarian law; No. 2, cooperate with U.S. efforts to provide humanitarian assistance in conflict zones where U.S.-provided weapons are being used; and No. 3, submit a report to the Congress on the extent to which these standards are being met and the extent to which the recipients have adopted U.S. policies and mechanisms to reduce civilian casualties in conflict. These standards and simple accountability measures should

apply to all recipients of U.S. security assistance worldwide, and I will be pressing further on this issue when the Senate takes up President Biden's supplemental request.

For now, the business before the Senate is S. Res. 504, and I see no reason to oppose a measure requiring a report seeking facts and information. We have a duty to the American people to get answers to the questions set forth in this resolution.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, I support this resolution and appreciate the leadership of my good friend, the senior Senator from Vermont.

Section 502B of the Foreign Assistance Act is an important and long underutilized tool. It provides a practical mechanism to focus attention on serious human rights concerns around the world. These concerns should matter deeply to every Member of Congress and every American.

There are some who may not support asking the State Department to provide the information called for in this resolution. That is unfortunate. The Senate should be asking the hard questions, especially when fundamental rights and thousands of innocent lives are at stake. Though there are clauses in the resolution I believe could be more effective if drafted differently, that is the nature of the legislative process.

The people of Gaza are in the midst of a humanitarian catastrophe. The amount of death and destruction is staggering. An estimated 10,000 children have been killed and many more likely buried under rubble. The United Nations and other humanitarian relief organizations have warned of widespread starvation if the amount of food, potable water, medicines, and other necessities of life getting into Gaza is not drastically increased in the coming days.

Differences regarding this resolution and the conduct of the war aside, we have a shared responsibility to do whatever we can to save the lives of the 2 million men, women, and children who have been displaced in Gaza and are now completely dependent on international aid. That should be our immediate priority, and I look forward to working on this with other Members of Congress, the State Department, USAID, the United Nations, and other relief organizations in the coming days and weeks. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I have a great deal of respect for my two colleagues. I think every one of us is concerned about what we see in regards to the crisis in Gaza, what we see in regards to the need for humanitarian assistance for innocent Gazans being caught in this battle. But the resolution that is being presented here today is the wrong vehicle to deal with this issue.

So let me start by saying that the resolution does a lot more than requesting information. For the information from those partners that get security assistance from the United States, the State Department today must provide the information of their compliance with our laws. That report is already required for all recipients of security aid.

What this resolution requires is a report within 30 days on specific issues concerning conduct in Gaza, and it is very specific as to what the State Department must provide. I will just give you one example, and there are many, many other examples here. They have to certify that no unit of Israel security forces that received U.S. assistance since January 1, 2018, has committed any gross violation of human rights. Now they have got to do that within 30 days or aid is suspended. And once they give a report, it triggers privileged resolutions on this floor to cut off aid to Israel.

I strongly disagree with my colleagues. 502B was never intended to be used against an ally during a war. It has never been used for that purpose. That is not the right vehicle to deal with this.

Mr. President, this is the 102nd day since Hamas's brutal attack against Israel; 102 days that hostages have been held. Our thoughts and prayers are with the hostages, and we all agree that Israel has the right to defend itself.

The challenges are made much more difficult because they are going against an enemy that has sworn to destroy the nation Israel and they still believe that and they are still conducting themselves with a threat to Israel's sovereignty and safety.

Missiles are still available to be shot into Israel. They are still there in Gaza.

We know what the Houthis are doing in the Red Sea. We know what Iran is doing in Iraq. We know the problems on Israel's northern border by Hezbollah. Over 80,000 Israelis have had to evacuate their homes in northern Israel; 100,000 in the southern part. There is a war going on, and it is made much more difficult because Hamas, sworn to destroy Israel, embeds its operations within the civilian population; has a tunneling network to try to protect its military assets, making it very difficult for Israel to be able to eliminate the threat.

At the same time, we know how much military might was in Gaza on October 7. We were supposed to have had border security to make sure that didn't get into Gaza. There was supposed to be inspections. It didn't work.

I understand why the Israelis are concerned by the way in which the supplies get into Gaza, because there is a concern of ill use and supplying the terrorists in their efforts to destroy Israel. These are all very challenging issues that we have to deal with.

Now, this resolution, as I said before, is much more than requesting informa-

tion. Its passage would be a gift to Hamas, a gift to Iran. It would show a division between Israel and the United States. It is an indictment against Israel, make no mistake about it. It makes it more challenging with sensitive negotiations taking place, as we are here, on additional hostages being released. It makes it more difficult for us to deal with preventing the escalation of the conflict.

If Iran believes that the United States is not with Israel, believe me, it makes it more likely we are going to see additional attacks in that region.

The Biden administration is seeking to contain this conflict and not to see it spread and grow out of control. It is pressing for a shift to a more targeted campaign against Hamas military infrastructure and the perpetrators of the October 7 attacks. It is pressing to get more humanitarian assistance into Gaza. And, yes, we can and should continue to position toward a targeted prosecution of the war against Hamas and Gaza. But passing this resolution does not do that. In fact, I would say, it is counterproductive to it.

Make no mistake, our passing the resolution triggers this. This is not a resolution that goes to the House and is signed by the President. If we pass this, the process is triggered to cut off aid to Israel during war.

MOTION TO TABLE

For those reasons, Mr. President, I move to table the motion to discharge S. Res. 504, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President. The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KELLY). Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas and nays are ordered.

Mr. SANDERS. I ask unanimous consent for 1 minute.

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

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, 24,000 Palestinians are dead, 70 percent of whom are women and children, 70 percent of the housing stock has been damaged or destroyed, and almost 2 million people are trying to survive with inadequate supplies of food, water, medical supplies, or fuel. And, as we speak, hundreds of thousands of children face starvation.

The time is now for the U.S. Senate to act.

I ask for a "no" vote on the motion to table.

VOTE ON MOTION TO TABLE

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

The yeas and nays have previously been ordered.

The clerk will call roll. The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY), the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. SCHMITT), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE), and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) would have voted "yea," the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY) would have voted "yea," and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) would have voted "yea."

The result was announced—yeas 72, nays 11, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 8 Leg.]

