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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TAMMY DUCKWORTH, a Senator from the State of Illinois.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Holy God, sustainer of humanity, if it were not for Your love, our burdens would be too heavy and the journey would seem too difficult. But because of Your mercies, we can mount up on wings like eagles.

Draw near to our Senators today. Breathe upon their thinking with Your truth and illuminate their understanding with Your light. May the pressures of the world not intimidate them, but may they receive Your strength so that they can shape our Nation and world according to Your purposes.

Lord, maintain in them the fidelity of those to whom much has been given. May this be for them a productive day because they have placed their trust in Your strong and guiding hands.

We pray in your Sacred 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 bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 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 TAMMY DUCKWORTH, a Senator from the State of Illinois, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Ms. DUCKWORTH 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 820

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk that is due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 820) to direct the Federal Communications Commission to publish a list of entities that hold authorizations, licenses, or other grants of authority issued by the Commission and that have certain foreign ownership, and for other purposes.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I would object to further proceeding.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

U.S. SECRET SERVICE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, yesterday afternoon, I spoke with Secret Service Acting Director Rowe after an armed suspect was arrested after fleeing from former President Trump's golf course in West Palm Beach, FL.

I will say what I have said many times before: There is no place in America for political violence of any kind.

I am glad the former President is safe, and I applaud the Secret Service and all first responders for acting quickly before anyone got hurt.

As for the perpetrator, he should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

We all must do our part to ensure an incident like this does not happen again. This means that Congress has a responsibility to ensure the Secret Service and all law enforcement have the resources they need to do their jobs. So as we continue the appropriations process, if the Secret Service is in need of more resources, we are prepared to provide it for them, possibly in the upcoming funding agreement.

RIGHT TO IVF ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, now on IVF, 2 years ago, Donald Trump and the MAGA Supreme Court succeeded in overturning Roe and ripping away the right to choose from millions of Americans. This year, as we have seen in States like Alabama, the hard right has its sights on a new target, IVF.

So, tomorrow, the Senate will take up Senator DUCKWORTH's—your bill, Madam President—Senator DUCKWORTH's bill, the Right to IVF Act, to establish a nationwide right to IVF and make it easier for people to access this vital treatment.

This is the very same legislation that almost every single Senate Republican voted against earlier this summer. This

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



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past weekend, in New York, I stood with some amazing families—some amazing parents and their beautiful baby, a miracle of IVF—to say that we Democrats will do everything we can to protect access to IVF, and I hope that in this Chamber we will be joined by our Republican colleagues when we vote tomorrow, because tomorrow we will take up Senator DUCKWORTH'S Right to IVF Act.

The vast majority of Americans support requiring insurance plans to cover IVF treatments, and I bet every one of us knows someone who has struggled with infertility at one point or another. In my own family, IVF was the answer to our prayers. I have a beautiful grandchild thanks to the miracle of IVF, and I could not bear to imagine the pain we would feel if we were told: Sorry, you are out of luck.

If Republicans truly stand on the side of families, as they regularly claim, then they should leap at the opportunity to protect people's right to access IVF. They should stand ready to pass a bill that makes this treatment available on insurance plans. They should vote yes tomorrow. Of course, we are already beginning to hear the same tired, predictable, and unconvincing excuses from our Republican colleagues looking for a way to vote against IVF protections.

To my Republican colleagues: If you truly support IVF, then vote for a bill that actually protects IVF through the letter of the law.

Republicans cannot claim to be pro-family on the one hand, while then voting against IVF protection bills on the other. Americans are much smarter than that.

Republicans had a chance to back up their rhetoric with action when we voted earlier this year, and nearly all of them failed. I hope tomorrow will bring a different result. The American people will be watching.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, now on the CR, legislators now have roughly 2 weeks to reach an agreement to keep the government open beyond the September 30 deadline. It is not really much time at all. In order to avoid a shutdown, the worst thing our colleagues in the House can do right now is waste time on proposals that don't have broad, bipartisan support. But that is what the Speaker and his Republican colleagues have been doing all month long, and it is already September 16.

Mr. Speaker JOHNSON, you know as well as everyone else that your plan is a no-go as currently written. A 6-month CR with poison pills is not going to fly in a narrowly divided government.

CRs are always meant to be a short-term extension funding to give appropriators more time to do their work. They are not meant to be a substitute for Congress doing its job.

And if the hard right thinks that we will willingly give them leverage to ram Project 2025 down the American people's throats early next year by agreeing to a 6-month CR, they are dreaming. MAGA radicals are hoping they can use the threat of a shutdown next spring to pass the very worst of Project 2025. They want to cut the Department of Education. They want to eliminate Head Start. They want to privatize Fannie and Freddie, raising mortgage rates, making it harder to buy a home. They want to monitor women's pregnancies—monitor them—and potentially cut VA funding and more. We cannot—we will not—let that happen.

But even before we get to all of that, pushing for a CR that lasts 6 months, as the Speaker wants, would also mean that a slew of critical programs would still be shortchanged. It would be awful for our military. You simply cannot run the military with a 6-month stopgap—little surprise that even many House Republicans recognize the Speaker's current approach is the wrong one.

The answer to the Speaker's problem is not very complicated. The Speaker should drop his current proposal and work with both parties on an extension that prioritizes keeping the government open—open without pushing poison pills. We are happy to work with him.

Now, despite all its flaws, there are some bits of good news in the Speaker's proposal that I hope we can build on. I am very heartened that the Speaker's current proposal preserves the essence of the Schumer-Johnson agreement from early this year, the one that set top-line funding levels for fiscal year 2024.

This is a good sign because, last September, Speaker McCarthy wasted precious time trying to pass a CR that carried favor with the hard right through very deep, brutal funding cuts. In the end, that approach didn't work, and Speaker McCarthy was removed from the speakership anyway because of the radicals on his right flank.

For now, Speaker JOHNSON seems to be taking a different approach, and it is not pushing for across-the-board cuts as part of his CR. That is good news. It is a sign Speaker JOHNSON may be accepting the reality that any deal we reach will have to include the spending levels we agreed to earlier this year.

To be clear, there are still far too many omissions in his current proposal, and a 6-month timeline is not acceptable, but I hope we have a foundation on which to build upon. Make no mistake about it—the clock is ticking. We have until September 30 before the government shuts down.

If the government shuts down, it will be average Americans who suffer most. A government shutdown means seniors who rely on Social Security could be thrown into chaos as the Social Security Administration limits certain services, like benefit verifications or

fixing errors in payments. Our veterans could see regional VA offices shut down and support services put on halt. Some of our military servicemembers could be forced to work without pay. Families who benefit from WIC and other nutrition programs could see benefits halted. And a shutdown would shake the confidence of our economic recovery—something we can't possibly afford at a time like this.

If a shutdown happens because of Republican poison pills, the American people are going to hold them responsible.

We don't need to go down this road. We still have a little time to reach a bipartisan agreement. So I hope the Speaker drops his current plan.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, now on judges, finally, after today, the Senate will reach another great milestone in our effort to confirm more strong judges. With today's vote on Kevin Ritz to serve as a circuit court judge for the Sixth Circuit, the Senate will reach 210 judges confirmed under President Biden.

Mr. Ritz would be an excellent addition to the Federal bench. He is rated "well qualified" by the ABA and has spent his entire career with the U.S. Attorney's Office. Seventy-five percent of all the cases he has worked on have been criminal proceedings. In trial, he has won convictions on everything from carjackings, to firearm offenses, to robbery. On the merits, he deserves confirmation.

I thank Chairman DURBIN, members of the Judiciary Committee, and all my colleagues who have helped us reach 210 judges. Many have been bipartisan, I am glad to say. And once we finish with Mr. Ritz, we will keep going.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

TRUMP ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I am dismayed to begin another week with news of an assassination attempt against a former President. We are certainly all grateful once again that the worst outcome was avoided.

This ought to be a moment of soul-searching for all Americans. It is a

time to reflect on the ways that our political process has been injected by reprehensible violence. In America, our democracy flows from the ballot box, not from the barrel of a gun—period.

In the meantime, for the second time in as many months, law enforcement faces an even more urgent task: completing a thorough, swift, and transparent investigation into the circumstances of yesterday's close call.

The American people deserve answers. They deserve assurance that a former President whom tens of millions of Americans have nominated once again will receive every appropriate measure of security. And they ought to receive them without delay.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, now on another matter, I have repeatedly warned colleagues on both sides against setting aside America's interests in pursuit of closer relations with foreign leaders who they think share their values.

I made it clear to Washington Democrats that whatever kudos the Paris climate deal earned them with European greens, punishing America for producing affordable, reliable, and abundant energy was welcome news to China, the world's leading emitter of carbon, and to Russia, which would weaponize Europe's own reliance in due course.

Likewise, I have urged fellow Republicans to recognize that despite whatever affinity we might be expected to hold for a Hungarian ruling party that professes traditional values, legitimizing Victor Orban's reckless obeisance to China, Russia, and Iran is not in America's interests.

And I have been clear-eyed about the regimes with which the United States shares neither interests nor values, and acted accordingly. For example, the strategic case for maximum pressure and credible deterrence against Iran, the world's most active state sponsor of terror, is compelling enough on its own. Weakening sanctions in exchange for empty promises on nuclear proliferation is not in America's strategic interests; neither is responding to proxy violence with half measures.

The only way to achieve measurable improvements to the security of America's interests in Iran's backyard is to change Iran's calculus. This is, of course, an opportunity for the United States and allies with common interests in the region to work more closely together in applying meaningful pressure on Tehran—an opportunity as yet unused.

But lest anyone forget, just as Tehran's export of terror threatens America's interests, its repression at home is an affront to American values. Today is the second anniversary of the beating, detention, and murder of Mahsa Amini at the hands of Iran's morality police. Tehran's thugs killed another 500 people and detained thou-

sands more who took to the streets in protest.

Today, Iranian women are continuing their protest against the regime's repressive morality laws. Many are walking the streets without head coverings, and 34 political prisoners have gone on a hunger strike. Tehran is marking the anniversary in its own way: placing Ms. Amini's surviving family under unofficial house arrest.

Further east, in Kabul, another group of medieval theocrats is dragging Afghan women and girls even further backward into the familiar repression of Taliban rule. A new "vice and virtue law" amounts to an even more severe crackdown on education for Afghan girls, with even tighter restrictions on women's behavior in public.

Like in Iran, Taliban repression is not difficult to recognize as abhorrent, and the latest developments are an outcome many of us saw coming years ago. Unfortunately, they are also a shameful reminder of a decision that damaged American interests and a sales campaign that denied observable reality. Recall that as the Taliban surged back into power in Kabul, President Biden insisted that "human rights will be the center of our foreign policy." Remember how the President's National Security Advisor declared that the administration was "absolutely resolutely committed" to "alleviate the burden that [Afghan] women and girls will face in the days ahead."

I am curious how the administration would rate the effectiveness of that commitment. I wonder whether it thinks its confidence in so-called over-the-horizon counterterrorism has paid off.

And when the administration's special envoy warns that its "patience with the Taliban is running out," I can't help but ask why on Earth any such patience would align with America's interests in the first place, let alone our values.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Kevin Gafford Ritz, of Tennessee, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The senior Senator from Illinois.

TRUMP ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, like many Americans yesterday afternoon,

I heard reports of what Federal law enforcement is investigating as a possible assassination attempt on former President Trump while he was golfing in Florida. Thankfully, the former President was not harmed, and there were no injuries, and the subject was quickly taken into custody.

I am grateful for the work of the Secret Service and their law enforcement partners to keep the President and those around him safe.

My staff was briefed by the Secret Service last night, and there is an active investigation into this incident as law enforcement gathers more details about what happened. As I have said many times, there is no place for violence in our country no matter what the motive. It must come to an end.

SIREN ACT

Madam President, on a different topic, a recent report from The Wall Street Journal had a stark headline. It read: "Your Ambulance Is on the Way, ETA: 65 Minutes."

Across rural America, nearly 5 million Americans live in an ambulance desert, where access to critical emergency care is limited, and in eight States, there were fewer than three ambulances for every 1,000 square miles of land. Think about it. If you or a loved one experienced cardiac arrest or an overdose—when seconds truly matter—you may not be able to receive timely care; and across rural Illinois, EMS personnel are often the only healthcare providers around, with many being volunteers.

To keep our rural communities thriving, we must ensure our first responders are ready for the call. So in 2018, 6 years ago, I worked with then-Republican Senator Pat Roberts, of Kansas, to pass into law a bill called the SIREN Act. I was inspired by a visit from Mark Kennedy, a paramedic from Nauvoo, IL, in Hancock County, who told me some of the challenges they were facing. The SIREN Act provides Federal funding for rural fire and EMS Agencies for recruitment, certification courses, and purchasing equipment—everything from Naloxone to power stretchers. Over the past 5 years, we have steadily increased funding for this small but important program. In total, we have sent \$40 million to rural communities in 42 States, both red and blue.

The SIREN Act is up for reauthorization now. Senator SUSAN COLLINS, of Maine, and I have teamed up in recent years to increase the funding for it and on legislation to extend funding for another 5 years. Our bill is endorsed by the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the International Association of Firefighters, and the National Rural Health Association. Last December, it unanimously passed the Senate.

This week, the House is scheduled to take it up. I applaud the sponsors for their work in the House to advance the bill out of committee by a 46-to-nothing vote, and I urge the House to

quickly pass out the SIREN Reauthorization Act this week.

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Madam President, on another health-related topic, the question of women's reproductive freedom continues to be a matter of importance in the upcoming election.

At the Presidential debate last week, it became clear that the two candidates could not be further apart on the issue. The former President took credit for the "great service" he said he did in erasing the constitutional right under *Roe v. Wade*. On the other hand, Vice President HARRIS asked us to consider what abortion bans mean for young survivors of rape or incest who are forced to carry pregnancies to term or for women who miscarry and are repeatedly denied access to life-saving care.

That is the world we live in today because of the Dobbs decision, because of Donald Trump and his success in choosing three ultraconservative Supreme Court Justices who overruled *Roe v. Wade*.

Make no mistake, the former President sees the polls, and he knows that limiting women's access to making their own decisions on reproductive care and choice is wildly unpopular, even in conservative red States. That is why former President Trump is twisting himself into knots trying to have it both ways: taking credit for overruling *Roe v. Wade* to appease his base while refusing to acknowledge all of the suffering that has resulted.

THE RIGHT TO IVF ACT

Madam President, when *Roe v. Wade* was overruled, anti-choice politicians warned us that it would only be the beginning of policies that limit women's reproductive freedoms, and for once, they were telling the truth. The overruling of *Roe v. Wade* has been accompanied by a troubling increase in fetal personhood laws that threaten access to assisted reproductive technologies, including in vitro fertilization, or IVF.

I might say, before I go any further, that the Acting President pro tempore has been a leader on this issue for good reason. She is not only right on the issue, but it is personal to her and her family. I thank her for her leadership.

Earlier this year, after the Alabama Supreme Court ruled that frozen embryos created during IVF were children under the State's wrongful death statute, a national debate ensued. I held a hearing in my Judiciary Committee on this disturbing trend. We heard moving testimony from Jamie Heard, an Alabama woman whose IVF treatment was interrupted by this extreme decision in court. We also heard compelling testimony from the Acting President pro tempore herself, Senator TAMMY DUCKWORTH, who was able to have her two beautiful children with the help of IVF.

Earlier this year, Senators DUCKWORTH, MURRAY, BOOKER, and SCHUMER introduced the Right to IVF Act, which I am honored to cosponsor.

It establishes a clear and enforceable nationwide right to receive, provide, or cover IVF services and other assisted reproductive technologies. It also expands insurance coverage for such care.

Whether, when, and how to expand one's family is a private, personal matter. Every American should be able to access the care and resources they need to start a family however they choose. Yet, when the Senate last considered this bill in June, only 2—only 2—of 49 Republicans voted to consider the bill. The rest of the Republican caucus filibustered this critical legislation. They say they are for IVF, but they won't vote for the bill that guarantees it will be legally there.

Republicans, led by former President Trump, know that the American people do not support this extreme position and are desperate to fool us into thinking they don't mean what they say.

Well, they will have another chance to show the American people where they really stand on IVF tomorrow because, if Republicans truly support privacy, freedom, and the right to access IVF treatment, they are going to join us on a bipartisan basis to consider this bill. They can't have it both ways. They can't claim to support IVF while voting against legislation that protects the rights of families to make that decision.

I might add, parenthetically, that this is personal to me as well. I have two beautiful grandkids who are the product of IVF. I am so happy that that happened. My daughter and her husband had just about given up. They couldn't find a way to do it, and they found this one clinic that had tests that were taking place. It was successful, and we had two babies come out of it. They are 12 years old now, and we are so happy to have them. IVF is the reason they are here, and this notion that we are going to play games with this treatment is unfair to the families who are desperate to have children and make them a part of their futures.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam 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.

(The remarks of Ms. COLLINS pertaining to the introduction of S. 5055 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Ms. COLLINS. 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. GRASSLEY. Madam 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.

The Senator from Iowa.

TRIBUTE TO MITCH MCCONNELL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I come to the floor today to share a few words about my friend, the Republican leader, Senator MITCH MCCONNELL.

I have had the privilege to serve alongside the senior Senator from Kentucky here in the U.S. Senate for nearly four decades, spanning 40 sessions of the U.S. Senate.

From the 110th Congress through the 118th, Senator MCCONNELL won support of our caucus to serve as Republican leader. In those secret ballot elections, he often ran unopposed because of his very strong support from our conference. That makes his tenure the longest serving Senate leader in the history of the U.S. Senate.

For the last four decades, Senator MCCONNELL has lived and breathed the U.S. Senate. So when Senator MCCONNELL spoke on the floor in February, announcing that he would step down from his leadership post after the upcoming November election, he took many of us by great surprise.

After all, his love for the U.S. Senate, the State of Kentucky, and for our great country, America, are indisputable. Although his critics and even some of his supporters don't see eye to eye on every issue, I would suggest my colleagues on both sides of the aisle can agree on this: Senator MCCONNELL's service as the Republican leader was hard-earned.

Time and again, MITCH MCCONNELL has shown a shrewd skill set that set the table for his climb up the leadership ladder. Once he got to that top rung, Senator MCCONNELL didn't flinch from his resolve. A keen negotiator, Leader MCCONNELL finessed legislative hurdles, scaled political mountains, and secured policy victories on behalf of the American people.

It takes a steel spine to survive and thrive in the dog-eat-dog world of politics. Senator MCCONNELL's grit, his purpose, and laser focus to deliver are just three of his ironclad leadership traits that our caucus has counted upon since 2006.

Senator MCCONNELL and I have served many years together on the Senate Agriculture Committee, joining forces for family farmers and for rural America.

When I served as chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, we teamed up to deliver historic tax relief that put money back in the people's pockets and helped grow the American economy.

One of the seminal moments of Leader MCCONNELL's tenure took place in 2016 when I chaired the Senate Judiciary Committee. That February, as you remember, Justice Scalia passed away unexpectedly, thus creating a vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court. That vacancy created a once-in-a-generation prospect to shape the highest Court in the land.

Leader MCCONNELL and I recognized what was at stake. Without wavering, we leveraged the constitutional authority of the U.S. Senate—that is the authority of advice and consent—and held off on confirming a nominee until after the elections so the American people could have a say in that process.

Now, to put it mildly, the decision wasn't met with open arms by the White House or our colleagues across the aisle. Leader MCCONNELL can play hardball with the best of them, with detractors within and outside of our conference.

We kept with the tradition and precedent of the Senate, a rule articulated by then-Senator Joe Biden in 1992, that when there was a Republican White House and a Democrat majority here in the U.S. Senate, you wait until after the election to make that appointment.

Generations from now, historians will note our efforts to confirm Trump-appointed judges and the imprint it made on the Federal judiciary, reshaping the Supreme Court and lower courts with what we ought to have on the judiciary—people that you call strict constructionists, meaning people that are going to interpret the law according to congressional intent and interpret the Constitution according to original intent. So we have jurists who now interpret the laws written by Congress, not jurists who legislate from the bench.

