

of S. 2571, a bill to provide for the inclusion on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall of the names of the soldiers who died on Flying Tiger Flight 739 on March 16, 1962.

S. 2615

At the request of Mr. OSSOFF, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2615, a bill protecting the right to vote in elections for Federal office, and for other purposes.

S. 2721

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2721, a bill to require the Internal Revenue Service to issue a report on the tax gap, to establish a fellowship program within the Internal Revenue Service to recruit mid-career tax professionals to create and participate in an audit task force, and for other purposes.

S. 2727

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2727, a bill to provide for a period of continuing appropriations in the event of a lapse in appropriations under the normal appropriations process, and establish procedures and consequences in the event of a failure to enact appropriations.

S. 2728

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2728, a bill to amend title VI of the Social Security Act to extend the coverage of Coronavirus Relief Fund payments to Tribal Governments.

S. 2760

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2760, a bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to provide for automatic continuing resolutions.

S. 2780

At the request of Mr. MARSHALL, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2780, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to prohibit certain adverse personnel actions taken against members of the Armed Forces based on declining the COVID-19 vaccine.

S. 2785

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2785, a bill to prohibit the use of Federal funds for gender transition in minors.

S. RES. 338

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor

of S. Res. 338, a resolution designating September 2021 as National Democracy Month as a time to reflect on the contributions of the system of government of the United States to a more free and stable world.

S. RES. 364

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 364, a resolution supporting the designation of September 17, 2021, as "National Physician Suicide Awareness Day" to raise awareness of, and promote a national discussion about, physician suicide and to reduce the stigma of mental health issues.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTION

By Mr. SCHUMER (for Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 2805. A bill to revise laws regarding liability in certain civil actions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President. I rise today to introduce the "Small Passenger Vessel Liability Fairness Act of 2021."

This bill would help the families of 34 people who were tragically killed in the *Conception* boat fire off the coast of Santa Cruz Island, California on September 2, 2019, and other victims and their families of similar tragedies. This was the worst maritime disaster in modern California history, and my thoughts continue to be with the victims and their loved ones.

In December of last year, my bill, the Small Passenger Vessel Safety Act, passed as part of the annual National Defense Authorization Act. It goes a long way toward improving passenger vessel safety, but the families of the victims are still unable to seek compensation for the great loss of life they have suffered.

The victims of the *Conception* boat fire were killed when a fire started on-board the boat, while passengers and crewmembers were sleeping below deck after a nighttime swim.

The National Transportation Safety Board's final investigation report for the fire indicates that the victims were awake and trying to escape before they were overcome with smoke. Both exits from the bunkroom were blocked by flames, and coroner reports list smoke inhalation as the cause of death for all passengers.

The same NTSB investigation also determined that the owner and operator of the boat was at fault for failing to provide effective safety oversight. There was no roving watchman as required, the emergency procedures were not properly followed, and the Coast Guard failed to enforce safety requirements.

The families of the victims of the *Conception* boat fire have filed claims

against the owners of the boat for violating federal safety rules. However, due to an outdated maritime liability law, The Limitation of Liability Act of 1851, the owner of the vessel may not be financially liable for any of the losses incurred as a result of the fire, including the enormous loss of life. My bill would address this issue.

How the bill would help:

My bill would amend the outdated law to allow families of victims to bring claims against owners of small passenger vessels found to be liable for maritime accidents such as the *Conception* boat fire, and receive proper compensation for their suffering. It would require small passenger vessels to be governed by liability laws that allow for victims to receive compensation.

I am very appreciative of the NTSB and Board Member Jennifer Homendy and the Coast Guard's responsiveness to several safety recommendations issued by the NTSB, and for their feedback on this bill. I am especially appreciative to the families of the *Conception* boat fire victims for bringing this issue to my attention, and for their tireless efforts to improve maritime safety and ensure just compensation for future victims.

This bill would provide a long overdue update to an outdated law. It is critical that Congress pass it in a timely manner, so as to ensure families of the 34 victims may have their day in court and that future victims of similar tragedies can also seek justice.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. INHOFE):

S. 2809. A bill to protect social security benefits and military pay and require that the United States Government to prioritize all obligations on the debt held by the public in the event that the debt limit is reached; placed on the calendar.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, currently, America's debt is barreling toward \$30 trillion. This \$30 trillion is hard to imagine. So think about it this way: That is more than \$233,000 of debt for every American family.

On July 31, the suspension on the Federal debt limit expired, and now the Democrats in Congress, who continue to pursue a purely partisan, reckless tax-and-spending spree, are pushing this as a decision point with only two options: to vote to suspend the debt limit or increase it with no reforms to control excess Federal spending. They want us to write the government a blank check to spend more money that we don't have. The Republicans have been clear: We will not do it.

Now, my Democratic colleagues will say that the debt ceiling shouldn't be a partisan issue, and I completely agree,

but what we have seen from the Democrats this year has been purely partisan even by Washington's broken standards.

First, they passed a nearly \$2 trillion so-called COVID bill that spent less than 10 percent of its funding on actually fighting COVID, without any Republican votes, and now they are pushing forward a \$5.5 trillion reckless tax-and-spending spree—again, without a single Republican vote. This insane Democratic spending means we are on the dangerous path of reaching \$45 trillion in Federal debt by 2031. That is not my number. That is what the Democrats' own bill says. The Democrats' own projections have their reckless spending taking the U.S. debt to \$45 trillion in the next 10 years.