YEAS—72

Baldwin	Fetterman	Murray
Bennet	Fischer	Ossoff
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Padilla
Booker	Graham	Peters
Braun	Hassan	Reed
Britt	Hawley	Ricketts
Brown	Hickenlooper	Risch
Budd	Hoeben	Rosen
Cantwell	Johnson	Schumer
Capito	Kaine	Scott (FL)
Cardin	Kelly	Scott (SC)
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Klobuchar	Sinema
Cassidy	Lankford	Smith
Collins	Lee	Stabenow
Cornyn	Lummis	Tester
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Thune
Cotton	Marshall	Tillis
Cramer	McConnell	Vance
Crapo	Menendez	Warner
Cruz	Moran	Warnock
Duckworth	Mullin	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murkowski	Wyden
Ernst	Murphy	Young

NAYS—11

Butler	Markey	Van Hollen
Heinrich	Merkley	Warren
Hirono	Paul	Welch
Luján	Sanders	

NOT VOTING—17

Barrasso	Hagerty	Schatz
Blackburn	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Boozman	Kennedy	Sullivan
Coons	Romney	Tuberville
Daines	Rounds	Wicker
Grassley	Rubio	

The motion to table was agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant 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 motion to proceed to Calendar No. 243, H.R.

2872, a bill to amend the Permanent Electronic Duck Stamp Act of 2013 to allow the Secretary of the Interior to issue electronic stamps under such Act, and for other purposes.

Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Alex Padilla, Gary C. Peters, Jack Reed, Tina Smith, Sheldon Whitehouse, Margaret Wood Hassan, Jeanne Shaheen, Richard J. Durbin, Tim Kaine, Tammy Baldwin, Peter Welch, Catherine Cortez Masto, Christopher Murphy, Richard Blumenthal, Mark R. Warner.

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 motion to proceed to Calendar No. 243, H.R. 2872, a bill to amend the Permanent Electronic Duck Stamp Act of 2013 to allow the Secretary of the Interior to issue electronic stamps under such Act, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY), the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. SCHMITT), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE), and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 68, nays 13, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 9 Leg.]

YEAS—68

Baldwin	Hassan	Padilla
Bennet	Heinrich	Peters
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Reed
Booker	Hirono	Ricketts
Brown	Hoeven	Rosen
Butler	Kaine	Sanders
Cantwell	Kelly	Schumer
Capito	King	Shaheen
Carper	Klobuchar	Sinema
Casey	Lankford	Smith
Cassidy	Luján	Stabenow
Collins	Lummis	Tester
Cornyn	Manchin	Thune
Cortez Masto	Markey	Tillis
Cotton	McConnell	Van Hollen
Cramer	Menendez	Warner
Duckworth	Merkley	Warnock
Durbin	Moran	Warren
Ernst	Mullin	Welch
Fetterman	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Fischer	Murphy	Wyden
Gillibrand	Murray	Young
Graham	Ossoff	

NAYS—13

Braun	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Britt	Lee	Scott (SC)
Budd	Marshall	Vance
Crapo	Paul	
Cruz	Risch	

NOT VOTING—19

Barrasso	Hagerty	Schatz
Blackburn	Hawley	Schmitt
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Sullivan
Cardin	Kennedy	Tuberville
Coons	Romney	Wicker
Daines	Rounds	
Grassley	Rubio	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 68, the nays are 13.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate 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.

(At the request of Mr. THUNE, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD).

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, as a result of multiple flight delays and cancellations due to the winter storm, I will miss today's votes.●

UNITED STATES SENATE CHAMBER AND GALLERIES REGULATIONS

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD updated United States Senate Chamber and Galleries Regulations.

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

UNITED STATES SENATE CHAMBER AND GALLERIES REGULATIONS

ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION ON JANUARY 11, 2024, PURSUANT TO RULE XXXIII OF THE STANDING RULES OF THE SENATE

1.0 Scope—These regulations are applicable only to the Senate Chamber and Galleries.

2.0 Definitions—For purposes of these regulations, the following terms have the meaning specified.

2.1 Cloakroom means the two spaces, one assigned to the majority party and one assigned to the minority party, adjacent to the Senate Chamber.

2.2 Galleries means the ten seating galleries located in the Senate Chamber.

2.3 Marble Room means the Senators' meeting room adjacent to the Senate Lobby.

2.4 Senate Chamber means the space that encompasses the Senate Floor and Galleries.

2.5 Senate Floor means the floor of the Senate Chamber.

2.6 Senate Lobby means the hallway space adjoining the Senate Chamber to the Marble Room.

2.7 Sergeant at Arms means the Sergeant at Arms of the Senate.

3.0 Sergeant at Arms Chamber and Galleries Duties—The Sergeant at Arms of the Senate, under the direction of the Presiding Officer, shall be the Executive Officer of the body for the enforcement of all rules made by the Committee on Rules and Administration for the regulation of the Senate Chamber and Galleries.

3.1 The Senate Floor shall be at all times under the Sergeant at Arms' immediate supervision, and the Sergeant at Arms shall see that the various subordinate officers of the Office of the Sergeant at Arms perform the duties to which they are especially assigned.

3.2 The Sergeant at Arms shall see that the messengers assigned to the doors upon the Senate Floor are at their posts and that the Senate Floor, Cloakrooms, and Senate Lobby are cleared at least five minutes before the opening of daily sessions of all persons not entitled to remain there.

3.3 In the absence of the Sergeant at Arms the duties of the office, so far as they pertain to the enforcement of the rules, shall devolve upon the Deputy Sergeant at Arms.

4.0 Messengers Acting as Assistant Doorkeepers—The messengers acting as Assistant Doorkeepers shall be assigned to their duties by the Sergeant at Arms.

5.0 Assignment of Majority and Minority Secretaries—The secretary for the majority and the secretary for the minority shall be assigned, during the daily sessions of the Senate, to duty upon the Senate Floor.

6.0 Use of the Senate Chamber—When the Senate is not sitting in session or otherwise using the Chamber for some function of the Senate, no Senator shall seat any person or persons in chairs of Senators other than the chair assigned, no other persons shall seat anyone in a chair of a Senator; and lectures, talks, or speeches shall not be given at such times to groups on the Senate Floor by Senators or others except for the purpose of explaining the Chamber.