Now, in addition to tax relief, the Federal judiciary, and agriculture, Leader MCCONNELL and I most recently worked together to get the bipartisan infrastructure package and funding for U.S. national security, with support for our allies in Israel, Taiwan, and Ukraine. That got across the finish line, and it wasn't a very easy job for Senator MCCONNELL.

Senator MCCONNELL and I served together here in the Senate during the Reagan administration. The Reagan doctrine made the world safer and more secure. In other words, "peace through strength" actually works.

This month, we observed the 23rd anniversary of 9/11. Next month marks the 1-year anniversary of the terrorist attacks on October 7 in Israel, and October 7 in Israel will be remembered in that country much like December 7, 1941, is remembered in the United States.

Now, more than ever, Leader MCCONNELL and this U.S. Senator agree that America can't afford to fall asleep at the wheel. Senator MCCONNELL didn't mince words about why he is stepping down as Republican leader. He has a firm grasp of the politics of our party. His ability to read the room helped him to scale the leadership ladder, winning the top job nine times in our Republican conference.

In his floor remarks this February, he wryly noted:

I have many faults. Misunderstanding politics is not one of them.

Politics aside, his reverence for this institution and his reverence for this

great country of America come from an unwavering commitment to the ideals enshrined in our founding charters.

I am proud to associate myself with the statement that "for as long as I am drawing breath on this Earth, I will defend American exceptionalism." And I will do the same thing here as this Senator.

We know that, no matter who runs the White House or the House of Representatives, the U.S. Senate serves a vital constitutional role in our system of checks and balances.

Senator MCCONNELL and I also share a love for history, especially Senate history. We have that in common.

George Washington supposedly told this very story about pouring a cup of hot tea into a saucer and comparing the role of the U.S. Senate as that saucer to cool legislation coming in hot from the House of Representatives.

James Madison said the Senate was the "anchor" of government and a "necessary fence" against the "fickleness and passion" of the temporary waves of public opinion."

Former Republican Leader Howard Baker referred to the Senate leadership as "herding cats," suggesting it required the dual ability to understand how the institution worked and to understand the personalities of individual Members. For certain, Leader MCCONNELL has a clear grasp on the arcane rules and precedents of this body, and he has kept his finger on the pulse of our caucus for now 18 years.

You will have to ask him if he agrees with Senator Baker's analogy of what it is like to run the U.S. Senate. But in my observation, it is not easy and often thankless.

In closing, I applaud Senator MCCONNELL for his historic service as our Republican leader. Barbara and I extend our warmest wishes to him and Elaine for their partnership and decades of public service. We are grateful for our friendship over these many years.

I am glad to say this isn't a farewell speech. We will continue our work together in the next Congress, here in the U.S. Senate. I have no doubt that Senator MCCONNELL will continue to be an effective champion for American agriculture, U.S. leadership around the world, and peace through strength, and especially prosperity for all of the American people.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I am so grateful for your overly generous assessment of my work over the years. One of the joys of being in this job as long as I have is the opportunity to work with you and to watch the way you handle so many things so skillfully. So thank you very much. I appreciate that.

As you indicated, I am not going anywhere yet.

I yield the floor.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, 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.

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

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

IRS AUDITS

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, as I am out and about across Tennessee, one thing I continue to hear from many Tennesseans and our small business owners is that one of the things they find very frightening is an IRS audit.

Now, for a lot of our small business owners, when they talk about this, they mention how time-consuming it is and how it means sleepless nights and financial uncertainty and needless harassment because they are all working hard, and they are trying to comply with the law.

As of last year—and I find this so very interesting. As of last year, nearly two-thirds of the IRS audits targeted Americans who were making less than \$200,000, but in a misguided effort to fund the Biden-Harris administration's trillions in inflationary spending, the IRS recently doubled down on its pledge to ramp up audits on American taxpayers. We all know the administration had said no audits on taxpayers who are earning under \$400,000, but bear in mind, two-thirds—two-thirds—of those audits were on taxpayers earning less than \$200,000.

Regularly, when I am doing meetings in our 95 counties, I will hear from small business owners, farmers, and independent contractors all across the State who are worried about being targeted by the IRS. This is the same Agency that received \$80 billion from the Inflation Reduction Act, which was brought to us by this Biden-Harris administration—\$80 billion to go out and hire 87,000 new agents.

While IRS Commissioner Werfel recently promised that there would be "no new wave of audits coming from middle- and low-income" Americans—and that is a direct quote from him—a new report from the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration confirms that Tennesseans do have a reason to be concerned. Although the Treasury Department directed the IRS to exclude Americans making less than \$400,000 each year from increased audit rates, the report found that the IRS has no plan to make this happen. You heard me right. Treasury directed the IRS to exclude those Americans making less than \$400,000, but the Agency has absolutely no plan for how they are going to do that.

For example, they are using a novel definition of "taxpayers' earnings"—it is "total positive income." This phrasing has no statutory definition. According to the IRS, the term refers to "the sum of all positive amounts shown for the various sources of income reported on an individual income tax return and, thus, excludes losses."

To be sure, the confusing definition raises more questions than it answers:

Will a small business owner or farmer be subject to more audits if his revenue exceeds \$400,000 even if his profit is much less than that? Will a married couple with a household income of \$400,000 face the same audit rate as a single person with the same income?

For months on the Senate Finance Committee, I pressed Commissioner Werfel and other Biden-Harris officials for answers, but time and again, they have failed to provide satisfactory explanations.

While disturbing, this lack of clarity should come as no surprise. The IG report found that the IRS has failed to define “small business” under the directive and develop a methodology for enforcing the \$400,000 threshold, all while lacking basic documentation and transparency about its audit plan—there again, no plan.

In short, the Biden-Harris IRS is preparing to shake down Main Street, all while claiming to focus on tax cheats and millionaires and billionaires.

No doubt, the IRS audit plan is just the latest example of this administration’s disastrous tax-and-spend agenda, which has seen our national debt increase by more than \$7 trillion while pushing up prices across the board by 20 percent in less than 4 years. That is right. The current inflation rate from the time Joe Biden took office until today is actually 20.3 percent.

Unfortunately, this administration has forgotten a simple fact: Hard-working Tennesseans and Americans do best when they have more money in their pocketbooks, not less. With its reckless audit plan, the Biden-Harris IRS is doing its best to ensure that they take more money out of your pocket.

I yield the floor.

NOMINATION OF KEVIN GAFFORD RITZ

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Kevin Ritz to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.

Mr. Ritz grew up in Memphis and received his B.A., Phi Beta Kappa, from the University of Virginia, his M.S. from the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, and his J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law. After law school, he served as a law clerk to Judge Julia Smith Gibbons on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit in Memphis.

Mr. Ritz then went to work as an assistant U.S. attorney in the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Western District of Tennessee in Memphis, serving as criminal appellate chief, special counsel to the U.S. attorney, and appellate chief. Mr. Ritz has tried 11 cases to verdict, including 10 jury trials. While serving as appellate chief, he personally wrote more than 200 briefs and argued 37 Federal appeals.

Since September 2022, Mr. Ritz has served as the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Tennessee. The Senate confirmed him to that role by voice vote. Notably, both of his home State Senators—Mrs. BLACKBURN and Mr. HAGERTY—returned positive blue

slips on his U.S. attorney nomination. In his role as U.S. attorney, Mr. Ritz serves as the chief Federal law enforcement officer for the district and oversees an office of attorneys who engage in defensive and affirmative civil work, appellate work, and criminal work.

The American Bar Association unanimously rated Mr. Ritz as “well qualified” to serve on the bench. He has deep ties to Tennessee, and his significant litigation background and extensive experience in Federal court will serve him well on the Sixth Circuit.

Mr. Ritz has dedicated his entire legal career to public service. I look forward to his continued service as a circuit judge, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting his nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, I ask that the vote scheduled for 5:30 begin immediately.

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

VOTE ON RITZ NOMINATION

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Ritz nomination?

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Alabama (Mrs. BRITT), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The result was announced—yeas 48, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 240 Ex.]

YEAS—48

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

NAYS—46

Barrasso	Cornyn	Graham
Blackburn	Cotton	Grassley
Boozman	Cramer	Hagerty
Braun	Crapo	Hawley
Budd	Cruz	Hoeven
Capito	Daines	Hyde-Smith
Cassidy	Ernst	Johnson
Collins	Fischer	Kennedy

Lankford	Ricketts	Sullivan
Lee	Risch	Thune
Lummis	Romney	Tillis
McConnell	Rubio	Tuberville
Moran	Schmitt	Wicker
Mullin	Scott (FL)	Young
Murkowski	Scott (SC)	
Paul	Sinema	

NOT VOTING—6

Britt	Manchin	Rounds
Fetterman	Marshall	Vance

The nomination was confirmed. (Mr. HELMY assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SMITH). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The Senator from Oregon.

ELECTIONS

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I am taking the floor tonight to ring the alarm bells for our democracy, with grave concerns about the opening up of a casino for betting on our elections.

Imagine this. Election day is approaching. Ultrarich Americans and huge corporations bet billions of dollars on the outcome of which party controls the House of Representatives or bet those same billions on who controls the U.S. Senate. But as the election approaches—it is 45 days out; it is 30 days out—and one or two races might make the difference on whether they win or lose that bet, they now have a huge incentive to spend another vast sum smearing the candidate they want to lose. They now have a vast incentive to spread disinformation to get the outcome that they have wagered millions of dollars on or billions of dollars on. That is a profound corruption of our democracy.

I am sure you are thinking: That could never happen here in America. That is not government by and for the people. That is not elections as a way of choosing who will best lead us forward or cast the votes consistent with our principles. That is, instead, just turning elections into a casino.

But if you think this could never happen here, you are wrong. This isn’t fantasy.

Last week, less than 60 days before one of the most consequential elections in the history of our Nation, a Federal district judge—a DC district judge—threw the doors wide open for just such a gambling scheme on our elections, allowing individuals and corporations to bet up to \$100 million apiece. No, this is not some research project where people can bet \$10 to see, kind of, the influence of whether or not the way people bet is a better prediction than polling. No, this is not a research project. This is vast, powerful people betting huge sums and then, with dark money authorized through Citizens United court decisions, being able to put their thumbs on the scale. That is what happened last Thursday.

Fortunately, shortly after the ruling was announced, it was appealed by the CFTC, or the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, to the circuit

court, and the circuit court put a stay on it—a stay that will give them time to think about whether they should allow this casino to go forward at this moment in time. They are going to make that decision, they say, by Thursday, 3 days from now.

So I am ringing the alarm bells that there is an enormous threat to the integrity of our elections. It will be based on a decision of a circuit court 3 days from now. Will they, like the district judge, throw the doors open to the casino, allowing individuals to bet millions of dollars—up to \$100 million—and do so knowing those same individuals can then spend massively to put their thumb on the scale and affect the outcome of the election?

Let's go back a little bit to the lead-up to this moment. In 2020, a Wall Street firm called Kalshi was authorized by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, or the CFTC, to do a limited amount of bets or contracts on events, ranging from what the daily temperature will be in Chicago to what countries will have a recession—lots of event contracts.

Fast forward 3 years, and Kalshi decided to go way beyond that kind of structure, and they filed paperwork to say they wanted to allow an event contract allowing bets on the outcome of who controls the House and the Senate.

Given this unprecedented move and concerns about how this type of action could corrupt the elections, the CFTC initiated a 90-day review period to study the issue and 30 days for public comment. In that comment period, I led a group of fellow Senators to weigh in, urging the CFTC to reject this event contract on elections.

The letter stated:

Mass commodification of our democratic process would raise widespread concerns about the integrity of our electoral process. Such an outcome is in clear conflict with the public interest and would undermine confidence in our political process.

In September of last year, the CFTC agreed, and they rejected Kalshi's request, concluding that betting on elections is contrary to the public interest and would undermine the integrity of our elections.

But Kalshi sued, and that is what put it in to the DC District Court that led to the decision last Thursday of a district court judge siding with Kalshi and allowing them to start offering or taking bets on who controls the House and Senate.

I have in my hand here some of the legal language for the CFTC. Here is what it says:

Under CEA section 5c(c)(5)(C)(i), the Commission may determine that contracts in certain excluded commodities . . . are contrary to the public interest if [they] involve: (1) activity . . . unlawful under Federal . . . law; (2) terrorism; (3) assassination; (4) war; (5) gaming; or (6) other similar activity determined by the Commission, by rule or regulation, contrary to the public interest.

Here is the thing. This law clearly gave the Commission the power to proceed to control gaming. And what is gaming but a bet on an event?

Despite the clear language that is in the law, despite the fact that gambling and gaming are used interchangeably in all kinds of rules and statutes, a district judge said: No concern about the public interest here. We will just throw the doors of the casino wide open.

That is a vast concern, and I am hoping that the DC circuit judges are paying attention to the law having given the power to the CFTC to turn down contracts allowing gaming.

Now, we just had, today, an attempted assassination attempt on former President Trump. Do you want to put contracts on assassinations when you know that people can put their thumb on the scale and actually try to assassinate someone? No. That is why the law is written like this.

Do you want to be able to have people bet on the outcome of an election and then spend vast sums smearing the candidate they want to lose, corrupting the election from the vision of guiding our country forward into a simple gaming exercise about enriching those who cannot just make huge bets but can influence the outcome of those bets? Absolutely not. That is why the law is written in this fashion.

So, at a minimum—at a minimum—the circuit court should stay this decision, not allow this to be unfolding now, less than 60 days before the election, 7 weeks from tomorrow. I think that makes it 43 days—49, 50—50 days, 7 weeks from tomorrow.

It is not OK—not OK—to allow corruption of our elections in this fashion.

I was thinking about the fact that this law allows insider trading. For example, Exxon—that is the decision of the district court—Exxon, an oil company, could be planning to fund a PAC, and that PAC is going to do a huge amount of ads involving disinformation, involving smearing a candidate—maybe, you know, the last 2 weeks of the election. They know that, but they are not banned from betting. So they can turn around and put a massive bet on the outcome of the election while they have the insider information about the huge campaign the PAC is planning that nobody else knows about.

What an incentive to create that type of strategy—a strategy where the very rich and the very powerful can both cast the bet and heavily influence the outcome—not an influence about government by and for the people but about enriching, through a rigged bet, the most powerful people in our country. That is not the purpose of elections. That is why Congress wrote the law the way they wrote it, giving the CFTC the power to turn down this type of event contract.

How about Russia, Russian nationals? Maybe they are lent money. They are here in the country. They can bet on the outcome of this election. Maybe they have allies who can donate to a PAC.

Do you want to further incentivize public disinformation and election rig-

ging by foreign powers? We already know how much China does. We already know how much Russia does. Do we want to give them such an easy platform to make this happen?

There are certain principles core to democracy. One is that citizens have access to the ballot box. A second is the peaceful transfer of power. The third and the theory behind a democracy is that when votes are cast and when campaign donations are made, they are made because the person sees a representative who corresponds to their values.

But in this case, it isn't about a person who corresponds to your values. You may, in fact, want somebody to win who is on the right end of the spectrum, but then you make a huge bet thinking the person on the left end is going to win, so you proceed to heavily smear the very person you, according to your principles, want to win because of your pocketbook now being at risk.

This profoundly affects the public interest. This is a profound corruption of our democracy.

We already have a lot of challenges. Social media is a problem. Cable television presenting different sets of facts in different parts of our universe is a challenge. Bots that create fake commentary, try to create themes that move people and make things appear real that are not real. Voter suppression—that is a challenge. AI, deepfakes are a challenge. The last thing we need is a casino on elections that, at its very core, incentivizes rigged bets contrary to the public interest and election outcomes driven by profit, not driven by values.

So that is where we are. So I hope that the circuit court of DC will pay attention about how much is at risk.

Now, I have noted that the current contract is about who controls the House and who controls the Senate, but once that is allowed, what is to prevent Kalshi from putting up an event contract on the outcome of a specific Senate race or a specific House race? Then we have a ton of really close races. Do we want those really close races to be affected by people betting—a bet up to a hundred million dollars followed by dark money smear campaigns under Citizens United—determining what the outcome of those races is? I think not—not if you believe in the vision of democracy, not if you believe in the vision of a republic, not if you believe that who comes to stand in this room is to be the person you think will honor our Constitution and work toward a better future.

So, Madam President, I will just summarize by saying, just 3 days from today, there could be a decision. It could have a profound impact on the integrity of the coming election. That decision should be a stay that prevents these election contracts. Then this body should get to work and outlaw specifically, in the law, such contracts.

It already appears that they have because it says the CFTC has the power

to turn down event contracts based on gaming that are contrary to the public interest. But if one district judge has said that doesn't carry the day, there is another judge out there somewhere who will do the business of helping out some corporation trying to open the doors to that casino.

So let's here come together—Democrats and Republicans, left and right—and say: We care about the integrity of our election, and we will not let this happen. But, first, we need a stay from the court to prevent it from happening this Thursday.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 4771

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, I have been called many names—some nice and some not so nice—Governor, Senator, husband, Dad; but my favorite is Grandpa.

When I first became Governor back in 2010, Ann and I had no grandchildren. Fast-forward to today, and we are blessed with seven beautiful grandkids.

As I speak today, my daughter is using in vitro fertilization, or IVF, to grow her family. As a grandpa, of course, I am thrilled.

And thanks to the people of Florida, I have also had the opportunity as a U.S. Senator to do what I can to make this amazing science that helps bring beautiful babies into the world more accessible and affordable for millions of Americans.

The truth about IVF is that it is one of the few unifying policies that almost all Democrats and Republicans agree with. Earlier this year, a ruling of the Alabama Supreme Court concerned many of us, myself included. Thankfully, the Republican-controlled Alabama Legislature swiftly updated their laws to ensure IVF is protected for citizens of their State.

Right after the ruling, I introduced a resolution with my colleague in the House, KAT CAMMACK, which outlined the overwhelming support in Congress for IVF and the millions of families using it to grow their families. We built on that resolution by then introducing the IVF with HSAs Act to expand access to IVF by doubling the contribution limits of health savings accounts, or HSAs, and expanding eligibility to utilize them by decoupling them from traditional high-deductible health plans. The real-world impact of my bill is that millions of Americans will be able to save more money in tax-free accounts to pay for medical expenses like IVF.

We should all be able to agree that it is a good thing for more families to have an opportunity to grow. So many

of us here are parents and grandparents. We should all be able to agree that more babies is wonderful. That is why I am here to ask for unanimous consent to pass my bill. If the Senate is serious about ensuring opportunities for families, we can start today by allowing this good bill to get sent over to the House, where I am confident it will pass, and we can send it to the President's desk for signature.

Madam President, I am going to wait for Senator WYDEN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be discharged from further consideration of S. 4771 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, let me go to the policy issue. I know this is very important to my colleague from Florida. And when families are wrestling with this issue, they have the sympathies of all of us.

Here is what concerns me: Families struggling to afford IVF will get virtually no benefit from the Scott proposal that more than doubles the annual contribution limit. That is the bottom line. Families struggling get virtually nothing from this.

I have just felt—and I am sorry that we started a little bit early because I wanted to hear Senator SCOTT's remarks. I just think, if you look overall, Republicans have just had no interest in protecting in vitro fertilization or reproductive rights.

The fact is, Donald Trump, some time ago, claimed that he was going to require insurers to cover IVF. As far as I can tell, not Senator SCOTT, but Republicans generally basically never thought he was serious about it, which is the case for all of these proposals, virtually, that he is making, sometimes more than one a week.

So my view is, the money that this bill would cost is better spent on extending the expansion of the Affordable Care Act's premium tax credits because they actually lower the cost of health insurance for typical families. That is what we want to do: lower the cost of health insurance for typical families. By the way, that is set to expire at the end of next year unless Congress takes action.

So for those reasons, Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, I appreciate my colleague being here.

First off, here is the positive. I think we all support IVF. I support IVF. I have a daughter going through it right now. I am glad IVF is legal and available in all 50 States, and there is no actual risk of it going away. I think we all know this.

