

authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 24, 2021, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL

The Subcommittee on Personnel of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 24, 2021, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER AND POWER

The Subcommittee on Water and Power of the Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 24, 2021, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL SPENDING OVERSIGHT AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The Subcommittee on Federal Spending Oversight and Emergency Management of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 24, 2021, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 963

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 963) to authorize dedicated domestic terrorism offices within the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation to analyze and monitor domestic terrorist activity and require the Federal Government to take steps to prevent domestic terrorism, and for other purposes.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will be receive a second reading on the next legislative day.

COVID-19 BANKRUPTCY RELIEF EXTENSION ACT OF 2021

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 1651, which was received from the House and is at the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1651) to amend the CARES Act to extend the sunset for the definition of a small business debtor, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MURPHY. I further ask that the Durbin amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as

amended, be considered read three times and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The amendment (No. 1407) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To improve the bill)

Strike section 2(c).

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The bill (H.R. 1651), as amended, was passed.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 2021

Mr. MURPHY. Finally, I would ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, March 25; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon conclusion of morning business, the Senate resume the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 11, H.R. 1799, as provided under the previous order; finally, that the votes scheduled for 11 a.m. begin at 10:45 a.m.

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

Mr. MURPHY. For the information of Senators, we expect to have four rollcall votes beginning at 10:45 a.m. tomorrow. Additional rollcall votes are expected during Thursday's session.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order following the remarks of Senators SULLIVAN and SASSE.

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

The Senator from Alaska.

CHINA

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I wanted to come down to the Senate floor for a couple reasons, but first I want to talk a little bit about what happened in Alaska last weekend—actually, a really important meeting between the United States and China, our senior diplomats, their senior diplomats. It took place in Anchorage, and let's just say the meeting was as frosty as the Alaska air.

It was a tough meeting. The Chinese came out, kind of took a little advantage of being extra verbose in their opening statements, going against the 2-minute, agreed-upon time limit.

It was a bit of a tongue-lashing, I think, of the U.S. team, our Secretary of State, Tony Blinken. I think our team pushed back appropriately—the National Security Advisor, Jake Sullivan; Kurt Campbell, who also works at the National Security Council. But this was the first face-to-face meeting between the United States and Chinese diplomats with the Biden administration.

What we saw was a very confident China, a very aggressive China that showed up in Alaska. For example, they were talking about “Chinese-style democracy.” We also know that as a dictatorship.

Earth to the Chinese Communist Party: There is no democracy in China. You run an authoritarian regime, so don't try to fool anybody. It is a dictatorship, not a democracy.

But the bigger issue is this: Xi Jinping and the Chinese Communist Party clearly believe that it is rising, that its rise for this century is unstoppable, and that the United States—and the West but particularly the United States, our country—is declining and there is nothing we can do to stop this. They say this in private. They say it in public. And they believe it. They are confident to the point of being cocky, as we saw in Alaska, to the point of calling their dictatorship a democracy, which, of course, it isn't.

Now, my view—and I think it is the view of every Senator here; I certainly hope it is; I think it is—is that it is never a good idea to bet against the United States. Every major power in the world that has done so has lost that bet. That is a fact, but we clearly have work to do. We have a lot of work to do as it relates to this challenge.

I have been coming to the Senate floor for the last 6 years talking about this issue, talking about this challenge, talking about some of the things that we need to do to address the biggest U.S. strategic challenge for this century. It is the rise of China.

Now we have a new administration in power, and it was clear from the Alaska meeting that the Chinese Communist Party plans to aggressively challenge the Biden administration.

Now, I have a lot of disagreements already with the Biden administration, especially the way in which they are treating my State. I have been speaking on the Senate floor—eight Executive orders focused on Alaska, shutting down our economy, killing jobs. And I will fight them hard on this. But, on China, I believe it is imperative that we all work together, not as Democrats and Republicans but as Americans, as we have done when other major powers have threatened the United States.

The Communist Party of China clearly sees one of our major weaknesses as our political divisions. They write about it. It is in all the intel. They talk about it. Look, we are a democracy. We are transparent, unlike them. Our political divisions are on full display. You see them tonight. By the

way, we have had political divisions since the founding of the Republic.