7.0 Use of the Marble Room—No persons shall be admitted to the Marble Room except Senators.

8.0 Use of the Cloakrooms—No persons shall be admitted to the Cloakrooms except those entitled to the privileges of the Senate Floor under the Rule XXIII of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

9.0 Use of the Senate Lobby—No persons shall be admitted to the Senate Lobby except those entitled to the privileges of the Senate Floor under the Rule XXIII of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

10.0 Use of Display Materials in the Senate Chamber—Graphic displays in the Senate Chamber are limited to charts, photographs, or renderings:

10.1 Size—No larger than 36 inches by 48 inches.

10.2 Where—On an easel stand next to the Senator's desk or at the rear of the Chamber.

10.3 When—Only at the time the Senator is engaged in debate.

10.4 Number—No more than two may be displayed at a time.

11.0 Display of Flowers in the Senate Chamber—Flowers are not permitted in the Senate Chamber, except that upon receiving notice of the death of a sitting Senator, the majority leader and the minority leader of the Senate may jointly permit a display of flowers to be placed upon the desk of the deceased Senator.

12.0 Solicitation and Commercial Activities Prohibited—No persons shall carry out any of the following activities in the Senate Chamber and Galleries: offer or expose any article for sale; display a sign, placard, or other form of advertisement; or solicit fares, alms, subscriptions, or contributions.

13.0 Legislative Buzzers and Signal Lights—The system of legislative buzzers and signal lights, which correspond with rings if available, shall be as follows:

13.1 Pre-session signals:

13.1.1 One long ring at hour of convening.

13.1.2 One red light to remain lighted at all times while Senate is in actual session.

13.2 Session signals:

13.2.1 One ring—Yeas and nays.

13.2.2 Two rings—quorum call.

13.2.3 Three rings—Call of absentees.

13.2.4 Four rings—Adjournment or recess.

(End of daily session.)

13.2.5 Five rings—Seven and a half minutes remaining on ye and nay vote.

13.2.6 Morning business concluded—Six rings. Lights cut off immediately.

13.2.7 Recess during daily session—Six rings. Lights stay on during period of recess.

14.0 Taking of Pictures Prohibited; Use of Mechanical Equipment in Chamber—

14.1 The taking of pictures of any kind is prohibited in the Senate Chamber, the Marble Room, the Senate Lobby, and the Senate Cloakrooms.

14.2 The majority leader and the minority leader of the Senate may suspend 14.1 temporarily for the sole and specific purpose of permitting the Senate Photographic Studio to photograph the Senate in session, at a date and time jointly agreed upon by the majority leader and the minority leader.

14.3 The Chair and Ranking Member of the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate may suspend 14.1 temporarily, for the sole and specific purpose of permitting the Senate Curator to take photographs in the Senate Chamber, Marble Room, and Senate Lobby, as required to complete the archival and administrative responsibilities of the Senate Curator, at a date and time jointly agreed upon by the Chair and Ranking Member of the Committee on Rules and Administration.

14.3.1 Photographs taken pursuant to 14.3 may be released upon written request to, and the approval of, the Chair and Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration.

14.4 The Sergeant at Arms shall be authorized to admit into the spaces defined in 14.1 such mechanical equipment and/or devices which, in the judgment of the Sergeant at Arms, are necessary and proper in the conduct of official Senate business and which by their presence shall not in any way distract, interrupt, or inconvenience the business or Members of the Senate.

15.0 Galleries—The Sergeant at Arms shall keep the aisles of the galleries clear, and shall not allow admittance into the galleries of more than their seating capacity. The Sergeant at Arms shall not permit any person to enter a gallery with or carrying any firearms or dangerous weapons except for law enforcement and other personnel performing duties under the direction of the Senate, or any package, bundle, suitcase, briefcase, or camera; the Sergeant at Arms shall not permit any person in any gallery to smoke, applaud, or commit any other type of demonstration either by sound or sign; except in the press, radio, television, and correspondents' galleries the Sergeant at Arms shall not permit any person to read (except the Senate seating diagram) or to write or take notes (except credentialed employees of the Senate when taking notes in the course of their employment); the Sergeant at Arms shall not permit any person to take any picture or photograph or to sketch or draw; the Sergeant at Arms shall not permit any person to place any object whatsoever—including hats, coats, or other personal apparel—or portion of a person on any railing, or any person to wear a hat, except that where a person's religious beliefs require that person

wear a head-cover in such public places as the Senate Gallery, then such head-cover shall be permitted; and the Sergeant at Arms shall not allow any person to lean forward over the railings or to place hands thereon.

15.1 The galleries of the Senate shall be set apart and occupied as follows:

15.1.1 Gallery 1—The gallery above the northeastern corner of the Senate Chamber, commonly referred to as the Staff Gallery, is reserved for the use of credentialed employees of the Senate.

15.1.2 Gallery 2—The gallery above the eastern entrance to the Senate Chamber, commonly referred to as the Family Gallery, is reserved for the exclusive use of the families of Senators, former Presidents of the United States, and incumbent Secretary and Sergeant at Arms of the Senate.

15.1.2.1 The first two rows of the gallery are reserved for the spouses and other members of the immediate families of Senators.

15.1.2.2 The remainder of the gallery is reserved for the families of Senators and guests visiting their families who shall be designated by some member of the Senator's family, and for the families of former Presidents of the United States, as well as families of incumbent Secretary and Sergeant at Arms of the Senate.

15.1.3 Gallery 3—The gallery over the southeastern corner of the Senate Chamber, commonly referred to as a Public Gallery, is reserved for the use of persons holding a card issued by a Senator.

15.1.3.1 The period to which such card of admission shall be limited rests entirely in the discretion of the Senator issuing it, except that such cards shall expire at the end of each session and cards of a different color shall be furnished by the Sergeant at Arms for the following session.

15.1.3.2 The Sergeant at Arms shall in the Sergeant at Arms' discretion limit occupancy of the public galleries to such periods as may be required to accommodate with reasonable expediency all card bearers who are seeking admission.

15.1.4 Gallery 4—The gallery between Gallery 3 and Gallery 5 on the south side of the Senate Chamber, commonly referred to as the Representatives' Gallery, is reserved for the use of Members of Congress of the House of Representatives and their guests.

15.1.5 Gallery 5—The gallery over the southern main entrance to the Senate Chamber, commonly referred to as the Presidential and Diplomatic Gallery, is reserved for the use of the Diplomatic Corps, and no person shall be admitted to it excepting the Secretary of State, foreign ministers, their families and Senators.

15.1.5.1 The first row on the eastern side of this gallery shall be set apart for the use of the President of the United States.

15.1.5.2 The second row on the eastern side of this gallery shall be set apart for the use of the Vice President of the United States.

15.1.5.3 The third row on the eastern side of this gallery shall be set apart for the use of the President pro tempore of the Senate.