What I propose is the IVF with HSAs Act. It is going to expand access to IVF by doubling the contribution limits of Health Saving Accounts, and it is going to expand eligibility to include them by decoupling them from traditional high-deductible health plans. The impact of this will be millions of Americans will be able to save money and have better access to it in tax-free accounts to pay for medical expenses like IVF.

That is all positive. The opportunity we have here is not about whether IVF will be here tomorrow or next year or 5 years from now. Everyone knows IVF is here to stay. Today, our opportunity is to help more people use IVF to grow their families. But Democrats, unfortunately—my colleagues—decided to block this bill.

I know my Democratic colleagues are going to call up for a vote tomorrow a bill, but it seems like it is just scoring political points. They are going to bring up the same bill that didn't pass before. And what is frustrating to me is—I support IVF; I think all my colleagues support IVF—there wasn't an attempt between Democrats and Republicans to write a bipartisan bill that we could actually get a bill that we could pass.

The last 2 months have just been spent, basically, political posturing. I know it is an election year. I hope the Democrats are going to get serious about doing something that will help benefit hard-working people.

I am disappointed, but I thank my colleague for being here.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 651.

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

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Rebecca L. Pennell, of Washington, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Washington.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 651, Rebecca L. Pennell, of Washington, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Washington.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, John W. Hickenlooper, Sheldon Whitehouse, Tina Smith, Alex Padilla, Tammy Baldwin, Tammy Duckworth, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jack Reed, Angus S. King, Jr., Gary C. Peters, Peter Welch, Margaret Wood Hassan, Brian Schatz, Jeanne Shaheen.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 706.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Michelle Williams Court, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 706, Michelle Williams Court, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Alex Padilla, Laphonza R. Butler, Peter Welch, Gary C. Peters, Chris Van Hollen, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tina Smith, Jack Reed, Christopher Murphy, Richard Blumenthal, Christopher A. Coons, Tim Kaine, Catherine Cortez Masto, Tammy Duckworth, Sheldon Whitehouse.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions filed today, September 16, be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for 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.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Ms. ROSEN. Madam President, on September 12, 2024, I missed rollcall vote No. 238 while recovering from a kidney infection. Had I been present, I would have voted yea on vote 238, confirming the nomination of Laura Margarete Provinzino to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Minnesota.

On September 12, 2024, I missed rollcall vote No. 239 while recovering from a kidney infection. Had I been present, I would have voted yea on vote 239, cloture on the nomination of Kevin Gafford Ritz to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE ARKANSAS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, today I rise to recognize the Arkansas Alumni Association National Board of Directors and welcome its members to Washington, DC.

This group, composed of individuals from around the world, is visiting our Nation's Capital for its national board retreat and meeting. The Arkansas Alumni Association serves as the front door of the University of Arkansas and its more than 180,000 living alumni, fostering a spirit of community, pride, and lifelong connection.

The University of Arkansas, through its alumni, has made significant contributions to the State of Arkansas, the Nation, and beyond. It embodies the values of leadership, service, and excellence. As a fellow Razorback, I can attest that the time students spend at the University of Arkansas is an enriching, impactful experience they will carry with them the rest of their lives.

The Arkansas Alumni Association advances the mission of university alumni through its unwavering commitment to education, scholarship, research, and providing critical support to students, faculty, and staff, as well as the broader U of A community.

I am pleased to welcome the Arkansas Alumni Association National Board to Washington, DC, and it is an honor to recognize its service, dedication, and ongoing commitment to the University of Arkansas. I am confident members will make the most of their experience

with successful and productive meetings during their visit as ambassadors of Razorbacks past, present, and future.●

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NORTHWEST MICHIGAN COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

• Mr. PETERS. Madam President, I rise today to recognize the incredible work of the Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency (NWMCAA) as they celebrate 50 years of community action that has touched the lives of so many.

In 1974, two community action agencies in northern Michigan merged to form the Northwest Michigan Human Services Agency, now known as the Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency (NWMCAA).

Since then, the organization has developed a wide range of community action programs tailored to meet diverse individual needs across the lifespan.

Annually, the Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency allocates \$20 million of program services to over 10,000 individuals across 10 counties. The organization strives to provide community members with the tools and skills necessary to promote housing stability, economic security, and educational opportunity through assistance with tax credits and refunds and homebuyer coaching education courses.

Between 2019 and 2022, the agency's Early Head Start and Head Start Programs helped 7,653 children within home-based and center-based environments. In addition to quality child development programs, the agency offers parents free prenatal education and resources for expectant families. This work is crucial to keep all students on track towards academic success and to build strong families and communities.

With over 300 dedicated employees located across their Petoskey, Traverse City, and Cadillac offices, the agency's impact across northern Michigan has extended far and wide. It is the talent and tenacity of such hard-working individuals which enables the agency's mission: "to drive positive change by offering opportunities that promote independence, enhance quality of life, and strengthen community connections."

In 2023 alone, the Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency successfully distributed 948,080 pounds of food to 23,702 participants through the USDA's Commodity Supplement Food Program (CSFP). In addition to their great work in the realm of nutrition, the organization addresses other pressing issues facing Michiganders, like home repair, weatherization, and financial management.

The scale and magnitude of these programs is felt each day by the seniors who rely on Meals on Wheels deliveries, children enrolled in Head Start, and working parents utilizing homebuyer coaching.

As the Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency continues to work hard to improve the lives of community members, I will continue to advocate for funding to the programs that enable NWMCAA's work to come to fruition.

The Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency has impacted countless lives throughout the course of 50 years. I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing NWMCAA for their tireless advocacy and support of everyday Michiganders. I wish the Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency 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. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1398. An act to establish the CCP Initiative program, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7980. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude vehicles the batteries of which contain materials sourced from prohibited foreign entities from the clean vehicle credit.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1398. An act to establish the CCP Initiative program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 7980. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude vehicles the batteries of which contain materials sourced from prohibited foreign entities from the clean vehicle credit; to the Committee on Finance.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 820. An act to direct the Federal Communications Commission to publish a list of entities that hold authorizations, licenses, or other grants of authority issued by the Commission and that have certain foreign ownership, and for other purposes.

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-5845. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Saflufenacil; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 12040-01-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-5846. 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 "TRICARE; Reimbursement of Ambulatory Surgery Centers and Outpatient Services Provided in Cancer and Children's Hospitals" (RIN0720-AB73) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-5847. 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 "Privacy Act of 1974; Implementation" (RIN0720-AL09) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-5848. 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 "Privacy Act of 1974; Implementation" (RIN0720-AL10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-5849. A communication from the Assistant to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Quality Control Standards for Automated Valuation Models" (RIN1700-AG60) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5850. A communication from the Assistant to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Availability of Funds and Collection of Checks" (RIN1700-AG76) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5851. A communication from the Assistant to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Interagency Guidance on Third-Party Relationships: Risk Management" (Docket No. OP-1752) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5852. A communication from the Secretary of the Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Form N-PORT and Form N-CEN Reporting; Guidance on Open-End Fund Liquidity Risk Management Programs" (RIN3235-AM98) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5853. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to operation of the Exchange Stabilization Fund (ESF) for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5854. A communication from the Senior Congressional Liaison, Legislative Affairs, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Interagency Guidance on Reconsiderations of Value of Residential Real Estate Valuations"; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5855. A communication from the Director, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Fair Debt Collection Practices Act Annual Report"; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5856. 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 13660 with respect to Ukraine; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5857. 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 13692 with respect to Venezuela; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5858. A communication from the Congressional and Public Affairs Specialist, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Implementation of Additional Sanctions Against Russia and Belarus Under the Export Administration Regulations; and Corrections" (RIN0694-AJ78) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5859. A communication from the General Counsel of the National Credit Union Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Quality Control Standards for Automated Valuation Models" (RIN3133-AE23) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5860. A communication from the Director, Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Anti-Money Laundering Regulations for Residential Real Estate Transfers" (RIN1506-AB54) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5861. A communication from the Director, Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Anti-Money Laundering/Countering the Financing of Terrorism Program and Suspicious Activity Report Filing Requirements for Registered Investment Advisers and Exempt Reporting Advisers" (RIN1506-AB58) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

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 Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING):

S. 5055. A bill to require the United States Armed Forces to fully utilize applicable State extreme risk protection order programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. ERNST, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 5056. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to clarify how controlled substance analogues that are imported or offered for import are to be regulated, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL:

S. 5057. A bill to establish minimum Federal standards for sports betting, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. ERNST (for herself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 5058. A bill to require the Secretary of Defense to submit to Congress a strategy to improve cooperation between the Department of Defense and allies and partners of the United States located in the Middle East so as to improve use of partner-sharing network capabilities to facilitate joint defense efforts among the United States and such allies and partners, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. ERNST (for herself and Ms. ROSEN):

S. 5059. A bill to require the Secretary of Defense to design and implement a foreign military officer subject matter expert exchange program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. WARREN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Ms. SMITH):

S. Res. 817. A resolution designating the week beginning September 8, 2024, as "National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week"; considered and agreed to.

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

S. Res. 818. A resolution expressing support for and celebrating the 80th anniversary of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. KING (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. REED, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. Res. 819. A resolution designating September 25, 2024, as "National Lobster Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. CASSIDY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. BUTLER, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COONS, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KING, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. REED, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 820. A resolution expressing support for the designation of the week of September 21 through September 28, 2024, as "National Estuaries Week"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. KING, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. YOUNG):

S. Res. 821. A resolution expressing support for designation of the week of September 15 through 21, 2024, as "National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 722

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 722, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permit certain expenses associated with obtaining or maintaining recognized postsec-

ondary credentials to be treated as qualified higher education expenses for purposes of 529 accounts.

S. 930

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 930, a bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to provide public safety officer benefits for exposure-related cancers, and for other purposes.

S. 1007

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1007, a bill to establish in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor of the Department of State a Special Envoy for the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Peoples, and for other purposes.

S. 1193

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1193, a bill to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities who need long-term services and supports, and for other purposes.

S. 1266

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1266, a bill to amend titles 10 and 38, United State Code, to improve benefits and services for surviving spouses, and for other purposes.

S. 1558

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1558, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the brave women who served in World War II as members of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps and U.S. Navy Nurse Corps.

S. 1651

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1651, a bill to encourage increased trade and investment between the United States and the countries in the Western Balkans, and for other purposes.

S. 1749

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1749, a bill to amend title XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act with respect to nursing facility requirements, and for other purposes.

S. 1960

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1960, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to foreign persons responsible for violations of the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) individuals, and for other purposes.

S. 2158

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Tennessee

(Mrs. BLACKBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2158, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for disciplinary procedures for supervisors and managers at the Department of Veterans Affairs and to modify the procedures of personnel actions against employees of the Department, and for other purposes.

S. 2555

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2555, a bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to expand and improve the enforcement capabilities of the Attorney General, and for other purposes.

S. 2563

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2563, a bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to allow for dual enrollment in the supplemental nutrition assistance program and the food distribution program on Indian reservations.

S. 2581

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2581, a bill to extend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.

S. 3014

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3014, a bill to establish requirements for the Federal Trade Commission with respect to certain rules related to automotive retailing, and for other purposes.

S. 3197

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the names of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. RICKETTS) were added as cosponsors of S. 3197, a bill to establish and authorize funding for an Iranian Sanctions Enforcement Fund to enforce United States sanctions with respect to Iran and its proxies and pay off the United States public debt and to codify the Export Enforcement Coordination Center.

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3197, supra.

S. 3376

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3376, a bill to provide for the liquidation or reliquidation of certain entries of steel and aluminum products retroactively approved for exclusion from certain duties during the COVID-19 pandemic.

S. 3775

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3775, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act, and for other purposes.

S. 3812

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3812, a bill to provide firearm licensees an opportunity to correct statutory and regulatory violations, and for other purposes.

S. 3949

At the request of Ms. BUTLER, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. HELMY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3949, a bill to amend title V of the Public Health Service Act to ensure protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth and their families.

S. 4015

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4015, a bill to temporarily suspend duties on imports of titanium sponge, and for other purposes.

S. 4163

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. RICKETTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4163, a bill to require a report on the United States supply of nitrocellulose.

S. 4243

At the request of Ms. BUTLER, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. HELMY), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) were added as cosponsors of S. 4243, a bill to award posthumously the Congressional Gold Medal to Shirley Chisholm.

S. 4272

At the request of Mr. WARNOCK, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4272, a bill to direct the Joint Committee of Congress on the Library to obtain a statue of Shirley Chisholm for placement in the United States Capitol.

S. 4299

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 4299, a bill to require the Sec-

retary of Transportation to issue a rule relating to the collection of crash-worthiness information under the New Car Assessment Program of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and for other purposes.

S. 4334

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4334, a bill to enhance the security operations of the Transportation Security Administration and stability of the transportation security workforce by applying the personnel system under title 5, United States Code, to employees of the Transportation Security Administration, and for other purposes.

S. 4370

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4370, a bill to amend the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004 to improve that Act, and for other purposes.

S. 4419

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4419, a bill to require the Science and Technology Directorate in the Department of Homeland Security to develop greater capacity to detect, identify, and disrupt illicit substances in very low concentrations.

S. 4569

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4569, a bill to require covered platforms to remove nonconsensual intimate visual depictions, and for other purposes.

S. 4776

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. 4776, a bill to amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2025 through 2029, and for other purposes.

S. 4891

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4891, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Defense to limit copayments for outpatient visits for mental health or behavioral health under the TRICARE program, and for other purposes.

S. 4892

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4892, a bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to establish a grant program for first responder mental health and wellness, and for other purposes.

S. 4932

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor

of S. 4932, a bill to amend the National Quantum Initiative Act to provide for a research, development, and demonstration program, and for other purposes.

S. 4960

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. RICKETTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4960, a bill to prohibit State excise taxes on firearms and ammunition manufacturers and dealers.

S. 4988

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4988, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the individuals who fought for or with the United States against the armed forces of Imperial Japan in the Pacific theater and the impacted Sashinax people on Attu, whose lives, culture, and community were irrevocably changed from December 8, 1941, to August 15, 1945.

S. 5007

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) were added as cosponsors of S. 5007, a bill to amend the Defense Production Act of 1950 with respect to foreign investments in United States agriculture, and for other purposes.

S. 5018

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 5018, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to clarify and preserve the breadth of the protections under the Medicare Secondary Payer Act.

S. 5049

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 5049, a bill to modify the definition of disaster in the Small Business Act to include low or no snowfall amounts, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 669

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the names of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) and the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 669, a resolution designating October 10, 2024, as "American Girls in Sports Day".

S. RES. 684

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 684, a resolution supporting the role of the United States in helping save the lives of children and protecting the health of people in low-income countries with vaccines and immunization through Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance ("Gavi").

S. RES. 816

At the request of Mr. RICKETTS, the names of the Senator from Tennessee

(Mr. HAGERTY) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 816, a resolution recognizing the 73rd anniversary of the signing of the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Philippines and the strong bilateral security alliance between our two nations in the wake of persistent and escalating aggression by the People's Republic of China in the South China Sea.

AMENDMENT NO. 3263

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3263 intended to be proposed to S. 4638, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING):

S. 5055. A bill to require the United States Armed Forces to fully utilize applicable State extreme risk protection order programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I rise today to introduce the Armed Forces Crisis Intervention Notification Act.

This legislation is in response to the October 25, 2023, tragedy in Lewiston, ME. On that day, 18 Mainers were killed and 13 injured during the worst mass shooting in Maine's history. For 2 days, Lewiston and the surrounding communities were locked down and people were frightened as law enforcement searched for the shooter. It was a horrific event that Mainers will never forget, nor should we.

The phrase "Lewiston strong" continues to echo across our State as we remember those whom we lost nearly a year ago. The victims were enjoying time with their family and friends at a local bowling alley and a restaurant. They included four members of Maine's deaf community who had gathered at the restaurant that evening to play cornhole. They also included a 14-year-old high school honors student, an Army veteran who served tours in Iraq, and a volunteer coach for a youth bowling league. They were parents, husbands and wives, neighbors, co-workers, and friends. Lives were forever changed on that day as families continue to mourn the loss of their loved ones.

The shooter was a sergeant first class in the Army Reserve. In the aftermath of the shootings, I led the Maine delegation in requesting an independent review by the inspector general of the

Army to help us better understand what happened and what could have been done differently to help prevent this tragedy.

I said then that I wanted to use the results of that review—as well as the findings of a separate investigation by the Army Reserve and the independent commission established by the Governor of Maine—to inform potential Federal legislation that could help prevent future shootings.

The Army Reserve and the Army inspector general released their reports in July, and the independent commission appointed by the Governor released its report just last month. I commend the commission for its thorough report, and I thank the chairman of the commission, former chief justice of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court Daniel Wathen for his leadership.

All of these investigations revealed that there were numerous missed opportunities to potentially intervene and prevent this horrific tragedy. In many instances, there was a clear lack of effective communication and coordination. For example, the independent commission concluded that the local sheriff's office was "justified in pointing out that the Army Reserve did not share all relevant information it had about [the shooter's] behavior." In its report, the commission went on to explain that had Army Reserve personnel "presented a full and complete accounting of the facts, the [sheriff's office] might have acted more assertively."

The findings of these investigations into the Lewiston shootings also serve as a stark reminder that members of our Armed Forces are not immune from mental illness.

So, today, I am introducing legislation that is designed to help address these significant issues. If enacted, my bill will move us closer to achieving our goals of making our communities safer and ensuring that servicemembers in crisis get the assistance they need to prevent injury to themselves and to others.

This bill is premised on my belief, which is supported by the findings of the investigations, that State crisis intervention programs should be fully utilized by our military when appropriate and with adequate due process protections. This can only happen, however, if relevant information is shared in a timely and effective manner.

The Armed Forces Crisis Intervention Notification Act would facilitate that kind of communication and coordination between the Armed Forces and the relevant State, county, and local authorities that was lacking during the months leading up to the mass shootings in Lewiston.

Specifically, this bill would direct the Armed Forces to fully utilize State crisis intervention programs in certain circumstances where the risk of harm is the greatest—namely, when a servicemember is determined to be unfit to

possess military firearms due to that member making serious, credible threats of violence against themselves or against others or when a servicemember has been involuntarily committed to a hospital that specializes in caring for people with mental illness. "Fully utilize" is defined in the bill to mean taking action available to third parties under a State crisis intervention program and providing relevant material facts to appropriate law enforcement or judicial personnel.

In the case of the Lewiston shooter, Robert Card, the Army Reserve determined that he should not have access to military weapons and facilitated his treatment at a mental hospital, but regrettably, it did not provide civilian law enforcement in Maine, where he resided, or in New York, where he was training, with all of the relevant information that it had. This bill would direct that such information be provided to the appropriate authorities through an established process so that the authorities can make fully informed decisions about whether to take additional steps pursuant to a State crisis intervention program.

The bill also facilitates information sharing by directing the branches of our Armed Forces to fully participate in judicial proceedings authorized as part of a State crisis intervention program. This means that the branches of our Armed Forces would be required to produce upon request evidence as part of those proceedings.

This provision is especially meaningful. If this bill had been law prior to the shootings and Maine law enforcement had initiated proceedings under the State of Maine's yellow flag law, the Army would have been directed to produce evidence that could have resulted in the shooter losing possession of his personal weapons—the weapons that he used to murder 18 people—and at the same time, he could have received additional treatment for his severe mental illness.

I have worked for months to carefully craft this legislation, which also reflects the findings and recommendations of the three separate investigations I previously described. While drafting this bill, I solicited input from the relevant stakeholders—including the Army, veterans service organizations, and sportsman's groups, including the National Shooting Sports Foundation and the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine.

Responsible gun ownership is part of the heritage of many Maine families. The Sportsman's Alliance of Maine has long been an effective voice in our State for preserving this heritage and protecting the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding Americans, while recognizing that there are extreme circumstances in which action must be taken to intervene in order to prevent gun-related violence. I thank them for their thoughtful input and advice.