There are major consequences to this financial irresponsibility. Like any borrower, the Federal Government pays interest on its debt. When you rack up nearly \$30 trillion in debt, that means hundreds of billions of dollars in interest. Who pays for it? The taxpayers. Right now, even with interest rates at historic lows, the U.S. Government is already spending nearly \$345 billion yearly on interest. Instead of funding important infrastructure, defense, or the environment, nearly \$345 billion in hard-earned tax dollars is just paying interest which provides zero return for American families. Just imagine how much that will grow when the U.S. reaches \$45 trillion in debt. And when interest rates return to normal levels, things will get even worse.

Let's look at this.

Right now, about 11 percent of what we are going to collect this year will go to pay the interest. There is no return for taxpayers on this interest. Let's look at what is going to happen by 2031, and this is the Democrats' budget: 23 percent of total Federal receipts will go toward paying the interest. Now, that is assuming that interest rates stay low. Why would we believe that interest rates are going to stay low? Let's just look. We are having unbelievable inflation right now. When inflation goes up, interest rates typically follow. Assuming we have low interest rates stay low, like the Democrats do, we could be spending over \$1 trillion on just interest by 2031. Imagine, if interest rates return to historical averages, our payments will be astronomical. The Federal Government brings in less than \$4 trillion in revenues. So we will be spending roughly a quarter of all tax revenue on interest that does nothing—nothing—for taxpayers.

How can Congress justify that?

It is clear: Democratic spending has caused this massive Democratic debt, and it is time for liberals in Washington to own the debt crisis they have created.

Republicans have been clear: We won't stand for it. We won't vote to bail out the Democrats' out-of-control spending. We won't cut radical liberals in Congress more blank checks to bury our country in more debt, to drive up

America's interest expense, and to fuel an already raging inflation crisis, hurting families across my State and across this country.

Just last week, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the Consumer Price Index was up 5.3 percent in 1 year—from August to August, 5.3 percent. Year-over-year comparisons show that inflation has gone up each month of Biden's Presidency. Government doesn't feel the Biden inflation, but everyday Americans do.

I am hearing from families all across my State—a father of three in Jacksonville, a mother of four in Wauchula—and small businesses in Miami. Another family in Kissimmee told us about how hard it is to keep food on the table because everything is getting so expensive. They are having trouble keeping their car because of the cost of maintenance and gas. Of course, without a car, they won't have a way to get to work and provide for their family.

It is heartbreaking to hear these stories. I can relate to this. I grew up in a poor family. My mom would take in ironing for extra money. She would give us exact change to go to the grocery store, and if the price of something went up, we just simply couldn't get it.

In the face of this hardship felt by so many families in Florida and across this great Nation, President Biden and Democrats here in Congress have zero interest in reducing the national debt and cutting their insane spending. Democrats have shown a heartless disregard for the struggles so many families in Florida and across America are dealing with right now.

It is time we bring accountability to Federal spending. Unlike our Democratic colleagues, Republicans have a solution-focused approach to fixing America's debt crisis. We know that the Federal Government can and must pursue practical measures to make it easy and relatively painless to cut spending. We can start that right now.

Earlier this year, I introduced the Federal Debt Emergency Control Act, which prevents Washington from mindlessly spending by requiring that two-thirds of the Senate vote to increase the debt before approving any bill with deficit spending, terminating any unobligated funding from the stimulus bills and sending it back to the Treasury General Fund for deficit reduction, and fast-tracking any bill reducing the debt by at least 5 percent over 10 years.

Today, I am joining my friend Senator PAT TOOMEY to reintroduce the Full Faith and Credit Act. This bill ensures that the U.S. Government does not default on its debt while also prioritizing certain payments to our seniors, military, and veterans.

It is commonsense policy like this that will move the United States forward and out of the massive debt crisis we are clearly already in. I welcome all fiscally responsible colleagues to join me to say: We don't accept the status

quo. We won't watch in silence as Democrats try to spend us into oblivion. We can get spending under control.

While I was Governor of Florida, we paid down one-third of State debt by living within our means, all while cutting taxes. We can do it here. We have to start acting responsibly, and the time to do that is now.

Politicians in Washington want you to think this is so complicated. They want you to think that dysfunction is inevitable. That is a lie. It is a lie that a broken system and failed politicians up here have been telling you for decades, and it is time for that to end.

Getting America back on track is simple. It starts with passing commonsense reforms that rein in reckless spending, stop Congress from getting paid when it shuts down the government, and force Congress to stay in session until it passes a balanced budget. We keep our Nation on the right financial path by making sure Congress is constantly held accountable for its spending of taxpayer money. It is taxpayer money, every dollar of it.

It is time to stand up for those on fixed incomes and, of course, families whose income can't keep up with inflation. It is time to stand up for our grandkids, whose futures are being mortgaged by out-of-control Washington spending.

This isn't political. It is good government, and it is common sense. The longer we ignore the debt problem, the worse it will become not just for us but for future generations.

A debt crisis is here today. It will be American families who feel the effects of their government's lack of fiscal responsibility through inflation, higher costs, and rising taxes. That is not the America anyone wants. American families deserve better. Through smart legislation and responsible choices, we can be truly accountable to the American people and bring some stability back to the Federal Government's bank account.

#### SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 377—URGING THE EUROPEAN UNION TO DESIGNATE HIZBALLAH IN ITS ENTIRETY AS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION

Ms. ROSEN (for herself and Mrs. BLACKBURN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 377

Whereas, in April 1983, a Hizballah terror attack against the United States Embassy in Beirut killed 63 people;

Whereas, in October 1983, a Hizballah terror attack against the United States and French barracks of the Multinational Force in Lebanon killed 241 American and 58 French soldiers;

Whereas, in July 2012, a Hizballah terror attack, carried out by an operative with French citizenship, in Burgas, Bulgaria, killed 5 Israeli tourists and 1 Bulgarian;