15.1.6 Gallery 6—The gallery between Gallery 5 and Gallery 7 on the south side of the Senate Chamber, commonly referred to as a Public Gallery, is reserved for the use of large guided tours and other special parties.

15.1.7 Gallery 7—The gallery over the southwest corner of the Senate Chamber, commonly referred to as the Accessible Gallery, is reserved for the use of any guest, especially those who wish to avoid stairs, and those who would like to view closed captioning television, or use an assisted listening device.

15.1.8 Gallery 8—The gallery over the west entrance to the Senate Chamber, commonly referred to as a Public Gallery, is reserved for the use of persons holding a card issued by a Senator.

15.1.8.1 The period to which such card of admission shall be limited rests entirely in the discretion of the Senator issuing it, except that such cards shall expire at the end of each session and cards of a different color shall be furnished by the Sergeant at Arms for the following session.

15.1.8.2 The Sergeant at Arms shall in the Sergeant at Arms' discretion limit occupancy of the public galleries to such periods as may be required to accommodate with reasonable expediency all card bearers who are seeking admission.

15.1.9 Gallery 9—The gallery over the northwest corner of the Senate Chamber, commonly referred to as a Public Gallery, is reserved for the use of persons holding a card issued by a Senator.

15.1.9.1 The period to which such card of admission shall be limited rests entirely in the discretion of the Senator issuing it, except that such cards shall expire at the end of each session and cards of a different color shall be furnished by the Sergeant at Arms for the following session.

15.1.9.2 The Sergeant at Arms shall in the Sergeant at Arms' discretion limit occupancy of the public galleries to such periods as may be required to accommodate with reasonable expediency all card bearers who are seeking admission.

15.1.10 Gallery 10—The gallery above the Senate Floor dais on the north side of the Senate Chamber including the front row of Gallery 1 and the front row of Gallery 9, commonly referred to as the Media Gallery, is reserved for the exclusive use of the Press Gallery, Radio and Television Correspondents Gallery, Periodical Press Gallery, and Press Photographers' Gallery.

16.0 Use of the Media Gallery—Gallery 10, the Media Gallery shall be further set apart and occupied as follows:

16.1 Press Gallery—The gallery in the rear of the Vice President's chair shall be set apart for reporters of daily newspapers.

16.1.1 The administration of the Press Gallery shall be vested in a Standing Committee of Correspondents elected by accredited members of the gallery. The committee shall consist of five persons elected to serve for terms of two years: Provided, however, that at the election in January 1951, the three candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall serve for two years and the remaining two for one year. Thereafter, three members shall be elected in odd-numbered years and two in even-numbered years. Elections shall be held in January. The committee shall elect its own chair and secretary. Vacancies on the committee shall be filled by special election to be called by the Standing Committee.

16.1.2 Persons desiring admission to the Press Gallery in the Senate wing shall make application in accordance with Rule XXXIII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, which rule shall be interpreted and administered by the Standing Committee of Correspondents, subject to the review and approval by the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration.

16.1.3 The Standing Committee of Correspondents shall limit membership in the Press Gallery to bona fide correspondents of repute in their profession, under such rules as the Standing Committee of Correspondents shall prescribe: Provided, however, that the Standing Committee of Correspondents shall admit to the Press Gallery no person who does not establish to the satisfaction of the Standing Committee all of the following:

16.1.3.1 That the person's principal income is obtained from news correspondence intended for publication in newspapers entitled to second-class mailing privileges.

16.1.3.2 That the person is not engaged in paid publicity or promotion work or in prosecuting any claim before Congress or before

any department of the Government, and will not become so engaged while a member of the Press Gallery.

16.1.3.3 That the person is not engaged in any lobbying activity and will not become so engaged while a member of the Press Gallery.

16.1.4 Members of the families of correspondents are not entitled to the privileges of the Press Gallery.

16.1.5 The Standing Committee of Correspondents shall propose no change or changes in these rules except upon petition in writing signed by not less than 100 accredited members of the Press Gallery.

16.2 Radio and Television Correspondents Gallery—The front row of Gallery 1 shall be set apart for the use of the radio-television correspondents.

16.2.1 Persons desiring admission to the Radio and Television Correspondents Gallery of the Senate shall make application to the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate, as required by Rule XXIII of the Standing Rules of the Senate; and shall also state, in writing, the names of all radio stations, television stations, systems, or newsgathering organizations by which they are employed; and what other occupation or employment they may have, if any; and shall further declare that they are not engaged in the prosecution of claims or promotion of legislation pending before Congress, the departments, or the independent agencies, and that they will not become so employed without resigning from the gallery. They shall further declare that they are not employed in any legislative or executive department or independent agency of the Government, or by any foreign government or representative thereof; that they are not engaged in any lobbying activities; that they do not and will not, directly or indirectly, furnish special information to any organization, individual, or group of individuals, for the influencing of prices on any commodity or stock exchange; that they will not do so during the time they retain membership in the gallery. Holders of visitors' cards who may be allowed temporary admission to the gallery must conform to all the restrictions of this paragraph.

16.2.2 It shall be prerequisite to membership that the radio station, television station, system, or newsgathering agencies which the applicants represent shall certify, in writing, to the Radio and Television Correspondents Gallery that the applicants conform to the foregoing regulations.

16.2.3 The applications required by the above rule shall be authenticated in a manner that shall be satisfactory to the Executive Committee of the Radio and Television Correspondents Gallery, which shall see that the occupation of the gallery is confined to bona fide news gatherers and/or reporters of reputable standing in their business who represent radio stations, television stations, systems, or newsgathering agencies engaged primarily in serving radio stations, television stations, or systems. It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee of the Radio and Television Correspondents Gallery to report, at its discretion, violation of privileges of the gallery to the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, and, pending action thereon, the offending individual may be suspended.

16.2.4 Persons engaged in other occupations, whose chief attention is not given to—or more than one-half of their earned income is not derived from—the gathering or reporting of news for radio stations, television stations, systems, or newsgathering agencies primarily serving radio stations, television stations, or systems, shall not be entitled to admission to the Radio and Television Correspondents Gallery. The Radio and Tele-

vision Correspondents list in the Congressional Directory shall be a list only of persons whose chief attention is given to the gathering and reporting of news for radio stations, television stations, and systems engaged in the daily dissemination of news, and of representatives of newsgathering agencies engaged in the daily service of news to such radio stations, television stations, or systems.

16.2.5 Members of the families of correspondents are not entitled to the privileges of the gallery.

16.2.6 The Radio and Television Correspondents Gallery shall be under the control of the Executive Committee of the Radio and Television Correspondents Gallery, subject to the approval and supervision of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration.