China doesn't share their political divisions with the world, but they have them, no doubt about it. But here is a fact. Here is a fact, and we all need to know this. Every American needs to know this. Xi Jinping and the Chinese Communist Party's worst nightmare is seeing a determined, long-term, bipartisan, strong U.S. strategy to deal with the rise of China, to deal with the rise of China for what they are: our No. 1 geostrategic challenge for this century. That is why we need to work together on this issue. It is something I have been calling for for a long time. And here is the good news: It is something that is starting to happen. It is something that is starting to happen.

Now, I had a good opportunity to meet with Secretary Blinken, to meet with National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan and his top China national security official, Kurt Campbell, when they were in Alaska. I also was able to get a good debrief from Secretary Austin about his visits in Asia, particularly in India.

The Secretary of State and the National Security Advisor talk about dealing with China from what they call positions or situations of strength—situations of strength. They actually took that term from former Secretary of State Dean Acheson when he was doing something that they are currently trying to do now: putting together a coalition, a long-term strategy, in 1947, 1948, 1949 to deal with the Soviet Union, and they did it with Democrats and Republicans. NATO, the strategy of containment—these were all things that came together in this body.

So I want to talk very briefly about some of these positions of strength that the administration is trying to put together as it relates to China, and I think it is in our interest to help them.

First of all, I think it was important and, of course, as an Alaska Senator, I was glad that meeting took place in Anchorage, but it was also a symbol. One of the things that the Chinese Communist Party frequently states—Xi Jinping frequently states it—is that Asia should be for Asians. The subtext of that is, we are trying to kick the United States out of Asia.

Well, here is more news for the Chinese, for the Communist Party of China: We are an Asian nation. We have been an Asian nation for centuries. My hometown of Anchorage, where this meeting took place, is closer to Tokyo than it is to this city, Washington, DC. The Aleutian Island chain goes to the other side of the international dateline. We are an Asian nation. We are not leaving. We have been there 200 years; we will be there 200, 300, 500 more.

So that is No. 1, and I am glad they held the meeting in Alaska for that reason, on American soil, and they chose to do that purposely. But let me

talk about a couple of other positions of strength that I think it is incumbent upon us to try to help this administration with, help our country with. Some are going to be up to the Senate and the House. A lot more are going to be up to the President and his team. Where we can influence it, we should.

As I mentioned, politically being unified on issues that relate to China is exactly what the Chinese Communist Party fears the most, and it is starting to happen. Legislation to outcompete China economically—critical, critical. The more that we can do that, the more that we can show we are united, the more important what we do here is going to matter in the long-term competition with regard to China.

Let me give another one. Allies. Allies. The United States is an ally-rich nation. China is an ally-poor country. They have very few allies: maybe North Korea; Russia maybe, maybe not. China doesn't really have allies; they have customers.

We have a network, and it is one of our most important strategic advantages. We need to build upon that network of allies, deepen it, expand it. And I will give the administration a lot of credit for setting this up in an important way for their first meeting, the leaders of the quad.

The quad is the United States, Japan, Australia, and India, started by President George W. Bush, taken to another level by President Trump, and taken to a really high level by President Biden, the leader level. It was a really smart move. The quad can help anchor our alliances in the region in a critical way. Three of the four biggest economies in the world are part of the quad. Some of the best militaries in the world are part of the quad. So to have that meeting, even though it was virtual, with the leaders—the President, Prime Ministers—of the quad was smart and something I think they should be commended on. Then to have the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense go to Korea, go to Japan; continue on, the Secretary of Defense, to India—also very smart.

The Chinese know this is a huge weakness of theirs, and it is a huge strength of ours. As Senators, the more that we can do to encourage this on our own, go to these countries, reinforce the importance of these alliances—it is clearly a position of strength that the administration is off to a good start with.

Let me give another one, a position of strength. Our military. Our military. This is going to be pretty simple. If we see dramatic cuts to our military—and right now the Biden administration is debating this. There is a real fight going on internally: Where is the budget going to be? We can't see cuts.

The second term of the Obama-Biden administration cut defense spending by 25 percent. They gutted readiness. The Chinese and the Russians were applauding that whole period. We have worked hard to build that up under the

Trump administration and Republican Senate. They need to keep it going.