The product of this collaborative and consultative process is a bill that is

carefully constructed. It is a bill that is designed to save lives.

It is important to note once again that this proposal protects the due process and Second Amendment rights of servicemembers. It would not create a Federal crisis intervention program or impose new requirements on States or alter existing State programs or direct States to adopt such crisis intervention programs. The bill preserves the ability of States to craft their own crisis intervention programs. The Armed Forces would simply operate within each State's framework, provided that the State programs adhere to the due process and Second Amendment protections already specified by Congress in the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act.

Moreover, if a current or former servicemember seeks to regain possession of his or her firearms through a judicial proceeding, he or she would be entitled to evidence from the military that could be helpful to his or her case.

This legislation also does not affect the military's existing authority to disarm servicemembers of their issued weapons in a broad range of situations that are unrelated to a serious, credible threat of violence or involuntary commitment to a mental hospital.

We often search for something good to come from a terrible tragedy. After shoppers were killed in Buffalo, NY, and schoolchildren and teachers were murdered in Uvalde, TX, we came together in this Chamber to pass the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. I was honored to be part of that effort, which I believe has saved lives. Indeed, in June, the Department of Justice announced that it had charged more than 500 defendants under the provisions of that law that target unlawful trafficking and straw purchasing of firearms. I coauthored those provisions to help take dangerous criminals off the streets, and that is exactly what is happening.

Nothing that we can do can take away the pain, the shock, and the understandable anger felt by the families who lost loved ones last October, but we can and we should take legislative and administrative actions in response to the Lewiston tragedy. By taking such actions, we have a chance to help servicemembers in crisis. We have a chance to help protect our neighbors, our families, our communities. We have a chance to save lives.

Let me end by thanking my colleague from Maine Senator KING for co-sponsoring this legislation. I urge the rest of our colleagues to join us in this important effort.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 817—DESIGNATING THE WEEK BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 8, 2024, AS “NATIONAL DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS RECOGNITION WEEK”

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. WARREN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Ms. SMITH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 817

Whereas direct care workers, including direct support professionals, personal assistants, personal attendants, in-home support workers, and paraprofessionals, are key to providing publicly funded, long-term support and services for millions of individuals with disabilities;

Whereas direct support professionals provide essential services that ensure that all individuals with disabilities are—

- (1) included as a valued part of the communities in which those individuals live;
- (2) supported at home, at work, and in the communities of the United States; and
- (3) empowered to live with the dignity that all people of the United States deserve;

Whereas, by fostering connections between individuals with disabilities and their families, friends, and communities, direct support professionals ensure that individuals with disabilities thrive and provide an alternative to institutional care;

Whereas direct support professionals build close, respectful, and trusting relationships with individuals with disabilities and provide a broad range of personalized support to those individuals, including—

- (1) helping individuals make person-centered choices;
- (2) assisting with personal care, meal preparation, medication management, and other aspects of daily living;
- (3) assisting individuals in accessing the community and securing competitive, integrated employment;
- (4) providing transportation to school, work, religious, and recreational activities;
- (5) helping with general daily affairs, such as assisting with financial matters, medical appointments, and personal interests; and
- (6) assisting individuals in the transition to living in the communities of their choice;

Whereas there is a critical and increasing shortage of direct support professionals throughout the United States, a crisis that was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, bringing uncertainty and risk to individuals with disabilities;

Whereas direct support professionals do not have their own Standard Occupational Classification for the purposes of Federal data collection, including data produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor;

Whereas the Director of the Office of Management and Budget should, as part of the current revision of the Standard Occupational Classification system, consider establishing a separate code for direct support professionals as a healthcare support occupation;

Whereas the direct care workforce, including direct support professionals, is expected to be among the fastest growing occupations in the United States;

Whereas many direct support professionals—

(1) may be the primary financial providers for their families;

(2) are hardworking, taxpaying citizens who provide a critical service in the United States; and

(3) continue to earn low wages, receive inadequate benefits, and have limited opportunities for advancement, resulting in high turnover and vacancy rates that adversely affect the quality of support, safety, and health of individuals with disabilities; and

Whereas the Supreme Court of the United States, in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, 527 U.S. 581 (1999)—

(1) recognized the importance of the deinstitutionalization of, and community-based services for, individuals with disabilities; and

(2) held that, under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), a State must provide person-centered, community-based service options to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week beginning September 8, 2024, as “National Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week”;

(2) recognizes the dedication and vital role of direct support professionals in enhancing the lives of individuals with disabilities;

(3) appreciates the contribution of direct support professionals in supporting individuals with disabilities in the United States and the families of those individuals;

(4) commends direct support professionals for being integral to the provision of long-term support and services for individuals with disabilities;

(5) acknowledges the nearly 2,000 comments regarding supporting the inclusion of a Standard Occupational Classification category for direct support professionals; and

(6) finds that the successful implementation of public policies affecting individuals with disabilities in the United States can depend on the dedication of direct support professionals.

SENATE RESOLUTION 818—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR AND CELEBRATING THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SERVICEMEN'S READJUSTMENT ACT OF 1944

Mr. CARPER (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. BOOZMAN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 818

Whereas, on July 28, 1943, in seeking a solution to integrate returning members of the Armed Forces into civilian life, President Franklin D. Roosevelt called for a comprehensive set of veterans benefits during a fireside chat saying, “While concentrating on military victory, we are not neglecting the planning of the things to come Among many other things we are, today, laying plans for the return to civilian life of our gallant men and women in the Armed Services.”;

Whereas, on June 22, 1944, in demonstration of the full support of the United States for the transition of members of the Armed Forces to civilian life, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (58 Stat. 284, chapter 268), commonly known as the “GI Bill of Rights”;

Whereas the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 was the culmination of the tireless work and advocacy of veterans service organizations and Members of Congress;

Whereas the Act made immediate financial support, transformative educational benefits, and home loan guarantees available to

the approximately 16,000,000 veterans who served in the Armed Forces during World War II;

Whereas the Act helped approximately 7,800,000 veterans enroll in post-secondary education or training, helped to democratize higher education in the United States, and caused total post-secondary education enrollment to grow exponentially from 1,676,856 in 1945, with veterans accounting for 5.2 percent of total post-secondary education enrollment, to 2,338,226 in 1947, with veterans accounting for 49.2 percent of the total;

Whereas the Act contributed approximately 450,000 engineers, 240,000 accountants, 238,000 teachers, 91,000 scientists, 67,000 doctors, 122,000 dentists, 17,000 writers and editors, and thousands of other professionals to the workforce of the United States and helped expand the middle class more than at any other point in the history of the United States;

Whereas the Act expressed the duty, responsibility, and desire of a grateful United States to see to it that those who served on active duty in the Armed Forces are afforded every opportunity to become disciplined forces for prosperity and progress in the United States through economic opportunity and investment;

Whereas Congress passed subsequent Acts to provide educational assistance to new generations of veterans, including the Veterans' Readjustment Benefits Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-358), the Post-Vietnam Era Veterans' Educational Assistance Act of 1977 (title IV of Public Law 94-502), the Veterans' Educational Assistance Act of 1984 (title VII of Public Law 98-525), the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 (title V of Public Law 110-252), and the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-48);

Whereas, as of 2022, the Department of Veterans Affairs has paid more than \$400,000,000,000 in educational assistance to approximately 25,000,000 veterans and their loved ones who continue to excel academically in post-secondary education;

Whereas the Act created the Department of Veterans Affairs Home Loan Guarantee program, which, since 1944, has provided a pathway for more than 28,000,000 veterans to purchase a home guaranteed by the Department, the majority of which are purchased with no down payment;

Whereas the Act improved health care opportunities for veterans by transferring medical facilities from the Army and the Navy and providing funding for hospitals of the Veterans Administration following the conclusion of hostilities of World War II;

Whereas this combination of opportunities changed the social and economic fabric of the United States for the better, with a 1988 report from the Subcommittee on Education and Health of the Joint Economic Committee of Congress concluding that for every \$1 the United States invested pursuant to the Act, a minimum of \$5 and as much as \$12.50 was returned in growth to the United States;

Whereas the Act led to the education of 14 Nobel laureates, 24 Pulitzer Prize-winners, and three Supreme Court justices;

Whereas nearly 1,300 Members of Congress served in the Armed Forces on or after June 22, 1944, and directly benefitted from the enactment of the Act;

Whereas the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-48), commonly known as the "Forever GI Bill", was named after Harry W. Colmery of Topeka, Kansas, who was a former National Commander of The American Legion and is credited with drafting the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944; and

Whereas June 22, 2024, is the 80th anniversary of the date on which President Franklin

D. Roosevelt signed the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 into law: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors the achievements of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (58 Stat. 284, chapter 268), commonly known as the "GI Bill of Rights", in democratizing higher education, increasing home ownership, establishing greater citizenship through economic empowerment, and empowering a generation that would serve for decades to guide the transformation of the United States into a global force for good;

(2) considers the veterans benefitting from the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 on the 80th anniversary of its enactment—

(A) to be equal to the challenge of creating a lasting prosperity for the United States as their forebears; and

(B) to have the opportunity to become the heirs to the Greatest Generation;

(3) affirms the responsibility of Congress to be a faithful steward of educational assistance provided under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to ensure that such assistance endures as an honorable investment of public dollars; and

(4) encourages all people of the United States to celebrate June 22, 2024, as the 80th anniversary of the signing of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

SENATE RESOLUTION 819—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 25, 2024, AS "NATIONAL LOBSTER DAY"

Mr. KING (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. REED, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 819

Whereas lobstering has served as an economic engine and family tradition in the United States for centuries;

Whereas thousands of families in the United States make their livelihoods from catching, processing, or serving lobsters;

Whereas the lobster industry employs people of all ages year-round, and many harvesters begin fishing as children and stay in the industry for their entire working lives;

Whereas the lobster industry has spearheaded sustainability measures for more than 150 years, ensuring the health of the lobster stock and the marine environment;

Whereas consumers are looking to add more sustainable seafood to their diets, and more people are enjoying lobster at home;

Whereas historical lore notes that lobster likely joined turkey on the table at the very first Thanksgiving feast in 1621, and lobster continues to be a mainstay during many other holiday traditions;

Whereas lobster harvesters are evolving and diversifying their businesses to help maintain the health of the ocean, including through kelp farming, which absorbs carbon dioxide from seawater;

Whereas throughout history, Presidents of the United States have served lobster at their inaugural celebrations and state dinners with international leaders;

Whereas lobster is a versatile source of lean protein that is low in saturated fat and high in vitamin B12;

Whereas lobster is continually incorporated into foods such as pho, tacos, gnocchi, doughnuts, cocktails, ice cream, and butter;

Whereas the peak of the lobstering season in the United States occurs in late summer;

Whereas the Unicode Consortium added a lobster to its emoji set in 2018 in recognition of the popularity of the lobster around the world;

Whereas lobsters have inspired artists in the United States and throughout the world for hundreds of years;

Whereas lobsters have been, and continue to be, used as mascots for sports teams;

Whereas lobsters inspire innovation of all kinds beyond the culinary realm, including skincare, fertilizer, robotics, and biodegradable golf balls;

Whereas countless people in the United States enjoy lobster rolls to celebrate summer, from beaches to backyards, and from fine-dining restaurants to lobster shacks; and

Whereas lobster is a staple on the menus of beloved restaurants across the United States, and in kitchens across the United States, bringing families and friends together: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates September 25, 2024, as "National Lobster Day"; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 820—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 21 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 28, 2024, AS "NATIONAL ESTUARIES WEEK"

Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. CASSIDY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. BUTLER, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COONS, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KING, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. REED, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 820

Whereas estuary regions cover only 13 percent of the land area in the continental United States but contain nearly 40 percent of the population, 39 percent of the jobs, and 47 percent of the economic output of the United States;

Whereas the oceans, estuaries, and Great Lakes of the United States continue to fuel economic growth across the United States, with employment from the estuarine and ocean economy growing at 5 percent in 2022, compared to the national average employment growth of 3.9 percent;

Whereas the estuary, ocean, and Great Lakes economic sectors created 88,000 new jobs between 2018 and 2019, employed 3,500,000 people, and contributed \$476,200,000,000 to the gross domestic product;

Whereas the commercial and recreational fishing industries support over 2,300,000 jobs in the United States;

Whereas, in 2022—

(1) commercial and recreational saltwater fishing in the United States generated \$321,000,000,000 in sales;

(2) angler trip expenditures totaled nearly \$13,412,000,000; and

(3) saltwater recreational fishing supported over 691,693 jobs, generated \$138,000,000,000 in sales impacts across the economy, and contributed \$45,100,000,000 in income impacts and \$74,900,000,000 in value-added impacts to the United States;

Whereas estuaries provide vital habitats for—

(1) countless species of fish and wildlife, including more than 68 percent of the commercial fish catch in the United States by value and 80 percent of the recreational fish catch in the United States by weight; and

(2) many species that are listed as threatened or endangered species;

Whereas estuaries provide critical ecosystem services that protect human health and public safety, including water filtration, flood control, shoreline stabilization, erosion prevention, and the protection of coastal communities during hurricanes, storms, and other extreme weather events;

Whereas, by the 1980s, the United States had already lost more than 50 percent of the wetlands that existed in the Thirteen Original Colonies;

Whereas some bays in the United States that were once filled with fish and oysters have become dead zones filled with excess nutrients, chemical waste, and marine debris;

Whereas harmful algal blooms are hurting fish, wildlife, and human health and are causing serious ecological and economic harm to some estuaries;

Whereas changes in sea level can affect estuarine water quality and estuarine habitats;

Whereas section 320 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1330) (commonly known as the “Clean Water Act”) authorizes the development of comprehensive conservation and management plans to ensure that the designated uses of estuaries are protected and to restore and maintain—

(1) chemical, physical, and biological integrity;

(2) water quality;

(3) the balanced indigenous population of shellfish, fish, and wildlife; and

(4) recreational activity;

Whereas the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq.) provides that the policy of the United States is to preserve, protect, develop, and, if possible, restore or enhance the resources of the coastal zones of the United States, including estuaries, for current and future generations;

Whereas 34 coastal and Great Lakes States and territories of the United States operate or contain a National Estuary Program or a National Estuarine Research Reserve;

Whereas scientific study leads to a better understanding of the benefits of estuaries to human and ecological communities;

Whereas the Federal Government, State, local, and Tribal governments, national and community organizations, and individuals work together to effectively manage the estuaries of the United States;

Whereas estuary restoration efforts restore natural infrastructure in local communities in a cost-effective manner, helping to create jobs and reestablish the natural functions of estuaries that yield countless benefits; and

Whereas the week of September 21 through September 28, 2024, is recognized as “National Estuaries Week” to increase awareness among all people of the United States, including Federal Government and State, local, and Tribal government officials, of the importance of healthy estuaries and the need to protect and restore estuaries: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses support for the designation of “National Estuaries Week”;

(2) supports the goals and ideals of National Estuaries Week;

(3) acknowledges the importance of estuaries to sustaining employment in the United States and to the economic well-being and prosperity of the United States;

(4) recognizes that persistent threats undermine the health of estuaries;

(5) applauds the work of national and community organizations and public partners that promote public awareness, understanding, protection, and restoration of estuaries;

(6) supports the scientific study, preservation, protection, and restoration of estuaries; and

(7) expresses the intent of the Senate to continue working to understand, protect, and restore the estuaries of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 821—EX-PRESSING SUPPORT FOR DESIGNATION OF THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 15 THROUGH 21, 2024, AS “NATIONAL ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY WEEK”

Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. KING, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. YOUNG) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 821

Whereas the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development reports that more than 43,000,000 adults in the United States lack the basic literacy, numeracy, and digital skills necessary to succeed at home, in the workplace, and in society;

Whereas the literacy of the people of the United States is essential for the economic and societal well-being and the national security of the United States;

Whereas the United States reaps the economic benefits of individuals who improve their literacy, numeracy, and English-language skills;

Whereas literacy, numeracy, and digital skills are necessary for individuals to fully benefit from the range of opportunities available in the United States;

Whereas the economy and position of the United States in the world marketplace depend on having a literate, skilled population;

Whereas the unemployment rate in the United States is highest among those without a high school diploma or an equivalent credential, demonstrating that education is essential for economic recovery;

Whereas the educational skills of the parents of a child and the practice of reading to a child have a direct impact on the educational success of the child;

Whereas parental involvement in the education of a child is a key predictor of the success of a child, and the level of parental involvement in the education of a child increases as the educational level of the parent increases;

Whereas parents who participate in family literacy programs become more involved in the education of their children and gain the tools necessary to obtain a job or find better employment;

Whereas, as a result of family literacy programs, the lives of children become more stable and the success of children in the classroom and in future endeavors becomes more likely;

Whereas adults need to be part of a long-term solution to the educational challenges faced by the people of the United States;

Whereas many older individuals in the United States lack the reading, numeracy, or English-language skills necessary to read a prescription and follow medical instructions, which endangers the lives of older individuals and the lives of their loved ones;

Whereas many individuals who are unemployed, underemployed, or receive public assistance lack the literacy skills necessary to obtain and retain employment, to continue

their education, or to participate in job training and career development programs;

Whereas many high school dropouts do not have the literacy skills necessary to complete their education, transition to postsecondary education or career and technical training, or obtain work that provides a living wage;

Whereas a large portion of individuals in prison have low educational skills, and individuals without educational skills are more likely to return to prison once released;

Whereas many immigrants in the United States do not have the literacy skills necessary to succeed in the United States; and

Whereas National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week highlights the need to ensure that each individual in the United States has the literacy, numeracy, and digital skills necessary to succeed at home, at work, and in society: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of “National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week” to raise public awareness about the importance of adult education, workforce skills, and family literacy;

(2) encourages people across the United States to support programs that assist individuals in need of adult education, workforce skills, and family literacy programs;

(3) recognizes the importance of adult education, workforce skills, and family literacy programs; and

(4) calls on public, private, and nonprofit entities to support increased access to adult education and family literacy programs to ensure a fully literate society.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3277. Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. ROUNDS, and Mr. HEINRICH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3278. Mr. MURPHY (for himself and Mr. CORNYN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3279. Mrs. FISCHER (for herself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3280. Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. BRAUN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3281. Mr. McCONNELL (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. TILLIS, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3282. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3277. Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. ROUNDS, and Mr. HEINRICH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of

the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title XVI, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . PHYSICAL AND CYBERSECURITY PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SYSTEMS.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.**—The term “artificial intelligence” has the meaning given such term in section 5002 of the National Artificial Intelligence Initiative Act of 2020 (15 U.S.C. 9401).

(2) **COVERED ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TECHNOLOGY.**—The term “covered artificial intelligence technology” means an artificial intelligence system procured by the Department of Defense and all components of the development and deployment lifecycle of that artificial intelligence system, including source code, numerical parameters (such as model weights) of the trained artificial intelligence system, details of any methods and algorithms used to develop that system, data used in the development of the system, and software used for evaluating the trustworthiness of the artificial intelligence system during development or deployment.

(3) **COVERED ENTITY.**—The term “covered entity” means an entity that enters into a Department of Defense contract that engages in the development, deployment, storage, or transportation of a covered artificial intelligence technology.

(b) **SECURITY FRAMEWORK.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Defense shall develop a framework describing best practices for artificial intelligence cybersecurity and physical security to mitigate risks to the Department of Defense from the use of covered artificial intelligence technologies.

(2) **COVERAGE OF RELEVANT ASPECTS OF SECURITY.**—The framework developed under paragraph (1) shall cover all relevant aspects of the security of artificial intelligence systems, including the following:

(A) Workforce risks, such as insider threat risks.

(B) Supply chain risks, such as data poisoning risks.

(C) Risks relating to adversarial tampering with artificial intelligence systems.

(D) Risks relating to unintended exposure or theft of artificial intelligence systems.

(3) **RISK-BASED FRAMEWORK.**—The framework developed under paragraph (1) shall be risk-based, with higher security levels corresponding proportionally to the national security or foreign policy risks posed by the covered artificial intelligence technology being stolen or tampered with.