16.3 Periodical Press Gallery—The front row of Gallery 9 shall be set aside for the use of the periodical press.

16.3.1 Persons eligible for admission to the Periodical Press Gallery of the Senate must be bona fide resident correspondents of reputable standing, giving their chief attention to the gathering and reporting of news. They shall state in writing the names of their employers and their additional sources of earned income; and they shall declare that, while a member of the Gallery, they will not act as an agent in the prosecution of claims, and will not become engaged or assist, directly or indirectly, in any lobbying, promotion, advertising, or publicity activity intended to influence legislation or any other action of the Congress, nor any matter before any independent agency, or any department or other instrumentality of the Executive Branch; and that they will not act as an agent for, or be employed by the federal, or any state, local or foreign government or representatives thereof; and that they will not, directly or indirectly, furnish special or "insider" information intended to influence prices or for the purpose of trading on any commodity or stock exchange; and that they will not become employed, directly or indirectly, by any stock exchange, board of trade or other organization or member thereof, or brokerage house or broker engaged in the buying and selling of any security or commodity. Applications shall be submitted to the Executive Committee of the Periodical Correspondents' Association and shall be authenticated in a manner satisfactory to the Executive Committee.

16.3.2 Applicants must be employed by periodicals that regularly publish a substantial volume of news material of either general, economic, industrial, technical, cultural or trade character. The periodical must require such Washington coverage on a continuing basis and must be owned and operated independently of any government, industry, institution, association, or lobbying organization. Applicants must also be employed by a periodical that is published for profit and is supported chiefly by advertising or by subscription, or by a periodical meeting the conditions in this paragraph but published by a non-profit organization that, first, operates independently of any government, industry, or institution and, second, does not engage, directly or indirectly, in any lobbying or other activity intended to influence any matter before Congress or before any independent agency or any department or other instrumentality of the Executive Branch. House organs are not eligible.

16.3.3 Members of the families of correspondents are not entitled to the privileges of the gallery.

16.3.4 The Executive Committee may issue temporary credentials permitting the privileges of the Gallery to individuals who meet the rules of eligibility but who may be on

short-term assignment or temporarily resident in Washington.

16.3.5 Under the authority of Rule XXIII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Periodical Press Gallery of the Senate shall be under the control of the Executive Committee, subject to the approval and supervision of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration. It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee, at its discretion, to report violations of the privileges of the Gallery to the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, and pending action thereon, the offending correspondent may be suspended. The Committee shall be elected at the start of each Congress by members of the Periodical Correspondents' Association, and shall consist of seven members with no more than one member from any one publishing organization. The Committee shall elect its own officers, and a majority of the Committee may fill vacancies on the Committee. The list in the Congressional Directory shall be a list only of members of the Periodical Correspondents' Association.

16.4 Press Photographer's Gallery—

16.4.1 Administration of the Press Photographers' Gallery is vested in a Standing Committee of Press Photographers consisting of six persons elected by accredited members of the gallery. The Committee shall be composed of one member each from Associated Press Photos, Reuters News Pictures or AFP Photos, magazine media, local newspapers, agency or freelance member, and one at-large member. The at-large member may be, but need not be, selected from a media otherwise represented on the Committee, however no organization may have more than one representative on the Committee.

16.4.2 The term of office of a member of the Committee elected as the Associated Press Photos member, the local newspaper member, and the Reuters News Pictures or AFP Photos member shall expire on the day of the election held in the first odd-numbered year following the year in which the person was elected, and the term of office of a member of the Committee elected as the magazine media member, the agency or freelance member and the at-large member shall expire on the day of the election held in the first even-numbered year following the year in which the person was elected. A member elected to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of a term shall serve only for the unexpired portion of such term.

16.4.2.1 Election for the Reuters News Pictures or AFP photos seat was held in 1999.

16.4.2.2 Election for the agency or freelance seat was held in 2000.

16.4.3 Elections shall be held as early as practicable in each year and in no case later than March 31. A vacancy in the membership of the Committee occurring prior to the expiration of a term shall be filled by special election called for that purpose by the Committee.

16.4.4 The Standing Committee of the Press Photographers' Gallery shall propose no change or changes in these rules except upon petition in writing signed by not less than 25 accredited members of the gallery.

16.4.5 Persons desiring admission to the Press Photographers' Gallery of the Senate shall make application in accordance with rule XXIII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, which rule shall be interpreted and administered by the Standing Committee of Press Photographers subject to the review and approval of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration.

16.4.6 The Standing Committee of Press Photographers shall limit membership in the photographers' gallery to bona fide news photographers of repute in their profession and to heads of Photographic Bureaus under such rules as the Standing Committee of Press Photographers shall prescribe.

16.4.7 Provided, however, That the Standing Committee of Press Photographers shall admit to the gallery no person who does not establish to the satisfaction of the Committee all of the following:

16.4.7.1 That any member is not engaged in paid publicity or promotion work or in prosecuting any claim before Congress or before any department of the Government, and will not become so engaged while a member of the gallery.

16.4.7.2 That the person is not engaged in any lobbying activity and will not become so engaged while a member of the gallery.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE WARREN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

• Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Warren Symphony Orchestra located in Macomb County, MI. Founded in 1972, the Warren Symphony Orchestra and its musicians have worked to provide cultural enrichment, entertainment, and youth education to the Macomb community by supporting and advancing a local orchestra of professional quality. What began as a small project aimed at replacing the Warren Consolidates Schools string program has grown over the past 50 years into thriving arts and culture destination for residents of Warren and Macomb County.

The Warren Symphony Orchestra—WSO—opened its first season in 1973–1974, playing their first concert on May 5, 1974. Over the next decade, the WSO benefited from growing community support, hosting concerts such as “Music of the 20s” and “A Salute to Poland in April,” the latter of which celebrated the history of the Polish community in the city of Warren. In this period, the WSO also began to form traditions, including a series of concerts performed by the WSO at the St. Dorothy Church in Warren, the beginning of yearly youth concerts, and General Motors sponsoring the WSO’s opening night. By 1979, subscriptions to the Warren Symphony Orchestra had increased by over 143 percent and the WSO began to gain acclaim. The spring performance was chosen by the Detroit Free Press as one of the 10 best performances of the 1979–1980 season in metro Detroit. The WSO has been chosen seven times—2000, 2001, 2003, 2007, 2014, 2015, and 2017—as Outstanding Community Orchestra at the Detroit Music Awards. Over the years, the WSO has engaged and inspired the Warren community through the delivery of unique concert experiences and themes. Memorable among them was the All-American concert in the spring season of 1982, which features 2 choruses and 2 orchestras: 198 singers, 116 orchestra players, and 1 conducting, accounting for a total of 315 musicians, and a fully staged opera performed in accompaniment with Oakland University in the 2000–2001 season, to name a few.