And here is going to be a test. Last year in the NDAA, we put in the Defense bill a bipartisan piece of legislation called the Pacific Deterrence Initiative. The admiral in charge of the INDOPACOM region testified in front of the Armed Services Committee very recently. His replacement testified yesterday. All of them said we need to fully fund the Pacific Deterrence Initiative—a bipartisan part of the Defense bill last year—and \$4.6 billion is what they think we need to reorder the balance, particularly in the area of the Taiwan Strait. That is public.

The administration is debating this right now. They need to fund it. This body will approve it. That is going to be a position of strength that is up to them, but people are watching. We are watching, our allies are watching, and, of course, the Chinese Communist Party is watching.

Let me give one more, one more that I think is critical: taking advantage of America's resources, critical minerals: Yes, energy; yes, natural gas; yes, oil. Prior to the pandemic, we were the world's energy superpower, largest producer of oil in the world, largest producer of natural gas in the world, largest producer of renewables in the world.

This is a good thing for our country. Our allies in the region know it; the Chinese know it. And again, there is a debate within the administration right now on energy.

The President has recently told some of our great Union leaders he is "all in for natural gas." We should do that. That is the reason we reduced greenhouse gas emissions over the last 15 years, more than any other country—big country—in the world because of the revolution of natural gas. Our allies need that. They know it is a national security strength that we have.

On the other hand, we have other elements in the administration that clearly want to unilaterally give away our energy comparative advantage, restrict production of oil and gas. It makes no sense.

So energy, energy is another position of strength that we should be encouraging, and I certainly am encouraging the Biden administration to recognize it as something good for our economy, good for jobs and, yes, really good for our national security and really important in our competition with China. The Biden administration national security team knows this. I think they recognize it. But again, we will be watching. It is important.

This is going to be an issue that we are going to be focused on here in the U.S. Senate, in my view, for the next 50 to 100 years, if we are doing it right. If we work together, if we work from positions of strength, as the Secretary of State and National Security Advisor have mentioned, are focused on, the way this is going to end is the way it ended with other major powers that

have challenged the United States. I am very confident of that, and I think most of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle are. We need to get working together on that.

TRIBUTE TO ROD BOYCE

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, it is not Thursday yet, but it is almost Thursday, and that is when I love to come down to the floor of the U.S. Senate to recognize an Alaskan who is doing something great for our State. And as many know here, we call this person our Alaskan of the Week.

Now, it is one of my favorite times of the week. I know that a couple of Hill watchers like it too. I want to give a shout-out to Chris Cioffi from Roll Call. He actually did a piece in Roll Call today about the "Alaskan of the Week" series. So thank you, Chris. I hope you are watching. It is a little late, and it is not Thursday. But anyway, I appreciate the shout-out in your series today.

I am going to get to the punch. Our Alaskan of the Week tonight, this week, is Rod Boyce, a friend of mine, a former longtime editor of one of my favorite—actually, it is my favorite newspaper in Alaska, the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner. He clearly is deserving of this great, important award.

But before I talk about Rod, let me give you a little update about what is going on in the State. First, some good news, something we are all very proud of in Alaska. The economy is hurting; we are not proud of that. But in terms of the pandemic, the health elements, our State continues to be the No. 1 State vaccinated per capita of any State in the country. This is a minimiracle, by the way, because we are a really big State, and we are really spread out, a really small population. And yet, the Federal Government, Tribal healthcare system, VA, State of Alaska, everybody coming together is making it happen.

About 3 weeks ago, we announced that anyone over 16 could get a vaccine. And some communities are hitting 60, 70 percent vaccinated already in Alaska. Really important. We are opening up. If you are watching, and you don't live in Alaska, come visit. It is going to be safe, but we are very proud of that accomplishment because it has taken a lot of work.

Of course, it is cold in Alaska, but the Sun has been shining. The snow has been amazing. We have had a lot of it recently. The spirits are up. We have an Iditarod winner. Congratulations to Dallas Seavey on your fifth Iditarod win. Incredible, incredible.

You know, some may take issue with the claim that Alaska is the most unique State in the Union, but consider this: Every year, teams of mushers and their dogs barrel hundreds of miles across the State toward the city of Nome, in some of the harshest conditions, rugged conditions on the planet Earth.

Certainly, these are the kind of events that we think make Alaska unique and a big sense of community. I have said it before: Alaska isn't always the easiest place to live. It is far from the lower 48. The weather can be extreme, very tough. But as a result, the people and communities bond, and they work together, particularly in some of our most remote communities. We are one big community in the great State of Alaska, as my colleague from Nebraska knows.