(4) **USE OF EXISTING FRAMEWORKS.**—To the maximum extent feasible, the framework developed under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) draw on existing cybersecurity references, such as the NIST Special Publication 800 series; and

(B) be implemented as an extension or augmentation of existing cybersecurity frameworks developed by the Department of Defense, such as the Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification framework.

(5) **ADDRESSING EXTREME SECURITY RISKS.**—

(A) **HIGHLY CAPABLE CYBER THREAT ACTORS.**—The framework developed under paragraph (1) shall take into account that the most highly capable artificial intelligence systems may be of great interest to the most highly capable cyber threat actors, such as intelligence and defense agencies of peer and near-peer nations.

(B) **SECURITY LEVELS.**—The Secretary of Defense shall ensure that cybersecurity

frameworks provided for contractors contain security levels designed to mitigate risks posed by cyber threat actors described in subparagraph (A), with the highest levels being similar in scope to the level of protection offered by national security systems.

(C) **GENERAL DESIGN WITH SPECIFIC COMPONENTS.**—To the extent feasible, any additional security levels developed under subparagraph (B) shall be designed generally for all software systems, but may contain components designed specifically for highly capable artificial intelligence systems.

(c) **SECURITY REQUIREMENTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may amend the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement, or take other similar action, to require covered entities to implement the best practices described in the framework developed under subsection (c).

(2) **RISK-BASED RULES.**—Requirements implemented in rules developed under paragraph (1) shall be as narrowly tailored as practicable to the specific covered artificial intelligence technologies developed, deployed, stored, or transported by a covered entity, and shall be calibrated accordingly to the different tasks involved in development, deployment, storage, or transportation of components of those covered artificial intelligence technologies.

(3) **COST-BENEFIT CONSIDERATION.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—In implementing paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

(i) consider the costs and benefits to the Department and to United States national security and technological leadership, of imposing security requirements on covered entities; and

(ii) to the extent feasible, design requirements in a way that minimizes costs and maximizes benefits.

(B) **WEIGHING COSTS OF SLOWING DOWN DEVELOPMENT.**—In carrying out subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall, in particular, weigh the costs of slowing down artificial intelligence development and deployment against the benefits of mitigating national security risks and potential security risks to the Department of Defense from using commercial software.

(d) **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the congressional defense committees an update on the status of implementation of the requirements of this section.

SEC. ____ . PUBLIC-PRIVATE CYBERSECURITY PARTNERSHIP FOR HIGHLY CAPABLE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SYSTEMS.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT REQUIRED.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Cyber Policy shall establish a public-private partnership body to address cybersecurity threats to highly capable artificial intelligence systems.

(b) **FORUM FOR ENGAGEMENT.**—The partnership body established under subsection (a) shall serve as a forum for engagement between the Department of Defense and commercial industry partners to align and enhance cybersecurity frameworks and practices applicable to both national security systems and artificial intelligence systems at risk from sophisticated state actors.

(c) **PURPOSE.**—The public-private partnership body developed under subsection (a) shall—

(1) convene regular engagements to discuss cybersecurity threats specific to highly capable artificial intelligence systems, with a focus on both current and emerging threats posed by state-sponsored cyber actors;

(2) facilitate the development, sharing, and alignment of best practices and robust cybersecurity frameworks between the Depart-

ment and commercial industry to protect artificial intelligence systems;

(3) promote collaborative threat intelligence sharing between the Department and commercial entities, with particular attention to vulnerabilities in artificial intelligence systems used in critical infrastructure, defense operations, and sensitive national security functions; and

(4) develop recommendations for cybersecurity policy enhancements aimed at safeguarding artificial intelligence technologies from state-sponsored cyber attacks and report findings and policy recommendations to Congress on an annual basis.

(d) **PARTICIPANTS.**—The public-private partnership body developed under subsection (a) shall include representatives from—

(1) the Department of Defense, including—

(A) the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Cyber Policy;

(B) the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security;

(C) the Chief Information Officer of the Department of Defense;

(D) the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Officer of the Department of Defense;

(E) the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency;

(F) the National Security Agency;

(G) United States Cyber Command; and

(H) such other Department of Defense agencies with responsibilities for cybersecurity or artificial intelligence systems as the Assistant Secretary considers relevant;

(2) commercial industry companies with expertise in highly capable artificial intelligence systems or cybersecurity practices, including—

(A) cloud computing and artificial intelligence service providers;

(B) cybersecurity companies;

(C) artificial intelligence research and development companies;

(D) telecommunications companies; and

(E) such other industry leaders as the Assistant Secretary identifies as relevant and appropriate; and

(3) federally funded research and development centers, national laboratories, and academic institutions with demonstrated expertise in artificial intelligence or cybersecurity.

(e) **MEETINGS.**—The engagements described under subsection (c)(1) shall include convenings not less frequently than semi-annually—

(1) to identify key threats to artificial intelligence systems in both the Department and commercial sectors, with an emphasis on threats posed by sophisticated state actors;

(2) to align the most robust cybersecurity frameworks applicable to national security systems and those artificial intelligence systems used in commercial sectors that are deemed critical to national security; and

(3) to assess the cybersecurity readiness of artificial intelligence systems and artificial intelligence developers and providers and make recommendations to improve protective measures against cyber threats to artificial intelligence systems and artificial intelligence developers and providers.

(f) **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.**—Not later than one year after the establishment of the public-private partnership body under subsection (a), and not less frequently than once each year thereafter, the Assistant Secretary shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report summarizing—

(1) the key findings from the meetings held under subsection (e), including identified cybersecurity vulnerabilities in artificial intelligence systems;

(2) recommendations for enhancing cybersecurity policy and practices to protect artificial intelligence systems across both the Department and commercial sectors; and

(3) an analysis of the progress made in aligning Department and commercial cybersecurity frameworks to address state-sponsored cyber threats.

SA 3278. Mr. MURPHY (for himself and Mr. CORNYN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1216. EXTENSION AND MODIFICATION OF GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT CENTER.

(a) FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND LIMITATIONS.—Paragraph (2) of subsection (f) of section 1287 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114-328; 22 U.S.C. 2656 note) is amended to read as follows:

“(2) FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND LIMITATIONS.—

“(A) CERTIFICATION.—The Secretary of State shall only provide funds under paragraph (1) to an entity described in that paragraph if the Secretary certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the entity receiving such funds—

“(i) has been selected in accordance with relevant existing regulations;

“(ii) has the capability and experience necessary to fulfill the purposes described in that paragraph;

“(iii) is nonpartisan; and

“(iv) is compatible with United States national security and foreign policy interests and objectives.

“(B) PARTISAN POLITICAL ACTIVITY.—The Secretary of State shall not knowingly provide funds under this subsection to any entity engaged in partisan political activity within the United States, including by carrying out activities that—

“(i) are directed toward the success or failure of a political party, a candidate for partisan political office, or a partisan political group; or

“(ii) result in unlawful partisan censorship of speech protected under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.”.

(b) EXTENSION.—Subsection (j) of such section is amended by striking “on the date that is 8 years after the date of the enactment of this Act” and inserting “on September 30, 2031”.

(c) SEVERABILITY.—If any provision of this section, an amendment made by this section, or the application of such provision or amendment to any person or circumstance is held to be unconstitutional, the remainder of this section and the amendments made by this section, and the application of the provision or amendment to any other person or circumstance, shall not be affected.

SA 3279. Mrs. FISCHER (for herself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle H of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1095. TREATMENT OF PAYMENTS FROM THE RAILROAD UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACCOUNT.

(a) AMENDMENTS.—Section 235 of the Continued Assistance to Rail Workers Act of 2020 (subchapter III of title II of division N of Public Law 116-260; 2 U.S.C. 906 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking paragraphs (1) and (2); and

(B) by striking “subsection (a)—” and inserting “subsection (a) shall take effect 7 days after the date of enactment of the Continued Assistance to Rail Workers Act of 2020.”; and

(2) by striking subsection (c).

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply as if enacted on the day before the date on which the national emergency concerning the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak declared by the President on March 13, 2020, under the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.) terminates.

(c) OFFSET FROM TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION FUND.—Of the unobligated balances of the amount made available under section 4011 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (135 Stat. 80), \$13,000,000 are rescinded.

SA 3280. Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. BRAUN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle H of title X, insert the following:

SEC. 10. U.S. PHARMACEUTICAL SUPPLY CHAINS MAPPING.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “Mapping America’s Pharmaceutical Supply Act” or the “MAPS Act”.

(b) PHARMACEUTICAL SUPPLY CHAIN MAPPING.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”), in coordination with the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies, shall ensure coordination of efforts of the Department of Health and Human Services, including through public-private partnerships, to—

(1) map, or otherwise visualize, the supply chains, from manufacturing of key starting materials through manufacturing of finished dosage forms and distribution, of drugs (as defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321)) that are—

(A) directly related to responding to chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear threats and incidents covered by the National Response Framework; or

(B) of greatest priority for providing health care and identified as being at high risk of shortage; and

(2) use data analytics to identify supply chain vulnerabilities that pose a threat to national security, as determined by the Secretary or the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies.

(c) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out subsection (b), the Secretary shall—

(1) describe the roles and responsibilities of agencies and offices within the Department of Health and Human Services related to monitoring such supply chains and assessing any related vulnerabilities;

(2) facilitate the exchange of information between Federal departments, agencies, and offices, as appropriate and necessary to enable such agencies and offices to carry out roles and responsibilities described in paragraph (1) related to drugs described in subsection (b)(1), which may include—

(A) the location of establishments registered under subsection (b), (c), or (i) of section 510 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 360) involved in the production of active pharmaceutical ingredients and finished dosage forms of drugs described in subsection (b)(1), and the amount of such ingredients and finished dosage forms produced at each such establishment;

(B) to the extent available and as appropriate, the location of establishments so registered involved in the production of the key starting materials and excipients needed to produce the active pharmaceutical ingredients and finished dosage forms, and the amount of such materials and excipients produced at each such establishment; and

(C) any regulatory actions with respect to such drugs or the establishments manufacturing such drugs, including with respect to inspections and related regulatory activities conducted under section 704 of such Act (21 U.S.C. 374), the seizure of such a drug pursuant to section 304 of such Act (21 U.S.C. 334), any recalls of such a drug; inclusion of such a drug on the drug shortage list under section 506E of such Act (21 U.S.C. 356e), or prior drug shortages reports of a discontinuance or interruption in the production of such a drug under 506C of such Act (21 U.S.C. 355d).

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary, in consultation with the heads of agencies with which the Secretary coordinates under subsection (b), shall submit a report to the relevant committees of Congress on—

(1) the current status of efforts to map and analyze pharmaceutical supply chains, as described in subsection (b);

(2) activities of the Secretary carried out under this section to coordinate efforts as described in subsection (b), including information sharing between relevant Federal departments, agencies, and offices;

(3) the roles and responsibilities described in subsection (c)(1), including the identification of any gaps, data limitations, or areas of unnecessary duplication between such roles and responsibilities;

(4) the extent to which Federal agencies use data analytics to conduct predictive modeling of anticipated drug shortages or risks associated with supply chain vulnerabilities that pose a threat to national security; and

(5) the extent to which the Secretary has engaged relevant industry in such mapping.

(e) CONFIDENTIAL COMMERCIAL INFORMATION.—The exchange of information among the Secretary and the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies, for purposes of carrying out this section shall not be a violation of section 1905 of title 18, United States Code. This section shall not be construed to affect the status, if any, of such information as trade secret or confidential commercial information for purposes of section 301(j) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 331(j)), section 552 of title 5, United States Code, or section 1905 of title 18, United States Code.

SA 3281. Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. TILLIS, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for

military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) Jens Stoltenberg served as the Prime Minister of Norway from 2000 to 2001 and 2005 to 2013.

(2) Norway was a founding member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (referred to in this Act as “NATO”) on April 4, 1949.

(3) As Prime Minister of Norway, Jens Stoltenberg oversaw Norway’s increased defense spending levels and the modernization of the Norwegian Armed Forces.

(4) A primary objective of NATO is to provide security and support to member nations and promote democratic values to ensure stability and peace.

(5) Jens Stoltenberg assumed the position of Secretary General of NATO in October 2014.

(6) The United States was the first NATO member to support Jens Stoltenberg’s appointment as Secretary General.

(7) Jens Stoltenberg has led NATO through significant new investments, reinforced its capabilities and enhanced the collective defense of the Alliance.

(8) Jens Stoltenberg has advocated for greater burden sharing among members of the NATO Alliance, and under his leadership the Alliance will see 23 member countries reach or exceed the 2 percent defense spending commitment by 2024, compared to 4 member countries in 2014.

(9) Jens Stoltenberg’s commitment to better burden sharing has resulted in a stronger and more sustainable Alliance than at any other time in NATO history.

(10) Under Jens Stoltenberg’s leadership, NATO has successfully undergone multiple enlargement periods and has extended membership to Finland, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Sweden.

(11) In addition to bolstering the collective security of the Alliance, NATO enlargement indicates that an increasing number of countries are meeting key benchmarks on the military, political and legal requirements needed for NATO accession, enhancing interoperability, defense expenditure and intelligence sharing among member countries.

(12) Jens Stoltenberg has increased NATO’s partnerships with Indo-Pacific countries to cooperate more closely to address our shared global challenges including cyber defense, emergency technologies, and the multitude of challenges posed by the People’s Republic of China.

(13) Jens Stoltenberg included Indo-Pacific leaders at NATO summits and traveled to the region which further cemented these important partnerships.

(14) Following Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Jens Stoltenberg has led the Alliance in maintaining unprecedented unity against Putin’s unprovoked, illegal actions.

(15) Since February 2022, NATO members have supplied Ukraine with the equipment and resources it needs to defend its democracy and its sovereignty.

(16) Jens Stoltenberg successfully marshaled political and financial support from Indo-Pacific partners to support Ukraine, including contributions of munitions and military equipment and sizeable financial contributions to NATO’s Comprehensive Assistance Plan Action Trust Fund for Ukraine.

(17) Jens Stoltenberg’s mandate was extended a total of 4 times with unanimous support by NATO allies, with 2 extensions agreed to following Russia’s unprovoked invasion of Ukraine.

(18) Jens Stoltenberg is the second longest-serving Secretary General, serving over 9 years in this position.

(19) Jens Stoltenberg has re-committed that the NATO Alliance will stand together against any threat posed to a NATO member, ensuring continued peace and stability within NATO territory and around the world.

(b) AWARD AND DESIGN.—

(1) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the award, on behalf of the Congress, of a single gold medal of appropriate design to Jens Stoltenberg, in recognition of his contributions to the security, unity, and defense of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

(2) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the award referred to in paragraph (1), the Secretary of the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the “Secretary”) shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary. The design shall bear a image of, and inscription of the name of, Jens Stoltenberg.

(c) DUPLICATE MEDALS.—The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck under subsection (b), at a price sufficient to cover the costs thereof, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

(d) STATUS OF MEDALS.—

(1) NATIONAL MEDALS.—Medals struck under this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

(2) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

(e) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF SALE.—

(1) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.—There is authorized to be charged against the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be necessary to pay for the costs of the medals struck under this Act.

(2) PROCEEDS OF SALES.—Amounts received from the sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under subsection (c) shall be deposited into the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund.

SA 3282. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

DIVISION F—DEPARTMENT OF STATE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

SEC. 9001. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This division may be cited as the “Department of State Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this division is as follows:

DIVISION F—DEPARTMENT OF STATE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

Sec. 9001. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 9002. Definitions.

TITLE I—WORKFORCE MATTERS

Sec. 9101. Commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Rogers Act; creation of the Department of State.

Sec. 9102. Workforce modernization efforts.

Sec. 9103. Training float of the Department of State for Civil and Foreign Service personnel.

Sec. 9104. Competitive local compensation plan.

Sec. 9105. Language incentive pay for civil service employees.

Sec. 9106. Strategy for targeted recruitment of civil servants.

Sec. 9107. Electronic medical records.

Sec. 9108. Options for comprehensive evaluations.

Sec. 9109. Portability of professional licenses.

Sec. 9110. Expanding opportunities for Department-paid student internship program.

Sec. 9111. Career intermission program adjustment to enhance retention.

Sec. 9112. Professional counseling services.

Sec. 9113. Assignment process modernization.

Sec. 9114. Report on modifying consular tour and first tours requirements.

Sec. 9115. Comprehensive policy on vetting and transparency.

Sec. 9116. Efficiency in employee survey creation and consolidation.

Sec. 9117. Per diem allowance for newly hired members of the Foreign Service.

Sec. 9118. Termination of residential or motor vehicle leases and telephone service contracts for members of the Foreign Service.

Sec. 9119. Needs-based childcare subsidies enrollment period.

Sec. 9120. Comptroller General report on Department traveler experience.

Sec. 9121. Quarterly report on global footprint.

Sec. 9122. Report on former Federal employees advising foreign governments.

Sec. 9123. Job share and part-time employment opportunities.

Sec. 9124. Expansion of special rules for certain monthly workers’ compensation payments and other payments for personnel under chief of mission authority.

Sec. 9125. Authority to provide or reimburse for certain security services.

TITLE II—ORGANIZATION AND OPERATIONS

Sec. 9201. State-of-the-art building facilities.

Sec. 9202. Presence of chiefs of mission at diplomatic posts.

Sec. 9203. Periodic Inspector General reviews of chiefs of mission.

Sec. 9204. Special Envoy for Sudan.

Sec. 9205. Special Envoy for Belarus.

Sec. 9206. National Museum of American Diplomacy.

Sec. 9207. Authority to establish Negotiations Support Unit within Department of State.

Sec. 9208. Restrictions on the use of funds for solar panels.

Sec. 9209. Responsiveness to Congressional Research Service inquiries.

Sec. 9210. Mission in a box.

Sec. 9211. Report on United States Consulate in Chengdu, People’s Republic of China.

- Sec. 9212. Personnel reporting.
 Sec. 9213. Support co-location with allied partner nations.
 Sec. 9214. Streamline qualification of construction contract bidders.

TITLE III—INFORMATION SECURITY AND CYBER DIPLOMACY

- Sec. 9301. Supporting Department of State data analytics.
 Sec. 9302. Realigning the Regional Technology Officer Program.
 Sec. 9303. Measures to protect Department devices from the proliferation and use of foreign commercial spyware.
 Sec. 9304. Report on cloud computing in Bureau of Consular Affairs.
 Sec. 9305. Information technology pilot projects.
 Sec. 9306. Leveraging approved technology for administrative efficiencies.
 Sec. 9307. Office of the Special Envoy for Critical and Emerging Technology.

TITLE IV—PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

- Sec. 9401. Africa broadcasting networks.
 Sec. 9402. United States Agency for Global Media.
 Sec. 9403. Extension of authorizations to support United States participation in international fairs and expos.
 Sec. 9404. Research and scholar exchange partnerships.
 Sec. 9405. Waiver of United States residency requirement for children of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty employees.

TITLE V—DIPLOMATIC SECURITY

- Sec. 9501. Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act requirements.
 Sec. 9502. Congressional notification for Serious Security Incidents.
 Sec. 9503. Notifications regarding security decisions at diplomatic posts.
 Sec. 9504. Security clearance suspension pay flexibilities.
 Sec. 9505. Modification to notification requirement for security clearance suspensions and revocations.

TITLE VI—UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Sec. 9601. Personal service agreement authority for the United States Agency for International Development.
 Sec. 9602. Crisis operations and disaster surge staffing.
 Sec. 9603. Education allowance while on military leave.
 Sec. 9604. Inclusion in the pet transportation exception to the Fly America Act.

TITLE VII—OTHER MATTERS

- Sec. 9701. Authorization of appropriations to promote United States citizen employment at the United Nations and international organizations.
 Sec. 9702. Amendment to Rewards for Justice program.
 Sec. 9703. Passport automation modernization.
 Sec. 9704. Extension of certain payment in connection with the International Space Station.
 Sec. 9705. Support for congressional delegations.
 Sec. 9706. Electronic communication with visa applicants.
 Sec. 9707. Electronic transmission of visa information.
 Sec. 9708. Inclusion of cost associated with producing reports.
 Sec. 9709. Extensions.