In line with their mission of youth education, the Warren Symphony Orchestra has a long history of performing with local youth choirs, bands, and artists. This is in addition to the free music education materials that the WSO provides to the youth in the Macomb community, as well the reoccurring youth concert series that reaches as many as 2,000 elementary students annually.

The Warren Symphony Orchestra has been enriching the lives of Warren and Macomb residents since 1972. As they celebrate their 50th anniversary, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing the cultural and educational contributions that the Warren Symphony Orchestra has made over the past five decades. I wish the Warren Symphony Orchestra continued growth and prosperity in the years ahead. •

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:02 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following joint resolution, without amendment:

S.J. Res. 38. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Federal Highway Administration relating to “Waiver of Buy America Requirements for Electric Vehicle Chargers”.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills and joint resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 540. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to pursue more equitable treatment of Taiwan at the international financial institutions, and for other purposes.

H.R. 788. An act to limit donations made pursuant to settlement agreements to which the United States is a party, and for other purposes.

H.R. 803. An act to direct certain financial regulators to exclude representatives of the People’s Republic of China from certain banking organizations upon notice of certain threats or danger, and for other purposes.

H.R. 839. An act to require the United States Executive Director at the International Monetary Fund to advocate for increased transparency with respect to exchange rate policies of the People’s Republic of China, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4768. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to instruct the United States Executive Directors at the international financial institutions to advocate for investment in projects that decrease reliance on Russia for agricultural commodities.

H.R. 6370. An act to require the Office of Foreign Assets Control to develop a program under which private sector firms may receive a license to conduct nominal financial transactions in furtherance of the firms’ investigations, and for other purposes.

H.J. Res. 98. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to “Standard for Determining Joint Employer Status”.

The message further announced that pursuant to section 703(c) of the Public Interest Declassification Act of 2000 (50 U.S.C. 3161 note), and the order of the

House of January 9, 2023, the Speaker appoints the following individual on the part of the House of Representatives to the Public Interest Declassification Board for a term of 3 years: Mr. Ezra Cohen of Chevy Chase, MD.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 540. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to pursue more equitable treatment of Taiwan at the international financial institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 788. An act to limit donations made pursuant to settlement agreements to which the United States is a party, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 803. An act to direct certain financial regulators to exclude representatives of the Peoples Republic of China from certain banking organizations upon notice of certain threats or danger, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 839. An act to require the United States Executive Director at the International Monetary Fund to advocate for increased transparency with respect to exchange rate policies of the People’s Republic of China, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 4768. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to instruct the United States Executive Directors at the international financial institutions to advocate for investment in projects that decrease reliance on Russia for agricultural commodities; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 6370. An act to require the Office of Foreign Assets Control to develop a program under which private sector firms may receive a license to conduct nominal financial transactions in furtherance of the firms’ investigations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

PRIVILEGED NOMINATION REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

On request by Senator GARY C. PETERS, under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Jeff Rezmovic, of Maryland, to be Chief Financial Officer, Department of Homeland Security.

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-3290. A communication from the General Counsel, Government Accountability Office, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Antideficiency Act Reports Compilations, Fiscal Years 2019–2023”; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC-3291. A communication from the Alternate Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “DoD Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Program; Amendment” (RIN0790-

AL54) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 26, 2023; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-3292. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 14064 with respect to the widespread humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan and the potential for a deepening economic collapse in Afghanistan; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3293. A communication from the Senior Legal Advisor for Regulatory Affairs, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Privacy Act of 1974; Exemptions" (RIN1506-AB63) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 26, 2023; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3294. A communication from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting a legislative proposal to amend the Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Pub. L. 113-291) to remove the requirement for public access to the summit of Rattlesnake Mountain, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-3295. A communication from the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Good Neighbor Environmental Boards' advice letter on drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure in the U.S.-Mexico border region, and the Council's response to the advice letter; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3296. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "State of Louisiana Underground Injection Control Program; Class VI Primacy" (FRL No. 9916-02-OW) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 4, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3297. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Outer Continental Shelf Air Regulations; Consistency Update for Maryland" (FRL No. 10292-02-R3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 4, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3298. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Mississippi: Final Approval of State Underground Storage Tank Program Revisions, Codification, and Incorporation by Reference" (FRL No. 11400-02-R4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 4, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3299. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Kentucky; Revisions to Jefferson County Emissions Monitoring and Reporting" (FRL No. 11564-04-R4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 4, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

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. MARKEY:

S. 3589. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit unauthorized private paramilitary activity, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida:

S. 3590. A bill to prohibit the importation of garlic from the People's Republic of China; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. LUJÁN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WARNER, Mr. KELLY, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 3591. A bill making appropriations to improve border security, imposing new reporting requirements relating to border security, and enhancing criminal penalties for destroying or evading border controls; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 3592. A bill to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to clarify the authority of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection with respect to persons regulated by a State insurance regulator, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. ROSEN:

S. 3593. A bill to provide for economic development and conservation in Washoe County, Nevada, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. PETERS):

S. 3594. A bill to require Governmentwide source code sharing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 135

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 135, a bill to provide for a period of continuing appropriations in the event of a lapse in appropriations under the normal appropriations process, and establish procedures and consequences in the event of a failure to enact appropriations.

S. 163

At the request of Mr. MARSHALL, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 163, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to remove short-barreled rifles, short-barreled shotguns, and certain other weapons from the definition of firearms for purposes of the National Firearms Act, and for other purposes.

S. 273

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 273, a bill to posthumously award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the African Americans who served with Union forces during the

Civil War, in recognition of their bravery and outstanding service.

S. 340

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 340, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to modify the definition of franchise fee, and for other purposes.

S. 495

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 495, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to provide assisted living services for eligible veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 815

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 815, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the female telephone operators of the Army Signal Corps, known as the "Hello Girls".

S. 2384

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2384, a bill to provide lawful permanent resident status for certain advanced STEM degree holders, and for other purposes.