Every community in Alaska, in America, needs to be able to share reliable, credible information. On that topic, of course, there has been a lot of negative attention in the past couple of years paid to some in the national media, particularly in the last few years. But the vital role, the vital role of local journalism and how that role that plays in different communities across our country, in my view, hasn't had nearly enough attention, and it is a positive role, our local reporters.

So our Alaskan of the Week, Rod Boyce, who, until just a few weeks ago was the longtime editor of the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, spent nearly his entire career, 35 years, ensuring that Alaskans stayed connected through local news.

Now, Rod himself hasn't made huge headlines in the State. As a matter of fact, that is one of the reasons for the Alaskan of the Week, to do a shout-out to someone who has not gotten a lot of recognition. The only time Rod has gotten a lot of headlines was one instance of a mushing mishap. I am going to talk briefly about that. But as an old-school newsman, he liked to stay behind the headlines, behind the scenes.

But he has been behind the scenes of so many of those headlines in our State. For years, he worked tirelessly—first at papers across the State and then for 27 years at the News-Miner—to keep the great community of Fairbanks and North Pole, AK, the interior part of our State, connected and informed.

So here is a little bit about Rod. Born in London, England—I have known Rod for many years, but I did not know that fact. Born in London, England, his family moved to Southern California in the 1960s. His father designed and engineered refineries. And Rod's father and his wife—Rod's mom—raised both him and his sister.

He wasn't sure what he wanted to do in life, but he was inspired by a trip he took to England early in his college career, came back with a camera that he actually found on a bench in the Heathrow Airport. It is an interesting detail. And he found his calling in journalism. He was the editor of the school newspaper at Humboldt State University and did some stints at small papers, landed at the Sacramento Union—the oldest paper in the West, by the way—one that Mark Twain used to write for. It was his first experience with a good old-fashioned newspaper

war. The younger, afternoon paper, the Sacramento Bee, decided to take on the establishment Sacramento Union. Eventually, the Bee won. But by then, Rod had made his way to the great State of Alaska to enter another, even bigger newspaper war: the Anchorage Times, the established paper, versus the upstart Anchorage Daily News.

Any person in news in Alaska who has been around a while will talk about that newspaper war with something of awe in their voice. Both papers then were fully staffed up, at least 30 reporters each, bureaus all across the State, even bureaus here in DC, pre-social media days, pre-Twitter days. Reporters spent their days on the streets, knocking on doors, stealing each other's scoops. It was called shoe leather reporting, and some great journalism in Alaska emerged.

Eventually, the upstart, the young Anchorage Daily News—still around—won the war. So Rod was on the losing team. He began to work for a small chain of six or seven rural papers called Alaska Newspapers, Inc. It was here that Rod got his first glimpse of rural Alaska. He learned about fisheries issues, ate his first piece of muktuk. That is whale blubber. He experienced the beauty and became aware of the heartbreak of rural Alaska, the true spiritual soul of our State, one of the spiritual souls of America, I would argue.

After a few years with Alaska newspapers, he took the job that he has been so good at for almost three decades, editor of the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, which is my wonderful wife Julie's hometown. It is the first city I lived in with Julie and our brandnew daughter of ours, Meghan, and, of course, I can still consider the News-Miner to be my hometown newspaper.

As I mentioned, Rod was an editor for 27 years for this great interior Alaska paper. The News-Miner is small but mighty in Alaska, punching way above its weight, winning numerous journalism awards, breaking important stories on health crises, injustice, scandals, economic opportunities, everyday stories about everyday people, the kind of stories that draw us together as communities.

As Rod said, "It's not just national journalism that matters. Local journalism matters [too]."

To that end, it was his policy, until he just retired a couple of weeks ago, to have at least 95 percent of the front page of the News-Miner devoted to local news. That is a great idea.

So many Alaskans have interests, hobbies, lifestyles that many here in the lower 48 just don't understand, Rod included. For many years, he spent his days in the newsroom and his evenings and weekends mushing dogs. And he still mushes. He loves it. It is a family affair. He and his wife Julie used to put their daughter, Edie, in a sled when she was just in diapers. And Edie is still doing it. The most dogs they have ever