SEC. 9002. DEFINITIONS.

- In this division:
 (1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.
 (2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.
 (3) DEPARTMENT.—The term “Department” means the Department of State.
 (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of State.
 (5) USAID.—The term “USAID” means the United States Agency for International Development.

TITLE I—WORKFORCE MATTERS

SEC. 9101. COMMEMORATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROGERS ACT; CREATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

Congress recognizes and honors those who have served, or are presently serving, in the diplomatic corps of the United States, in commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Act entitled, “An Act for the reorganization and improvement of the Foreign Service of the United States, and for other purposes” (43 stat. 140, chapter 182), commonly known as the “Rogers Act of 1924”, which on May 24, 1924, established what has come to be known as the Foreign Service. Today, the Department of State includes more than 13,000 Foreign Service personnel working alongside more than 11,000 civil service personnel and 45,000 locally engaged staff at more than 270 embassies and consulates.

SEC. 9102. WORKFORCE MODERNIZATION EFFORTS.

The Secretary should prioritize efforts to further modernize the Department, including—

- (1) making workforce investments, including increasing wages for locally employed staff and providing other non-cash benefits, and hiring up to 100 new members of the Foreign Service above projected attrition to reduce overseas vacancies and mid-level staffing gaps;
- (2) utilizing authorities that allow the Department to acquire or build and open new embassy compounds quicker and at significantly less cost to get diplomats on the front lines of strategic competition; and
- (3) modernizing legacy systems and human resource processes.

SEC. 9103. TRAINING FLOAT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR CIVIL AND FOREIGN SERVICE PERSONNEL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop and submit to the appropriate congressional committees and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a strategy to establish and maintain a “training float” by January 1, 2027, to allow for a minimum of 8 percent and up to 10 percent of members of the Civil and Foreign Service to participate in long-term training at any given time. The strategy shall include—

- (1) a proposal to ensure that personnel in the training float remain dedicated to training or professional development activities;
- (2) recommendations to maintain, and an assessment of the feasibility of maintaining, a minimum of 8 percent of personnel in the float at any given time; and
- (3) any additional resources and authorities needed to maintain a training float contemplated by this section.

(b) MONITORING.—For any established training float, not later than 120 days after

enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall ensure that personnel in such training float remain dedicated to training or professional development activities.

SEC. 9104. COMPETITIVE LOCAL COMPENSATION PLAN.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

- (1) the effectiveness and stability of United States foreign missions are linked to the dedication and expertise of locally employed staff; and
- (2) ensuring competitive compensation packages benchmarked against the local market is essential not only to retain valuable talent but also to reflect a commitment to employment practices abroad.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated \$47,500,000 for fiscal year 2025 to support implementation of a global baseline for prevailing wage rate goal for Local Compensation Plan positions at the 75th percentile.

SEC. 9105. LANGUAGE INCENTIVE PAY FOR CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES.

The Secretary and Administrator may provide special monetary incentives to acquire or retain proficiency in foreign languages to civil service employees who serve in domestic positions that require critical language skills. The amounts of such incentives should be similar to the language incentive pay provided to members of the Foreign Service under the Foreign Service pursuant to section 704(b)(3) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4024(b)(3)).

SEC. 9106. STRATEGY FOR TARGETED RECRUITMENT OF CIVIL SERVANTS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a strategy for targeted and proactive recruitment to fill open civil service positions, focusing on recruiting from schools or organizations, and on platforms targeting those with relevant expertise related to such positions.

SEC. 9107. ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) Foreign Service personnel at the Department serve with distinction in austere places and under challenging conditions around the world with limited healthcare availability;

(2) the use of paper medical records, which require Foreign Service personnel to carry files containing protected health information from post to post, limits the availability of their health information to Department medical personnel during critical health incidents;

(3) electronic medical records are necessary, particularly as the Department opens new embassies in the South Pacific, thousands of miles from the nearest Department medical officer, who may not have access to up-to-date personnel medical files;

(4) the lack of electronic medical records is even more important for mental health records, as the Department only has a small number of regional medical officer psychiatrists and relies heavily on telehealth for most Foreign Service personnel; and

(5) due to the critical need for electronic medical records, it is imperative that the Department address the situation quickly and focus on secure commercially available or other successful systems utilized by public and private sector organizations with a track record of successfully implementing large-scale projects of this type.

(b) ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS REQUIREMENT.—Not later than December 31, 2027, the

Secretary shall have fully implemented an electronic medical records process or system for all Foreign Service personnel and their Eligible Family Members that eliminates reliance on paper medical records and includes appropriate safeguards to protect personal privacy.

(c) **REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a report on the progress made towards meeting the requirement under subsection (b).

(2) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include the following elements:

(A) An updated timeline for implementation.

(B) An estimated completion date.

(C) The amounts expended to date on the required electronic medical records system.

(D) The estimated amount needed to complete the system.

(3) **TERMINATION OF REQUIREMENT.**—The reporting requirement under paragraph (1) shall cease upon notification to the appropriate congressional committees that electronic medical records have been completely implemented for all Foreign Service personnel.

SEC. 9108. OPTIONS FOR COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on options for integrating 360-degree reviews in personnel files for promotion panel consideration.

(b) **EVALUATION SYSTEMS.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall include—

(1) one or more options to integrate confidential 360-degree reviews, references, or evaluations by superiors, peers, and subordinates, including consideration of automated reference requests; and

(2) other modifications or systems the Secretary considers relevant.

(c) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall describe, with respect to each evaluation system included in the report—

(1) any legal constraints or considerations;

(2) the timeline required for implementation;

(3) any starting and recurring costs in comparison to current processes;

(4) the likely or potential implications for promotion decisions and trends; and

(5) the impact on meeting the personnel needs of the Foreign Service.

SEC. 9109. PORTABILITY OF PROFESSIONAL LICENSES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Chapter 9 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4081 et seq.) is amended by adding after section 908 (22 U.S.C. 4088) the following new section:

“SEC. 909. PORTABILITY OF PROFESSIONAL LICENSES.

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—In any case in which a member of the Foreign Service or the spouse of a member of the Foreign Service has a covered United States license and such member of the Foreign Service or spouse relocates his or her residency because of an assignment or detail to a location that is not in the jurisdiction of the licensing authority that issued the covered license, such covered license shall be considered valid at a similar scope of practice and in the discipline applied for in the jurisdiction of such new residency for the duration of such an assignment

or detail if such member of the Foreign Service or spouse—

“(1) provides a copy of the member’s notification of assignment to the licensing authority in the jurisdiction in which the new residency is located;

“(2) remains in good standing with—

“(A) the licensing authority that issued the covered license; and

“(B) every other licensing authority that has issued to the member of the Foreign Service or spouse a license valid at a similar scope of practice and in the discipline applied in the jurisdiction of such licensing authority; and

“(3) submits to the authority of the licensing authority in the new jurisdiction for the purposes of standards of practice, discipline, and fulfillment of any continuing education requirements.

“(b) **INTERSTATE LICENSURE COMPACTS.**—If a member of the Foreign Service or spouse of a member of the Foreign Service is licensed and able to operate in multiple jurisdictions through an interstate licensure compact, with respect to services provided in the jurisdiction of the interstate licensure compact by a licensee covered by such compact, the member of the Foreign Service or spouse of a member of the Foreign Service shall be subject to the requirements of the compact or the applicable provisions of law of the applicable State and not this section.

“(c) **COVERED LICENSE DEFINED.**—In this section, the term ‘covered license’ means a professional license or certificate—

“(1) that is in good standing with the licensing authority that issued such professional license or certificate;

“(2) that the member of the Foreign Service or spouse of a member of the Foreign Service has actively used during the two years immediately preceding the relocation described in subsection (a); and

“(3) that is not a license to practice law.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of contents in section 2 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 908 the following new item:

“Sec. 909. Portability of professional licenses.”.

SEC. 9110. EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEPARTMENT-PAID STUDENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 9201 of the Department of State Authorization Act of 2022 (22 U.S. 2737) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(2)(A), by inserting “or have graduated from such an institution within the six months preceding application to the Program” after “paragraph (1)”; and

(2) in subsection (c), by inserting “and gives preference to individuals who have not previously completed internships within the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development” after “career in foreign affairs”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following subsections:

“(k) **WORK HOURS FLEXIBILITY.**—Students participating in the Program may work fewer than 40 hours per week and a minimum of 24 hours per week to accommodate their academic schedules, provided that the total duration of the internship remains consistent with program requirements.

“(l) **MENTORSHIP PROGRAM.**—The Secretary and Administrator are authorized to establish a mentoring and coaching program that pairs Foreign Service or Civil Service employees with interns who choose to participate throughout the duration of their internship.”.

SEC. 9111. CAREER INTERMISSION PROGRAM ADJUSTMENT TO ENHANCE RETENTION.

(a) **AUTHORITY TO EXTEND FEDERAL EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFIT COVERAGE.**—The

Secretary and Administrator are authorized to offer employees the option of extending Federal Employee Health Benefit coverage during pre-approved leave without pay for up to 3 years.

(b) **RESPONSIBILITY FOR PREMIUM PAYMENTS.**—If an employee elects to continue coverage pursuant to subsection (a) for longer than 365 days, the employee shall be responsible for 100 percent of the premium (employee share and government share) during such longer period.

SEC. 9112. PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING SERVICES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall seek to increase the number of professional counselors, including licensed clinical social workers, providing services for employees under chief of mission authority. These positions may be filled under Limited Non-Career Appointment terms.

(b) **EMPLOYMENT TARGETS.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this division, the Secretary shall seek to employ not fewer than 4 additional professional counselors, including licensed clinical social workers, in the Bureau of Medical Services to work out of regional medical centers abroad.

SEC. 9113. ASSIGNMENT PROCESS MODERNIZATION.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall modernize the Foreign Service bidding process, and specifically implement the following elements:

(1) A stable-pair matching, preference-ranking system for non-directed Foreign Service employees and hiring bureaus, allowing for a more strategic alignment of workforce and resources.

(2) Incorporation of lessons learned from the previous stable-pair matching bidding pilot framework referred to as “iMatch”, but applied more expansively to include non-directed assignments up through FS-01 positions, taking advantage of efficiency benefits such as tandem assignment functionalities.

(3) Mechanisms to ensure transparency, efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, and flexibility in the assignment process, while maintaining equal opportunities for all officers.

(4) An independent auditing process to ensure adherence to established rules, effectiveness in meeting the Department’s needs, and prevention of bias or manipulation, including through the use of protected categories in making assignment decisions.

(b) **CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN PROMOTION ISSUES.**—In parallel with assignment process modernization efforts, the Secretary shall—

(1) assess whether any point systems tied to promotion incentives should consider service in hard-to-fill or critical positions; and

(2) assess whether the practice of dividing the assignment process into winter and summer cycles is necessary or efficient compared to stable matching processes.

(c) **REPORTING AND OVERSIGHT.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall provide the appropriate congressional committees a report on the implementation of the assignment process under this section, including—

(1) data on match rates, including in filling critical or priority positions, officer and hiring office satisfaction, and the impact on tandem placements;

(2) recommendations for further modifications to the bidding process;

(3) an overview of the strategy used to communicate any changes to the workforce; and

(4) results of analysis into additional transparency efforts, including those described in subsection (a)(3).

SEC. 9114. REPORT ON MODIFYING CONSULAR TOUR AND FIRST TOURS REQUIREMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that evaluates the feasibility of—

(1) reducing, removing, and adding flexibility to the directed consular tours requirements for non-consular-coned generalist members of the Foreign Service; and

(2) requiring that first tours for members of the Foreign Service be assigned in the National Capital Region.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include a description of resources required to implement the changes described in such subsection, a timeline for implementation, and an assessment of the benefits and consequences of such changes, including any obstacles.

SEC. 9115. COMPREHENSIVE POLICY ON VETTING AND TRANSPARENCY.

(a) COMPREHENSIVE POLICY ON VETTING AND TRANSPARENCY.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop a consistent and enhanced vetting process to ensure that individuals with substantiated claims of discrimination or harassment against them, to include when administrative or disciplinary actions are taken, are not considered for assignments to senior positions or promotions to senior grades within the Foreign Service.

(b) ELEMENTS OF COMPREHENSIVE VETTING POLICY.—Following the conclusion of any investigation into an allegation of discrimination or harassment, the Office of Civil Rights, Office of Global Talent Management, and other offices with responsibilities related to the investigation reporting directly to the Secretary shall jointly or individually submit a written summary of any findings of substantiated allegations, along with a summary of findings to the committee responsible for assignments to senior positions prior to such committee rendering a recommendation for assignment.

(c) RESPONSE.—The Secretary shall develop a process for candidates to respond to any allegations that are substantiated and presented to the committee responsible for assignments to senior positions.

(d) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for 5 years, the Secretary shall submit to the Department workforce and the appropriate congressional committees a report on the number of candidates confirmed for senior diplomatic posts against whom there were substantiated allegations described in subsection (a).

(e) SENIOR POSITIONS DEFINED.—In this section, the term “senior positions” means Chief of Mission, Under Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Deputy Chief of Mission, and Principal Officer (i.e., Consuls General) positions.

SEC. 9116. EFFICIENCY IN EMPLOYEE SURVEY CREATION AND CONSOLIDATION.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that employee surveys are crucial for understanding the needs and concerns of the workforce, and are most effective when they are strategically designed, collected, and the results transparent where possible.

(b) CONSOLIDATED RESOURCE REQUIREMENT.—The Department shall provide a consolidated resource of survey methods, best practices, and a repository of survey data to avoid survey fatigue, minimize duplicating surveys, increase confidence in survey data, and facilitate data-informed decision-making.

(c) TIMING.—The Secretary should determine the overall timing and administration of mandated surveys to ensure maximum participation and robust data sets.

SEC. 9117. PER DIEM ALLOWANCE FOR NEWLY HIRED MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE.

(a) PER DIEM ALLOWANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), any newly hired Foreign Service employee who is in initial orientation training, or any other training expected to last less than 6 months in the Washington, D.C. area before transferring to the employee's first assignment overseas or domestically outside the Washington, D.C. area shall, for the duration of such training, receive a per diem allowance at the levels prescribed under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code.

(2) LIMITATION ON LODGING EXPENSES.—A newly hired Foreign Service employee may not receive any lodging expenses under the applicable per diem allowance pursuant to paragraph (1) if that employee—

(A) has a permanent residence in the Washington, D.C., area (not including government-supplied housing during such orientation training or other training); and

(B) does not vacate such residence during such orientation training or other training.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term “per diem allowance” has the meaning given such term in section 5701 of title 5, United States Code; and

(2) the term “Washington, D.C., area” means the geographic area within a 50-mile radius of the Washington Monument.

SEC. 9118. TERMINATION OF RESIDENTIAL OR MOTOR VEHICLE LEASES AND TELEPHONE SERVICE CONTRACTS FOR MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE.

Section 907 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4087) is amended by striking “Service who are posted abroad at a Foreign Service post” and inserting “Foreign Service who are posted in the United States or posted abroad”.

SEC. 9119. NEEDS-BASED CHILDCARE SUBSIDIES ENROLLMENT PERIOD.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Department and USAID shall—

(1) issue and maintain guidance on how to apply for any program authorized under section 630 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2002 (Public Law 107-67; 115 Stat. 552); and

(2) consider using maximum flexibilities to accept applications throughout the year or in accordance with Qualifying Life Event changes (as defined by the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB)).

SEC. 9120. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT ON DEPARTMENT TRAVELER EXPERIENCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a review and submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the effect of section 40118 of title 49, United States Code (commonly referred to as the “Fly America Act”) on Department travelers.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include an analysis of the extent to which the Fly America Act—

(1) disproportionately impacts Department personnel;

(2) impacts travelers, including their ability to find suitable flights and the ability to complete their travel in a timely and effective manner;

(3) increases or decreases costs to the United States Government;

(4) produces overly burdensome restrictions in times of urgent travel such as Emergency Visitation Travel and Ordered/Authorized Departure; and

(5) a description of other relevant issues the Comptroller General determines appropriate.

SEC. 9121. QUARTERLY REPORT ON GLOBAL FOOTPRINT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 90 days thereafter for 5 years, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a report on the global footprint of the Department.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include, for each diplomatic post—

(1) the number and type of Department employees assigned to the post; and

(2) the number of allocated positions that remain unfilled.

(c) FORM.—The report required under subsection (a) shall be submitted in classified form.

SEC. 9122. REPORT ON FORMER FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ADVISING FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for 3 years, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees, the Select Committee on Intelligence and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives a report that identifies former United States Government senior officials who have been approved by the Secretary to advise foreign governments.

(b) FORM.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

SEC. 9123. JOB SHARE AND PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish and publish a Department policy on job share and part-time employment opportunities. The policy shall include a template for job sharing arrangements, a database of job share and part-time employment opportunities, and a point of contact in the Bureau of Global Talent Management.

(b) WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY TRAINING.—The Secretary shall incorporate training on workplace flexibility, including the availability of job share and part-time employment opportunities, into employee onboarding and every level of supervisory training.

(c) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for the following 5 years, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on workplace flexibility at the Department, including data on the number of employees utilizing job share or part-time employment arrangements.

SEC. 9124. EXPANSION OF SPECIAL RULES FOR CERTAIN MONTHLY WORKERS' COMPENSATION PAYMENTS AND OTHER PAYMENTS FOR PERSONNEL UNDER CHIEF OF MISSION AUTHORITY.

Section 901 of title IX of division J of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (22 U.S.C. 2680b) is amended—

(1) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (1), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking “of a” and inserting “of an”; and

(ii) by striking “January 1, 2016” and inserting “September 11, 2001”;

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “January 1, 2016” and inserting “September 11, 2001”; and

(C) in paragraph (3), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “January 1, 2016” and inserting “September 11, 2001”; and

(2) in subsection (h)(1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “January 1, 2016” and inserting “September 11, 2001”; and

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “January 1, 2016” and inserting “September 11, 2001”.

SEC. 9125. AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE OR REIMBURSE FOR CERTAIN SECURITY SERVICES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary and the Administrator are authorized to provide or reimburse for appropriate security services to mitigate risks to certain employees or members of their households resulting from or related to the employee’s official duties or affiliation with the Department or USAID. These security equipment or services may include security cameras and services to deprioritize or remove internet search results revealing personally identifiable information.

(b) **REQUIRED POLICY.**—Prior to providing or reimbursing services pursuant to subsection (a), the Department shall establish a policy that—

(1) outlines the requirements for qualifying for provision or reimbursement of services;

(2) identifies the office responsible for vetting requests for provision or reimbursement of services; and

(3) mandates expeditious consideration of such requests.

(c) **PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION.**—The Secretary and the Administrator shall not collect personally identifiable information on any United States citizens while undertaking the activities described in subsection (a) unless the collection is authorized by a court as part of a criminal investigation.

TITLE II—ORGANIZATION AND OPERATIONS

SEC. 9201. STATE-OF-THE-ART BUILDING FACILITIES.

The Secretary should use existing waiver authorities to expedite upgrades and critical maintenance for the Harry S. Truman Federal Building, with the goal of having at least 85 percent of construction and upgrades completed by December 31, 2027.

SEC. 9202. PRESENCE OF CHIEFS OF MISSION AT DIPLOMATIC POSTS.

(a) **REQUIREMENT FOR ARRIVAL AT DIPLOMATIC POST WITHIN 60 DAYS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall require that to be eligible for payment of travel expenses for initial arrival at the assigned post, a chief of mission must arrive at the post not later than 60 days after the date on which the chief of mission was confirmed by the Senate.

(2) **EXCEPTIONS.**—The restriction under paragraph (1) shall not apply to a chief of mission who arrives later than 60 days after confirmation by the Senate if the delay was caused by one or more of the following:

(A) A flight delay that was outside of the control of the chief of mission or the Department.