S. 2825

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2825, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the United States Army Dustoff crews of the Vietnam War, collectively, in recognition of their extraordinary heroism and life-saving actions in Vietnam.

S. 3211

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) were added as cosponsors of S. 3211, a bill to enhance our Nation's nurse and physician workforce by recapturing unused immigrant visas.

S. 3356

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3356, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to modify the role and duties of United States Postal Service police officers, and for other purposes.

S. 3381

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3381, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow intangible drilling and development costs to be taken into account when computing adjusted financial statement income.

S. 3390

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor

of S. 3390, a bill to improve purchasing of food by the Department of Agriculture, and for other purposes.

S. 3422

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3422, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to create a carbon border adjustment based on carbon intensity, and for other purposes.

S. 3549

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3549, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to extend the consumer credit protections provided to members of the Armed Forces and their dependents under title 10, United States Code, to all consumers.

S. RES. 333

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 333, a resolution designating 2024 as the Year of Democracy as a time to reflect on the contributions of the system of Government of the United States to a more free and stable world.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1381. Mrs. MURRAY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2872, of 2013 to allow the Secretary of the Interior to issue electronic stamps under such Act, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1381. Mrs. MURRAY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2872 of 2013 to allow the Secretary of the Interior to issue electronic stamps under such Act, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Further Additional Continuing Appropriations and Other Extensions Act, 2024”.

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short Title.
- Sec. 2. Table of Contents.
- Sec. 3. References.

DIVISION A—FURTHER ADDITIONAL CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2024

DIVISION B—OTHER MATTERS

- Title I—Health and Human Services
- Title II—Compacts
- Title III—Counter-UAS Authorities
- Title IV—Budgetary Effects

SEC. 3. REFERENCES.

Except as expressly provided otherwise, any reference to “this Act” contained in any division of this Act shall be treated as referring only to the provisions of that division.

DIVISION A—FURTHER ADDITIONAL CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2024

SEC. 101. The Continuing Appropriations Act, 2024 (division A of Public Law 118-15) is further amended—

(1) by striking the date specified in section 106(3) and inserting “March 8, 2024”;

(2) by striking the date specified in section 106(4) and inserting “March 1, 2024”;

(3) in section 123, by striking “94 days” and inserting “129 days” and by striking “94-day” and inserting “129-day”;

(4) in section 124, by striking “\$663,070,000” and inserting “\$2,199,260,000”; and

(5) by adding after section 146 the following new sections:

“SEC. 147. (a) Amounts made available by section 101 for ‘Department of Energy—Atomic Energy Defense Activities—National Nuclear Security Administration—Weapons Activities’ may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary to mitigate issuing WARN notices for ‘06-D-141 Uranium Processing Facility, Y-12’ in an amount not to exceed \$760,000,000.

“(b) The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall notify the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate not later than 3 days after each use of the authority provided in this section, and the Secretary of Energy shall provide a weekly report to the Committees specifying the obligations incurred for the purposes specified in subsection (a) with amounts made available in this Act.

“SEC. 148. Amounts made available by section 101 for ‘Department of Transportation—Federal Aviation Administration—Operations’ may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary to fund mandatory pay increases and other inflationary adjustments, to maintain and improve air traffic services, to hire and train air traffic controllers, and to continue aviation safety oversight, while avoiding service reductions.”.

This division may be cited as the “Further Additional Continuing Appropriations Act, 2024”.

DIVISION B—OTHER MATTERS

TITLE I—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Subtitle A—Public Health Extenders

SEC. 101. EXTENSION FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS, NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS, AND TEACHING HEALTH CENTERS THAT OPERATE GME PROGRAMS.

(a) TEACHING HEALTH CENTERS THAT OPERATE GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS.—Section 340H(g)(1) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 256h(g)) is amended by striking “and \$21,834,247 for the period beginning on November 18, 2023, and ending on January 19, 2024” and inserting “\$21,834,247 for the period beginning on November 18, 2023, and ending on January 19, 2024, and \$16,982,192 for the period beginning on January 20, 2024, and ending on March 8, 2024”.

(b) EXTENSION FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS.—Section 10503(b)(1)(F) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 254b-2(b)(1)(F)) is amended by striking “and \$690,410,959 for the period beginning on November 18, 2023, and ending on January 19, 2024” and inserting “\$690,410,959 for the period beginning on November 18, 2023, and ending on January 19, 2024, and \$536,986,301 for the period beginning on January 20, 2024, and ending on March 8, 2024”.

(c) EXTENSION FOR THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS.—Section 10503(b)(2)(I) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 254b-2(b)(2)(I)) is amended by striking “and \$53,506,849 for the period beginning on November 18, 2023, and ending on January 19, 2024” and inserting “\$53,506,849 for the period beginning on November 18, 2023, and ending on January 19, 2024, and \$41,616,438 for the period beginning on January 20, 2024, and ending on March 8, 2024”.

(d) APPLICATION OF PROVISIONS.—Amounts appropriated pursuant to the amendments

made by this section shall be subject to the requirements contained in Public Law 117-328 for funds for programs authorized under sections 330 through 340 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b et seq.).

(e) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 3014(h)(4) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking “and section 201(d) of the Further Continuing Appropriations and Other Extensions Act, 2024” and inserting “section 201(d) of the Further Continuing Appropriations and Other Extensions Act, 2024, and section 101(d) of the Further Additional Continuing Appropriations and Other Extensions Act, 2024”.

SEC. 102. EXTENSION OF SPECIAL DIABETES PROGRAMS.

(a) EXTENSION OF SPECIAL DIABETES PROGRAMS FOR TYPE I DIABETES.—Section 330B(b)(2)(E) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254c-2(b)(2)(E)) is amended by striking “and \$25,890,411 for the period beginning on November 18, 2023, and ending on January 19, 2024” and inserting “\$25,890,411 for the period beginning on November 18, 2023, and ending on January 19, 2024, and \$20,136,986 for the period beginning on January 20, 2024, and ending on March 8, 2024”.

(b) EXTENDING FUNDING FOR SPECIAL DIABETES PROGRAMS FOR INDIANS.—Section 330C(c)(2)(E) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254c-3(c)(2)(E)) is amended by striking “and \$25,890,411 for the period beginning on November 18, 2023, and ending on January 19, 2024” and inserting “\$25,890,411 for the period beginning on November 18, 2023, and ending on January 19, 2024, and \$20,136,986 for the period beginning on January 20, 2024, and ending on March 8, 2024”.