(B) A natural disaster, global health emergency, or other naturally occurring event that prevented the chief of mission from entering the country of the assigned post.

(C) Delay or refusal by the government of the host country to accept diplomatic accreditation.

(D) Family or medical emergency.

(E) Extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the chief of mission.

(3) **WAIVER.**—The Secretary may waive the requirement under paragraph (1) upon a determination that extenuating circumstances

warrant such a waiver and upon submission of a brief description of the determination to the appropriate congressional committees.

(4) **NOTIFICATION REQUIRED.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and in each case that a chief of mission arrives at an assigned post more than 60 days after confirmation, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report identifying any chief of mission who arrived at the assigned post more than 60 days after confirmation by the Senate, and includes a description of the justification.

(b) **NOTIFICATIONS ON DEPARTURES OF CHIEFS OF MISSION.**—Beginning on April 1, 2025, for 5 years, the Secretary shall notify the appropriate congressional committees of any chief of mission who has permanently departed from the assigned post within 90 days of the departure.

SEC. 9203. PERIODIC INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEWS OF CHIEFS OF MISSION.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Beginning on April 1, 2025, and for a 3-year period thereafter, the Inspector General of the Department of State shall conduct management reviews of chiefs of mission, charge d’affaires, and other principal officers assigned overseas during inspection visits, when those officers have been at post more than 180 days.

(b) **DISPOSITION.**—Reviews conducted pursuant to subsection (a) shall be provided to the rating officer for formal discussion as part of the performance evaluation process. The management review shall remain in the employee’s personnel file unless otherwise required by law. The subject of a review conducted pursuant to subsection (a) shall have the opportunity to respond to and comment on the review, and the response shall be included in the employee’s file for promotion panel review.

(c) **NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT IN CASE OF SERIOUS MANAGEMENT CONCERNS.**—The Inspector General of the Department of State shall notify the Secretary, the Deputy Secretary, and the appropriate congressional committees within 30 days of any review in which serious management concerns are raised and substantiated, and which is not otherwise submitted as part of the periodic inspection or report.

SEC. 9204. SPECIAL ENVOY FOR SUDAN.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The President shall, with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint a Special Envoy for Sudan at the Department (in this section referred to as the “Special Envoy”). The Special Envoy shall report directly to the Secretary and should not hold another position in the Department while holding the position of Special Envoy.

(b) **DUTIES.**—The Special Envoy shall—

(1) lead United States diplomatic efforts to support negotiations and humanitarian response efforts related to alleviating the crisis in Sudan;

(2) be responsible for coordinating policy development and execution related to ending the conflict and a future path to national recovery and democratic transition in Sudan across all bureaus in the Department and coordinating with interagency partners; and

(3) consult regularly with the appropriate congressional committees, and keep such committees fully and currently informed on the status of diplomatic efforts and negotiations.

(c) **STAFFING.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall ensure that the Special Envoy is staffed with personnel approved by the envoy, including through reassignment of positions responsible for issues related to Sudan that currently exist within the Department, encouraging details or assignment of employees of the Department from regional and functional

bureaus with expertise relevant to Sudan, or through request for interagency details of individuals with relevant experience from other United States Government departments or agencies, including the Department of Treasury.

(2) **BRIEFING REQUIREMENTS.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Department should brief the appropriate congressional committees on the number of full-time equivalent positions supporting the Special Envoy and the relevant expertise and duties of any employees of the Department serving as detailees.

(d) **SUNSET.**—The position of the Special Envoy for Sudan shall terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 9205. SPECIAL ENVOY FOR BELARUS.

Section 6406(d) of the Department of State Authorization Act of 2023 (division F of Public Law 118–31; 22 U.S.C. 5811 note) is amended to read as follows:

“(d) **ROLE.**—The position of Special Envoy—

“(1) shall only exist while United States diplomatic operations in Belarus at the United States Embassy in Minsk, Belarus are suspended; and

“(2) shall oversee the operations and personnel of the Belarus Affairs Unit.”.

SEC. 9206. NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN DIPLOMACY.

Title I of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 is amended by adding after section 64 (22 U.S.C. 2735a) the following:

“SEC. 65. NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN DIPLOMACY.

“(a) **ACTIVITIES.**—

“(1) **SUPPORT AUTHORIZED.**—The Secretary is authorized to provide, by contract, grant, or otherwise, for the performance of appropriate museum visitor and educational outreach services and related events, including—

“(A) organizing programs and conference activities;

“(B) creating, designing, and installing exhibits; and

“(C) conducting museum shop services and food services in the public exhibition and related physical and virtual space utilized by the National Museum of American Diplomacy.

“(2) **RECOVERY OF COSTS.**—The Secretary of State is authorized to retain the proceeds obtained from customary and appropriate fees charged for the use of facilities, including venue rental for events consistent with the activities described in subsection (a)(1) and museum shop services and food services at the National Museum of American Diplomacy. Such proceeds shall be retained as a recovery of the costs of operating the Museum, credited to a designated Department account that exists for the purpose of funding the Museum and its programs and activities, and shall remain available until expended.

“(b) **DISPOSITION OF DOCUMENTS, ARTIFACTS, AND OTHER ARTICLES.**—

“(1) **PROPERTY.**—All historic documents, artifacts, or other articles acquired by the Department of State for the permanent museum collection and determined by the Secretary of State to be suitable for display by the National Museum of American Diplomacy shall be considered to be the property of the United States Government and shall be subject to disposition solely in accordance with this subsection.

“(2) **SALE, TRADE, OR TRANSFER.**—Whenever the Secretary of State makes a determination described in paragraph (3) with respect to a document, artifact, or other article described in paragraph (1), taking into account

considerations such as the Museum's collections management policy and best professional museum practice, the Secretary may sell at fair market value, trade, or transfer such document, artifact, or other article without regard to the requirements of subtitle I of title 40, United States Code. The proceeds of any such sale may be used solely for the advancement of the activities described in subsection (a)(1) of the National Museum of American Diplomacy and may not be used for any purpose other than the acquisition and direct care of the collections of the Museum.

“(3) DETERMINATIONS PRIOR TO SALE, TRADE, OR TRANSFER.—The determination described in this paragraph with respect to a document, artifact, or other article described in paragraph (1) is a determination that—

“(A) the document, artifact, or other article no longer serves to further the mission of the National Museum of American Diplomacy as set forth in the collections management policy of the Museum;

“(B) the sale at a fair market price based on an independent appraisal or trade or transfer of the document, artifact, or other article would serve to maintain or enhance the Museum collection; and

“(C) the sale, trade, or transfer of the document, artifact, or other article would be in the best interests of the United States.

“(4) LOANS.—In addition to the authorization under paragraph (2) relating to the sale, trade, or transfer of documents, artifacts, or other articles described in paragraph (1), the Secretary of State may—

“(A) loan the documents, artifacts, or other articles to other institutions, both foreign and domestic, for repair, study, or exhibition when not needed for use or display by the National Museum of American Diplomacy; and

“(B) borrow documents, artifacts, or other articles from other institutions or individuals, both foreign and domestic, for activities consistent with subsection (a)(1).”

SEC. 9207. AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH NEGOTIATIONS SUPPORT UNIT WITHIN DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) there is a need for the United States Government to maintain a permanent institutional hub for technical expertise, strategic advice, and knowledge management in negotiations, mediation, and peace processes in order to prioritize and invest in diplomacy;

(2) the United States plays a role in enabling and supporting peace processes and complex political negotiations, the success of which is essential to stability and democracy around the world;

(3) the meaningful engagement of conflict-affected communities, particularly women, youth, and other impacted populations, is vital to durable, implementable, and sustainable peace;

(4) negotiation requires a specific technical and functional skillset, and thus institutional expertise in this practice area should include trained practitioners and subject matter experts;

(5) such skills should continue to be employed as the United States Government advises and contributes to peace processes, including those where the United States plays a supporting role or is led by multilateral and international partners; and

(6) training programs for United States diplomats should draw upon this expertise and United States lessons learned to help equip diplomats with skills to respond to peace processes and complex political negotiations, and how to request support.

(b) NEGOTIATIONS SUPPORT UNIT.—Section 1 of the State Department Basic Authorities

Act (22 U.S.C. 2651a) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(p) NEGOTIATIONS SUPPORT UNIT.—

“(1) AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH.—The Secretary of State may establish within the Department of State a unit to be known as the ‘Negotiations Support Unit’ responsible for carrying out the functions described in paragraph (2), as appropriate.

“(2) FUNCTIONS.—The functions described in this paragraph are the following:

“(A) Serving as a permanent institutional hub and resource for negotiations and peace process expertise and knowledge management.

“(B) Advising the Secretary of State, other relevant senior officials, members of the Foreign Service, and employees of the Department of State on the substance, process, and strategy of negotiations, mediation, peace processes, and other complex political negotiations from strategy and planning to implementation.

“(C) Supporting the development and implementation of United States policy related to complex political negotiations and peace processes, including those led by multilateral and international partners.

“(D) Advising on mediation and negotiations programs to implement United States policy.

“(E) Supporting training for Foreign Service Officers and civil servants on tailored negotiation and mediation skills.

“(F) Working with other governments, international organizations, and nongovernmental organizations, as appropriate, to support the development and implementation of United States policy on peace processes and complex political negotiations.

“(G) Any additional duties the Secretary of State may prescribe.

“(3) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 2025 for the establishment of the Negotiations Support Unit under paragraph (1).”

SEC. 9208. RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE OF FUNDS FOR SOLAR PANELS.

The Department may not use Federal funds to procure any solar energy products that were manufactured in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China or other regions in the country, which are known to be produced with forced labor.

SEC. 9209. RESPONSIVENESS TO CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE INQUIRIES.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congressional Research Service is charged with rendering effective and efficient service to Congress and responding expeditiously, effectively, and efficiently to the needs of Congress.

(b) RESPONSES.—The Secretary and Administrator shall ensure that for any inquiry or request from the Congressional Research Service related to its support of Members of Congress and congressional staff—

(1) an initial answer responsive to the request is sent within 14 days of receipt of the inquiry;

(2) a complete answer responsive to the request is sent within 90 days of receipt of the inquiry, together with an explanation as to why the request was delayed; and

(3) Congressional Research Service staff shall be treated as congressional staff for any informal discussions or briefings.

SEC. 9210. MISSION IN A BOX.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Increasing the United States' global diplomatic footprint is imperative to advance United States' national security interests, particularly in the face of a massive diplomatic expansion of our strategic competitors.

(2) Opening or re-opening diplomatic missions, often in small island nations where there is no United States Government presence, but one is needed to advance United States strategic objectives.

(3) Diplomatic missions should be resourced and equipped for success upon opening to allow diplomats to focus on advancing United States national interests in-country.

(4) The United States can and should move more swiftly to open new diplomatic missions and provide United States diplomats and locally employed staff with a workplace that meets locally appropriate quality, safety, and security standards.

(5) To do this, the Department must streamline and support the process of opening new posts to identify efficiencies and removing obstacles that are unduly complicating the opening of new diplomatic missions, particularly in small island states and similarly situated locations.

(b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on how the Department is creating a “mission in a box” concept to provide new such diplomatic missions the needed resources and authorities to quickly and efficiently stand up and operate a mission from the moment United States personnel arrive, or even before the opening of a new mission, particularly in small island nations.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) a list of authorities and processes related to the opening of new diplomatic missions;

(B) a list of authorities and processes related to the opening of new diplomatic missions that the Department can waive to expediently stand up new diplomatic missions;

(C) essential functions that each new diplomatic mission should be able to carry out independently upon opening;

(D) a description of functions that another post or support center will need to carry out to support the new mission;

(E) a list of essential equipment and access to facilities, including to support secure communications, that should be provided to each new diplomatic mission, the approval of which should be handled prior to or shortly after the opening of the new diplomatic mission, including arrangements for basic office equipment, vehicles, and housing;

(F) the number of recommended locally engaged staff and United States direct hires resident in-country;

(G) the number of non-resident support staff who are assigned to the new diplomatic mission, such as from another post or regional support center;

(H) a description of how medical and consular support services could be provided;

(I) procedures for requesting an expansion of the post's functions or physical platform after opening, should that be needed;

(J) any other authorities or processes that may be required to successfully and quickly stand up a new diplomatic mission, including any new authorities the Department may need;

(K) a list of incentives, in addition to pay differentials, being considered for such posts; and

(L) a description of any specialized training, including for management and security personnel supporting the establishment of such new embassies that may be required.

(c) SENIOR OFFICIAL TO LEAD NEW EMBASSY EXPANSION.—

(1) DESIGNATION.—The Secretary shall designate an assistant secretary-level senior official to expedite and make recommendations for the reform of procedures for opening new diplomatic missions abroad, particularly in small island states.

(2) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The senior official designated pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be responsible for proposing policy and procedural changes to the Secretary to—

(A) expediting the resourcing of new diplomatic missions by waiving or reducing when possible mandatory processes required to open new diplomatic missions, taking into account the threat environment and circumstances in the host country;

(B) when necessary, quickly adjudicating within the Department any decision points that arise during the planning and execution phases of the establishment of a new mission;

(C) ensuring new missions receive the management and operational support needed, including by designating such support be undertaken by another post, regional support center, or Department entities based in the United States; and

(D) ensuring that the authorities provided in the Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act of 1999 (title VI of division A of appendix G of Public Law 106-113), as amended by the Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act of 2022 (section 9301 of Public Law 117-263; 136 Stat. 3879), are fully utilized in the planning for all new diplomatic missions.

(d) NEW DIPLOMATIC MISSION DEFINED.—In this section, the term “new diplomatic mission” means any bilateral diplomatic mission opened since January 1, 2020, in a country where there had not been a bilateral diplomatic mission since the date that is 20 years before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(e) SUNSET.—The authorities and requirements of this section shall terminate 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 9211. REPORT ON UNITED STATES CONSULATE IN CHENGDU, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the effect of the suspension of operations at of the United States Consulate General in Chengdu, People's Republic of China, on July 27, 2020, on diplomatic and consular activities of the United States in Southwestern China, including the provision of consular services to United States citizens, and on relations with the people of Southwestern China, including in areas designated by the Government of the People's Republic of China as autonomous.

SEC. 9212. PERSONNEL REPORTING.

Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and at least every 120 days thereafter for 5 years, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report—

(1) describing the on-board personnel levels, hiring, and attrition of the Civil Service, Foreign Service, eligible family members, locally employed staff, and contractor workforce of the Department, on an operating unit-by-operating unit basis; and

(2) including a status update on progress toward fiscal year hiring plans for Foreign Service and Civil Service.

SEC. 9213. SUPPORT CO-LOCATION WITH ALLIED PARTNER NATIONS.

The Secretary, following consultation with the appropriate congressional committees, may alter, repair, and furnish United States Government-owned and leased space for use by the government of a foreign country to facilitate co-location of such government in

such space, on such terms and conditions as the Secretary may determine, including with respect to reimbursement of all or part of the costs of such alteration, repair, or furnishing. Reimbursements or advances of funds pursuant to this section may be credited to the currently applicable appropriation and shall be available for the purposes for which such appropriation is authorized.

SEC. 9214. STREAMLINE QUALIFICATION OF CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT BIDDERS.

Section 402 of the Omnibus Diplomatic Security and Antiterrorism Act of 1986 (22 U.S.C. 4852) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by inserting “be awarded” after “joint venture persons may”;

(B) by striking “bid on” both places it appears; and

(C) in paragraph (1), by striking “\$10,000,000” and inserting “\$25,000,000”; and

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph 1, by striking “two” and inserting “three”; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (D), by striking “at a United States diplomatic or consular establishment abroad” and inserting “on a Federal contract abroad”;

(ii) by striking subparagraphs (E) and (G);

(iii) by redesignating subparagraph (F) as subparagraph (E); and

(iv) in subparagraph (E), as redesignated by clause (iii), by striking “80” [both places it appears] and inserting “65”.

TITLE III—INFORMATION SECURITY AND CYBER DIPLOMACY

SEC. 9301. SUPPORTING DEPARTMENT OF STATE DATA ANALYTICS.

There is authorized to be appropriated for the Department of State for fiscal year 2025 \$3,000,000 for bureaus to hire Chief Data Officers through the “Bureau Chief Data Officer Program”, consistent with section 6302 of the Department of State Authorization Act of 2023 (division F of Public Law 118-31; 22 U.S.C. 2651a note).

SEC. 9302. REALIGNING THE REGIONAL TECHNOLOGY OFFICER PROGRAM.

Section 9508(a)(1) of the Department of State Authorizations Act of 2022 (division I of Public Law 117-263; 22 U.S.C. 10305(a)(1)) is amended by inserting “, and shall be administered by the Bureau for Cyberspace and Digital Policy” before the period at the end.

SEC. 9303. MEASURES TO PROTECT DEPARTMENT DEVICES FROM THE PROLIFERATION AND USE OF FOREIGN COMMERCIAL SPYWARE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives.

(1) COVERED DEVICE.—The term “covered device” means any electronic mobile device, including smartphones, tablet computing devices, or laptop computing device, that is issued by the Department for official use.

(2) FOREIGN COMMERCIAL SPYWARE; SPYWARE.—The terms “foreign commercial spyware” and “spyware” have the meanings given those terms in section 1102A of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3232a).

(b) PROTECTION OF COVERED DEVICES.—

(1) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall, in consultation with the relevant agencies—

(A) issue standards, guidance, best practices, and policies for Department and

USAID personnel to protect covered devices from being compromised by foreign commercial spyware;

(B) survey the processes used by the Department and USAID to identify and catalog instances where a covered device was compromised by foreign commercial spyware over the prior 2 years and it is reasonably expected to have resulted in an unauthorized disclosure of sensitive information; and

(C) submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the measures in place to identify and catalog instances of such compromises for covered devices by foreign commercial spyware, which may be submitted in classified form.

(2) NOTIFICATIONS.—Not later than 60 days after the date on which the Department becomes aware that a covered device was seriously compromised by foreign commercial spyware, the Secretary, in coordination with relevant agencies, shall notify the appropriate committees of Congress of the facts concerning such targeting or compromise, including—

(A) the location of the personnel whose covered device was compromised;

(B) the number of covered devices compromised;

(C) an assessment by the Secretary of the damage to the national security of the United States resulting from any loss of data or sensitive information; and

(D) an assessment by the Secretary of any foreign government or foreign organization or entity, and, to the extent possible, the foreign individuals, who directed and benefited from any information acquired from the compromise.

(3) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for 5 years, the Secretary, in coordination with relevant agencies, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report regarding any covered device that was compromised by foreign commercial spyware, including the information described in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of paragraph (2).

SEC. 9304. REPORT ON CLOUD COMPUTING IN BUREAU OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the status of the Bureau of Consular Affairs adoption of cloud-based products and services as well as options to require enterprise-wide adoption of cloud computing, including for all consular operations.

SEC. 9305. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PILOT PROJECTS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Chief Information Officer of the Department of State should, in consultation with the Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Consular Affairs, prioritize information technology systems with high potential to accelerate the passport renewal processes, reduce processing times, and reduce dependency on legacy systems.

SEC. 9306. LEVERAGING APPROVED TECHNOLOGY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCIES.

The Secretary and Administrator shall ensure appropriate and secure technological solutions are authorized and available for employee use, where feasible, to promote technological fluency in the workforce, including the integration of secure tools in the evaluation process to ensure performance management standards while maximizing efficiency.

SEC. 9307. OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY FOR CRITICAL AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGY.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish an Office of the Special Envoy for

Critical and Emerging Technology (referred to in this section as the “Office”), which may be located within the Bureau for Cyberspace and Digital Policy.

(b) LEADERSHIP.—

(1) SPECIAL ENVOY.—The Office shall be headed by a Special Envoy for Critical and Emerging Technology, who shall—

(A) be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate; and

(B) have the rank and status of ambassador; and

(C) report to the Ambassador-at-Large for Cyberspace and Digital Policy.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—The Office may include representatives or expert detailees from other key Federal agencies or research and technology-focused fellowship programs, as determined by the Special Envoy for Critical and Emerging Technology and with the consent of the Ambassador-at-Large for Cyberspace and Digital Policy, in coordination with appropriate senior officials of the Department and such agencies.