SEC. 103. NATIONAL HEALTH SECURITY EXTENSIONS.

(a) Section 319(e)(8) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d(e)(8)) is amended by striking “January 19, 2024” and inserting “March 8, 2024”.

(b) Section 319L(e)(1)(D) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d-7e(e)(1)(D)) is amended by striking “January 19, 2024” and inserting “March 8, 2024”.

(c) Section 319L-1(b) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d-7f(b)) is amended by striking “January 19, 2024” and inserting “March 8, 2024”.

(d)(1) Section 2811A(g) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300hh-10b(g)) is amended by striking “January 19, 2024” and inserting “March 8, 2024”.

(2) Section 2811B(g)(1) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300hh-10c(g)(1)) is amended by striking “January 19, 2024” and inserting “March 8, 2024”.

(3) Section 2811C(g)(1) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300hh-10d(g)(1)) is amended by striking “January 19, 2024” and inserting “March 8, 2024”.

(e) Section 2812(c)(4)(B) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300hh-11(c)(4)(B)) is amended by striking “January 19, 2024” and inserting “March 8, 2024”.

Subtitle B—Medicaid

SEC. 121. DELAYING CERTAIN DISPROPORTIONATE SHARE PAYMENT CUTS.

Section 1923(f)(7)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r-4(f)(7)(A)) is amended by striking “January 20, 2024” each place it appears and inserting “March 9, 2024”.

SEC. 122. MEDICAID IMPROVEMENT FUND REDUCTION.

Section 1941(b)(3)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396w-1(b)(3)(A)) is amended by striking “\$5,796,117,810” and inserting “\$5,140,428,729”.

Subtitle C—Medicare

SEC. 131. EXTENSION OF THE WORK GEOGRAPHIC INDEX FLOOR UNDER THE MEDICARE PROGRAM.

Section 1848(e)(1)(E) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(e)(1)(E)) is amended by

striking “January 20, 2024” and inserting “March 9, 2024”.

SEC. 132. MEDICARE IMPROVEMENT FUND.

Section 1898(b)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395iii(b)(1)) is amended by striking “\$2,250,795,056” and inserting “\$2,197,795,056”.

Subtitle D—Human Services

SEC. 141. EXTENSION OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PROGRAMS.

Activities authorized by part B of title IV of the Social Security Act shall continue through March 8, 2024, in the manner authorized for fiscal year 2023, and out of any money in the Treasury of the United States not otherwise appropriated, there are hereby appropriated such sums as may be necessary for such purpose.

SEC. 142. SEXUAL RISK AVOIDANCE EDUCATION EXTENSION.

Section 510 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 710) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1)—

(A) by striking “and” after “November 17, 2023,”; and

(B) by inserting “and for the period beginning on January 20, 2024, and ending on March 8, 2024,” after “January 19, 2024,”; and

(2) in subsection (f)(1)—

(A) by striking “and” before “for the period beginning on November 18, 2023,”; and

(B) by striking the period at the end and inserting “, and for the period beginning on January 20, 2024, and ending on March 8, 2024, an amount equal to the pro rata portion of the amount appropriated for the corresponding period for fiscal year 2023.”.

SEC. 143. PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY EDUCATION EXTENSION.

Section 513 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 713) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), in the matter preceding clause (i)—

(i) by striking “and” after “November 17, 2023,”; and

(ii) by inserting “and for the period beginning on January 20, 2024, and ending on March 8, 2024,” after “January 19, 2024,”; and

(B) in subparagraph (B)(i)—

(i) by striking “and” after “November 17, 2023,”; and

(ii) by inserting “, and for the period beginning on January 20, 2024, and ending on March 8, 2024” after “January 19, 2024,”; and

(2) in subsection (f)—

(A) by striking “and” before “for the period beginning on November 18, 2023,”; and

(B) by striking “fiscal year 2023.” and inserting “fiscal year 2023, and for the period beginning on January 20, 2024, and ending on

March 8, 2024, an amount equal to the pro rata portion of the amount appropriated for the corresponding period for fiscal year 2023.”.

TITLE II—COMPACTS

SEC. 201. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE COMPACTS OF FREE ASSOCIATION WITH THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS.

Section 2101(a)(1) of the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2024 and Other Extensions Act (Public Law 118–15; 137 Stat. 81; 137 Stat. 114) is amended by striking “February 2, 2024” and inserting “March 8, 2024”.

TITLE III—COUNTER-UAS AUTHORITIES

SEC. 301. COUNTER-UAS AUTHORITIES.

Section 210G(i) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 124n(i)) is amended by striking “February 3, 2024” and inserting “March 9, 2024”.

TITLE IV—BUDGETARY EFFECTS

SEC. 401. BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

(a) **STATUTORY PAYGO SCORECARDS.**—The budgetary effects of this division shall not be entered on either PAYGO scorecard maintained pursuant to section 4(d) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010.

(b) **SENATE PAYGO SCORECARDS.**—The budgetary effects of this division shall not be entered on any PAYGO scorecard maintained for purposes of section 4106 of H. Con. Res. 71 (115th Congress).

(c) **CLASSIFICATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.**—Notwithstanding Rule 3 of the Budget Scorekeeping Guidelines set forth in the joint explanatory statement of the committee of conference accompanying Conference Report 105–217 and section 250(c)(8) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, the budgetary effects of this division shall not be estimated—

(1) for purposes of section 251 of such Act;

(2) for purposes of an allocation to the Committee on Appropriations pursuant to section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974; and

(3) for purposes of paragraph (4)(C) of section 3 of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 as being included in an appropriation Act.

NOTICE: REGISTRATION OF MASS MAILINGS

The filing date for the 2023 fourth quarter Mass Mailing report is Thursday, January 25, 2024. An electronic op-

tion is available on Webster that will allow forms to be submitted via a fillable PDF document. If your office did no mass mailings during this period, please submit a form that states “none.”

Mass mailing registrations or negative reports can be submitted electronically at http://webster.senate.gov/secretary/mass_mailing_form.htm or e-mailed to OPR_MassMailings@sec.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact the Senate Office of Public Records at (202) 224–0322.

**ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY,
JANUARY 17, 2024**

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 11 a.m. on Wednesday, January 17; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, 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 resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 2872 postcloture; further, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings; further, that all time during adjournment, recess, morning business, and leader remarks count postcloture on the motion to proceed.

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

**ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 11 A.M.
TOMORROW**

Ms. SMITH. 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 9:10 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, January 17, 2024, at 11 a.m.