(d) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Office shall include—

(1) establishing, in coordination with relevant bureaus, offices and other Federal agencies, an interagency security review process for proposals regarding United States Government-funded international collaboration on certain critical and emerging technologies and associated research;

(2) establishing and coordinating an interagency strategy to facilitate international cooperation with United States allies and partners regarding the development, use, and deployment of critical and emerging technologies and associated standards and safeguards for research security, intellectual property protection, and illicit knowledge transfer;

(3) facilitating technology partnerships with countries and relevant political and economic unions that are committed to—

(A) the rule of law and respect for human rights, including freedom of speech, and expression;

(B) the safe and responsible development and use of certain critical and emerging technologies and the establishment of related norms and standards, including for research security and the protection of sensitive data and technology;

(C) a secure internet architecture governed by a multi-stakeholder model instead of centralized government control;

(D) robust international cooperation to promote open and interoperable technological products and services that are necessary to freedom, innovation, transparency, and privacy; and

(E) multilateral coordination, including through diplomatic initiatives, information sharing, and other activities, to defend the principles described in subparagraphs (A) through (D) against efforts by state and non-state actors to undermine them;

(4) supporting efforts to harmonize technology governance regimes with partners, coordinating on basic and pre-competitive research and development initiatives, and collaborating to pursue such opportunities in certain critical and emerging technologies;

(5) coordinating with other technology partners on export control policies for certain critical and emerging technologies, including countering illicit knowledge and data transfer related to certain critical and emerging technology research;

(6) conducting diplomatic engagement, in coordination with other bureaus, offices, and relevant Federal departments and agencies, with allies and partners to develop standards and coordinate policies designed to counter illicit knowledge and data transfer in aca-

demia related to certain critical and emerging technology research;

(7) coordinating with allies, partners, and other relevant Federal agencies to prevent the exploitation of research partnerships related to certain critical and emerging technologies;

(8) sharing information regarding the threat posed by the transfer of certain critical and emerging technologies to authoritarian governments, including the People’s Republic of China and the Russian Federation, and the ways in which autocratic regimes are utilizing technology, including for military and security purposes, to erode individual freedoms and other foundations of open, democratic societies; and

(9) collaborating with private companies, trade associations, and think tanks to realize the purposes described in paragraphs (1) through (8).

(e) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for the following 5 years, the Secretary, in coordination with the Director of National Intelligence and the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, as appropriate, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress an unclassified report, with a classified index, if necessary, regarding—

(1) the activities of the Office related to paragraphs (1) through (9) of subsection (d), including any cooperative initiatives and partnerships pursued with United States allies and partners, and the results of such activities, initiatives, and partnerships;

(2) the activities of the Government of the People’s Republic of China, the Chinese Communist Party, and the Russian Federation in sectors related to certain critical and emerging technologies and the threats they pose to the United States; and

(3) an inventory of all international research and development programs for certain critical and emerging technologies funded by the Department or USAID that include participation by institutions or organizations that are affiliated with, or receive support from, the Government of the People’s Republic of China or the Government of the Russian Federation.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Select Committee on Intelligence, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, the Committee on Homeland Security, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(2) CERTAIN CRITICAL AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES.—The term “certain critical and emerging technologies” means the technologies determined by the Secretary, in consultation with other Federal agencies, from the critical and emerging technologies list published by the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) at the Office of Science and Technology Policy, as amended by subsequent updates to the list issued by the NSTC.

TITLE IV—PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

SEC. 9401. AFRICA BROADCASTING NETWORKS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Chief Executive Officer of the United States Agency for Global Media shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a report on the re-

sources and timeline needed to establish within the Agency an organization the mission of which shall be to promote democratic values and institutions in Africa by providing objective, accurate, and relevant news and information to the people of Africa and counter disinformation from malign actors, especially in countries in which a free press is banned by the government or not fully established, about the region, the world, and the United States through uncensored news, responsible discussion, and open debate.

SEC. 9402. UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA.

Section 306 of the United States International Broadcasting Act of 1994 (22 U.S.C. 6205) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (f) and (g) as subsection (g) and (h), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (e) the following new subsection:

“(f) SUSPENSION AND DEBARMENT OF GRANTEEES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), a grantee may not be debarred or suspended without consultation with the Chief Executive Officer and a three-fourths majority vote of the Advisory Board in support of such action.

“(2) SUSPENSION.—

“(A) CRITERIA FOR SUSPENSION.—A grantee may not be suspended unless the Advisory Board determines that the criteria described in section 513.405 of title 22, Code of Federal Regulations, have been met.

“(B) SUSPENDING OFFICIAL.—The Advisory Board shall collectively serve as the suspending official (as described in section 513.105 of title 22, Code of Federal Regulations).

“(3) DEBARMENT.—

“(A) CRITERIA FOR DEBARMENT.—A grantee may not be debarred unless the Advisory Board determines that one or more of the causes described in section 513.305 of title 22, Code of Federal Regulations, has been established.

“(B) DEBARRING OFFICIAL.—The Advisory Board shall collectively serve as the debarring official (as described in section 513.105 of title 22, Code of Federal Regulations).”

SEC. 9403. EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATIONS TO SUPPORT UNITED STATES PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL FAIRS AND EXPOS.

Section 9601 of the Department of State Authorizations Act of 2022 (division I of Public Law 117–263; 136 Stat. 3909) is amended in subsection (b), by striking “fiscal years 2023 and 2024” and inserting “fiscal years 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, and 2027”.

SEC. 9404. RESEARCH AND SCHOLAR EXCHANGE PARTNERSHIPS.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) it is in the strategic interest of the United States to strengthen relations with Sub-Saharan African states to promote shared interests in the areas of—

(A) democracy and good governance;

(B) education and human capital;

(C) trade and economic development;

(D) science and technology;

(E) biodiversity, food, and agriculture; and

(F) the preservation and management of natural resources, including critical minerals; and

(2) historically Black colleges and universities (referred to in this section as “HBCUs”) have a long history of—

(A) cultivating diaspora relations with Sub-Saharan African states; and

(B) developing innovative solutions to some of the world’s most pressing challenges.

(b) STRENGTHENED PARTNERSHIPS.—The Secretary and the Administrator should seek to strengthen and expand partnerships and

educational exchange opportunities, including by working with HBCUs, which build the capacity and expertise of students, scholars, and experts from Sub-Saharan Africa in key development sectors.

(d) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Administrator is authorized to—

(1) provide technical assistance to HBCUs to assist in fulfilling the goals of this section, including in developing contracts, operating agreements, legal documents, and related infrastructure; and

(2) upon request, provide feedback to HBCUs, to the maximum extent practicable, after a grant rejection from relevant Federal programs in order to improve future grant applications, as appropriate.

SEC. 9405. WAIVER OF UNITED STATES RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT FOR CHILDREN OF RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY EMPLOYEES.

Section 320(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1431(a)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (1)(B), by striking “; or” and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(2) by adding at the end of the following new paragraph:

“(3) the child residing in the legal and physical custody of a citizen parent who is residing abroad as a result of employment with Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty.”.

TITLE V—DIPLOMATIC SECURITY

SEC. 9501. SECURE EMBASSY CONSTRUCTION AND COUNTERTERRORISM ACT REQUIREMENTS.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prescribe new guidance and requirements consistent with the Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act of 1999 (title VI of division A of appendix G of Public Law 106–113), as amended by the Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act of 2022 (section 9301 of Public Law 117–263; 136 Stat. 3879) and submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report detailing such guidance and requirements, including the impact of implementation on United States diplomatic facilities and construction projects.

(b) CONSEQUENCE FOR NONCOMPLIANCE.—If the Secretary fails to meet the requirement under subsection (a) no Federal funds appropriated to the Department shall be used for official travel by senior staff in the executive office of the Diplomatic Security Service, including the Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security, until such time as the Secretary meets the requirement.

(c) WAIVER.—The Secretary may waive the restriction in subsection (b) to meet urgent and critical needs if the Secretary provides written notification to the appropriate congressional committees in advance of travel.

SEC. 9502. CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION FOR SERIOUS SECURITY INCIDENTS.

Section 301(a) of the Omnibus Diplomatic Security and Antiterrorism Act of 1986 (22 U.S.C. 4833(a)), is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively;

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph:

“(2) INITIAL CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.—The Secretary shall notify the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, the majority and minority leaders of the Senate, and the Speaker and minority leader of the House of Representatives not later than 8 days after a possible Serious Security Incident has taken place. Such notification shall include a preliminary description of the incident, of an incident de-

scribed in paragraph (1), including any known individuals involved, when and where the incident took place, and the next steps in the investigation.”; and

(3) in paragraph (4), as redesignated by paragraph (1) of this section, by striking “paragraph (2)” and inserting “paragraph (3)”.

SEC. 9503. NOTIFICATIONS REGARDING SECURITY DECISIONS AT DIPLOMATIC POSTS.

Section 103(c) of section 103 of the Omnibus Diplomatic Security and Antiterrorism Act of 1986 (22 U.S.C. 4802(c)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively;

(2) by striking “The Secretary” and inserting “(1) The Secretary”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2) The Secretary of State shall notify the appropriate congressional committees within 10 days of any decision to retain authority over or approve decisions at an overseas post, including the movement of personnel.”.

SEC. 9504. SECURITY CLEARANCE SUSPENSION PAY FLEXIBILITIES.

Section 610(c)(6) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4010(c)(6)) is amended by striking “paragraph 1(B)” and inserting “this subsection”.

SEC. 9505. MODIFICATION TO NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT FOR SECURITY CLEARANCE SUSPENSIONS AND REVOCATIONS.

Section 6710(a) of the Department of State Authorization Act of 2023 (division F of Public Law 118–31; 22 U.S.C. 2651a note) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively, and moving such subparagraphs, as so redesignated, 2 ems to the right;

(2) by striking “IN GENERAL.—With respect” and inserting the following: “NOTIFICATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect”;

(3) in subparagraph (B), as redesignated by paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “revocation on” and all that follows through “or revocation” and inserting “revocation on—

“(A) the present employment status of the covered official and whether the job duties of the covered official have changed since such suspension or revocation;

“(B) the reason for such suspension or revocation;

“(C) the investigation of the covered official and the results of such investigation; and

“(D) any negative fallout or impacts for the Department of State, the United States Government, or national security of the United States as a result of the actions for which the security clearance was suspended or revoked.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2) SUBMISSION TO INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITIES.—To the extent the basis for any suspension or revocation of a security clearance is premised on the unauthorized release of intelligence (as defined by section 3(1) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3003(1)), the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives shall be an appropriate congressional committee for the purposes of this section.”.

TITLE VI—UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SEC. 9601. PERSONAL SERVICE AGREEMENT AUTHORITY FOR THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

Section 636(a) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2396(a)) is amended by

adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(17) employing individuals or organizations, by contract, for services abroad for purposes of this Act and title II of the Food for Peace Act, and individuals employed by contract to perform such services shall not by virtue of such employment be considered to be employees of the United States Government (except that the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development may determine the applicability to such individuals of section 5 of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1965 (22 U.S.C. 2672) regarding tort claims when such claims arise in foreign countries in connection with United States operations abroad, and of any other law administered by the Administrator concerning the employment of such individuals abroad), and such contracts are authorized to be negotiated, the terms of the contracts to be prescribed, and the work to be performed, where necessary, without regard to such statutory provisions as relate to the negotiation, making, and performance of contracts and performance of work in the United States.”.

SEC. 9602. CRISIS OPERATIONS AND DISASTER SURGE STAFFING.

Section 625 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2385) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(k) CRISIS OPERATIONS AND DISASTER SURGE STAFFING.—(1) The United States Agency for International Development is authorized to appoint personnel in the excepted service using funds authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available under the heading ‘Transition Initiatives’ in an Act making appropriations for the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs to carry out the provisions of part I and chapter 4 of part II of this Act of and section 509(b) of the Global Fragility Act of 2019 (title V of division J of Public Law 116–94) to prevent or respond to foreign crises;

“(2) Funds authorized to carry out such purposes may be made available for the operating expenses and administrative costs of such personnel and may remain attributed to any minimum funding requirement for which they were originally made available.

“(3) The Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development shall coordinate with the Office of Personnel Management on implementation of the appointment authority under paragraph (1).”.

SEC. 9603. EDUCATION ALLOWANCE WHILE ON MILITARY LEAVE.

Section 908 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4088) is amended by inserting “or United States Agency for International Development” after “A Department”.

SEC. 9604. INCLUSION IN THE PET TRANSPORTATION EXCEPTION TO THE FLY AMERICA ACT.

Section 6224(a)(1) of the Department of State Authorization Act of 2023 (division F of Public Law 118–31; 22 U.S.C. 4081a) is amended, in the matter preceding subparagraph (A)—

(1) by striking “the Department is” and inserting “the Department and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and other United States Government employees under chief of mission authority are”; and

(2) by striking “Department personnel” and inserting “Department and USAID personnel, and other United States Government employees under chief of mission authority”.

TITLE VII—OTHER MATTERS

SEC. 9701. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS TO PROMOTE UNITED STATES CITIZEN EMPLOYMENT AT THE UNITED NATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President should direct United States departments and agencies to, in coordination with the Secretary—

(1) fund and recruit Junior Professional Officers for positions at the United Nations and related specialized and technical organizations; and

(2) facilitate secondments, details, and transfers to agencies and specialized and technical bodies of the United Nations.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated an additional \$20,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2025 through 2031 for the Secretary to support Junior Professional Officers, details, transfers, and interns that advance United States interests at multilateral institutions and international organizations, including to recruit, train, and host events related to such positions, and to promote United States citizen candidates for employment and leadership positions at multilateral institutions and international organizations.

(c) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated pursuant to subsection (a) shall remain available until expended.

(d) CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.—Not later than 15 days prior to the obligation of funds authorized to be appropriated under this section, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a notification outlining the amount and proposed use of such funds.

SEC. 9702. AMENDMENT TO REWARDS FOR JUSTICE PROGRAM.

Section 36(b) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2708(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (13), by striking “; or” and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (14), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(15) the restraining, seizing, forfeiting, or repatriating of stolen assets linked to foreign government corruption and the proceeds of such corruption.”

SEC. 9703. PASSPORT AUTOMATION MODERNIZATION.

The Act entitled “An Act to regulate the issue and validity of passports, and for other purposes”, approved July 3, 1926 (44 Stat. 887, 22 U.S.C. 211a), is amended—

(1) by inserting “and through the use of Department of State electronic systems,” after “the insular possessions of the United States,”; and

(2) by striking “person” and inserting “entity”.

SEC. 9704. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN PAYMENT IN CONNECTION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION.

Section 7(1) of Public Law 106-178 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended, in the undesignated matter following subparagraph (B), by striking “December 31, 2025” and inserting “December 31, 2030”.

SEC. 9705. SUPPORT FOR CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATIONS.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) congressional travel is essential to fostering international relations, understanding global issues first-hand, and jointly advancing United States interests abroad; and

(2) only in close coordination and thanks to the dedication of personnel at United

States embassies, consulates, and other missions abroad can the success of these vital trips be possible.

(b) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall reaffirm to all diplomatic posts the importance of Congressional travel and shall require all such posts to support congressional travel by members and staff of the appropriate congressional committees fully, by making such support available on any day of the week, including Federal and local holidays and, to the extent practical, requiring the direct involvement of mid-level or senior officers.

(c) EXCEPTION FOR SIMULTANEOUS HIGH-LEVEL VISITS.—The requirement under subsection (a) does not apply in the case of a simultaneous visit from the President, the First Lady or First Gentleman, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, or the Secretary of Defense.

(d) TRAINING.—The Secretary shall require all designated control officers to have been trained on supporting congressional travel at posts abroad prior to the assigned congressional visit.

SEC. 9706. ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION WITH VISA APPLICANTS.

Section 833(a)(5)(A) of the International Marriage Broker Regulation Act of 2005 (8 U.S.C. 1375a(a)(5)(A)) is amended by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(vi) Mailings under this subsection may be transmitted by electronic means, including electronic mail. The Secretary of State may communicate with visa applicants using personal contact information provided to them or to the Secretary of Homeland Security by the applicant, petitioner, or designated agent or attorney.”

SEC. 9707. ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION OF VISA INFORMATION.

Section 222 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1202) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(i) ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of the immigration laws (as such term is defined in section 101(a)(17) of this Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(17)), all requirements in the immigration laws for communications with visa applicants shall be deemed satisfied if electronic communications are sent to the applicant using personal contact information at an address for such communications provided by the applicant, petitioner, or designated agent or attorney. The Secretary of State shall take appropriate actions to allow applicants to update their personal contact information and to ensure that electronic communications can be securely transmitted to applicants.”

SEC. 9708. INCLUSION OF COST ASSOCIATED WITH PRODUCING REPORTS.

(a) ESTIMATED COST OF REPORTS.—Beginning on October 1, 2026, and for the next three fiscal years, the Secretary shall require that any report produced for external distribution, including for distribution to Congress, include the total estimated cost of producing such report and the estimated number of personnel hours.

(b) ANNUAL TOTAL COST OF REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the end of each fiscal year, beginning with fiscal year 2025, and for the next three fiscal years, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives an annual report listing the reports issued for the prior fiscal year, the frequency of each report, the total estimated cost associated with producing such report, and the estimated number of personnel hours.

SEC. 9709. EXTENSIONS.

(a) USAID CIVIL SERVICE ANNUITANT WAIVER.—Section 625(j)(1)(B) of the Foreign As-

sistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2385(j)(1)(B)) shall be applied by striking “October 1, 2010” and inserting “September 30, 2026”.

(b) OVERSEAS PAY COMPARABILITY AND LIMITATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The authority provided under section 1113 of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2009 (Public Law 111-32; 123 Stat. 1904) shall remain in effect through September 30, 2026.

(2) LIMITATION.—The authority described in paragraph (1) may not be used to pay an eligible member of the Foreign Service (as defined in section 1113(b) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2009 (Public Law 111-32; 123 Stat. 1904)) a locality-based comparability payment (stated as a percentage) that exceeds two-thirds of the amount of the locality-based comparability payment (stated as a percentage) that would be payable to such member under section 5304 of title 5, United States Code, if such member’s official duty station were in the District of Columbia.

(c) INSPECTOR GENERAL ANNUITANT WAIVER.—The authorities provided under section 1015(b) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-212; 124 Stat. 2332)—

(1) shall remain in effect through September 30, 2026; and

(2) may be used to facilitate the assignment of persons for oversight of programs in Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Venezuela, and Yemen.

(d) SECURITY REVIEW COMMITTEES.—The authority provided under section 301(a)(3) of the Omnibus Diplomatic Security and Antiterrorism Act of 1986 (22 U.S.C. 4831(a)(3)) shall remain in effect for facilities in Afghanistan and shall apply to facilities in Ukraine through September 30, 2026, except that the notification and reporting requirements contained in such section shall include the appropriate congressional committees, the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions: S. Res. 817, S. Res. 818, S. Res. 819, S. Res. 820, S. Res. 821.

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

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

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

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

**ORDERS FOR TUESDAY,
SEPTEMBER 17, 2024**

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, September 17; that following the

prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that following the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Costello nomination; further, that the cloture motion with respect to the Costello nomination ripen at 11:30 a.m. and that if cloture is invoked, a confirmation vote occur at a time to be determined by the majority leader in consultation with the Republican leader; that following the cloture vote, the Senate re-

cess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings; further, that at 2:15 p.m., the Senate resume legislative session and resume consideration of the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 413, S. 4445, and that the majority leader be recognized at 3:30 p.m.; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Tuesday's session, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam 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 8 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, September 17, 2024, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate September 16, 2024:

THE JUDICIARY

KEVIN GAFFORD RITZ, OF TENNESSEE, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE SIXTH CIRCUIT.