

awake for hours each night trying to process all of that alone with no help. Imagine the courage it then takes for that kid to have the first conversation with a parent or a friend. And then layer on top of that some of the most powerful people in the world deciding to use their power not to cure disease or end poverty or hunger but instead to use their power to target those very scared, desperate kids and to use their powers to harass and bully and shame them.

Imagine how small, how insecure, how weak a person must be to have all that power and to use it to bully children.

Seth Walsh was gay, not transgender, but his experience was not much different than Eric's. Students at his school were systematic in their targeting of him because of his sexual orientation. They pushed him down the stairs. They kicked him until he was badly bruised. They screamed at him. They called him names. No doubt these bullies took direction and inspiration from adults who paved the way, who endorsed this kind of hateful behavior.

One day, after one of these incidents, a frightened Seth called his mom and he said: "Mom, you have to come get me right now." His mom could feel—hear the fear in his voice, and so she grabbed Seth's little brother and they got in the car and they rushed to pick him up. His mom was so supportive. That afternoon they sat and they talked.

Seth took a shower to calm himself down, and afterward he asked his mom for a pen and told her that he was going to go outside and play with the dogs. About 10 minutes later, his mom went outside to continue this conversation with her son, but it was too late. Seth had hung himself from a tree. The pen that he asked for was for his suicide note.

I tell you these stories because they are consequences of adults' behavior. Donald Trump and MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE and their ilk, they aren't murderers, but make no mistake, there is a direct through line from the hateful words and the policies of leaders and the misery that too many transgender, nonbinary, and gay kids are going through today.

But I am also here to tell you that Trump and TAYLOR GREENE, others like them, they are not the majority. And I want to make sure that I finish by sending a message to transgender children and adults that these hateful people, this movement that is growing out there to try to target you, it is not going to win. We are going to build a community of love and protection for you. No matter how bad things may seem right now, they are going to get better. The world is going to get kinder. Adults are going to learn their lessons. And if you don't have it now, as you are struggling with your identity, you will find a support structure that will nurture and support you. It is out there for you. You should be who

you are. Don't feel like you need to hide your true self just because of these idiot adults who feel big by bullying people who are different from them.

Be who you are and know that there are a whole lot of us who are going to work our tails off to support you, to love you, and to make sure that you get a chance to thrive—because in the long run, the bullies never win. They never do.

I yield the floor.

#### APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Republican Leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 117-81, appoints the following individual to serve as a member of the Afghanistan War Commission: Seth Jones of Virginia.

#### REMOVAL OF INJUNCTION OF SECRECY—TREATY DOCUMENT NO. 117-2

Mr. MURPHY. I ask unanimous consent that the injunction of secrecy be removed from the following treaty transmitted to the Senate on April 7, 2022, by the President of the United States: the extradition treaty with the Republic of Albania, Treaty Document No. 117-2. I further ask that the treaty be considered as having been read the first time; that it be referred with accompanying papers to the Committee on Foreign Relations and ordered to be printed; and that the President's message be printed in the RECORD.

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

The message of the President is as follows:

*To the Senate of the United States:*

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Extradition Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Albania (the "Treaty"), signed at Tirana on December 22, 2020. I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty would replace the extradition treaty between the United States and Albania, signed at Tirana on March 1, 1933. The Treaty follows generally the form and content of other extradition treaties recently concluded by the United States. It would replace an outmoded list of extraditable offenses with a modern "dual criminality" approach, which would enable extradition for such offenses as money laundering, cyber-related crimes, and other newer offenses not appearing on the list. The Treaty also contains a modernized "political offense" clause and provides that extradition shall not be refused based on the nationality of the person sought. Finally, the Treaty incorporates a series

of procedural improvements to streamline and expedite the extradition process.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.  
THE WHITE HOUSE, April 7, 2022.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 646, 790, 814, 863, 864; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc without intervening action or debate; the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate resume legislative session.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nominations of Oren E. Whyche-Shaw, of Maryland, to be United States Director of the African Development Bank for a term of five years; Adriana Debora Kugler, of Maryland, to be United States Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for a term of two years; Steven H. Fagin, of New Jersey, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Yemen; Erik Kristopher Raven, of the District of Columbia, to be Under Secretary of the Navy; and William A. LaPlante, Jr., of Massachusetts, to be Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment? The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

#### APPOINTMENTS AUTHORITY

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the upcoming adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the President pro tempore and the majority and minority leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, committees, boards, conferences, or interparliamentary conferences authorized by law, by concurrent action of the two Houses, or by order of the Senate.

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

#### STRENGTHENING OVERSIGHT FOR VETERANS ACT OF 2021

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate

proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 304, S. 2687.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2687) to provide the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs testimonial subpoena authority, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Tester substitute amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to.

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

The amendment (No. 5024) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Strengthening Oversight for Veterans Act of 2021”.

#### SEC. 2. TESTIMONIAL SUBPOENA AUTHORITY OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 312 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(d)(1)(A) In addition to the authority otherwise provided by the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) and in accordance with the requirements of this subsection, the Inspector General, in carrying out the provisions of this section, may require by subpoena the attendance and testimony of witnesses as necessary in the performance of the functions assigned to the Inspector General by the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) and this section, which in the case of contumacy or refusal to obey, such subpoena shall be enforceable by order of any appropriate district court of the United States.

“(B) The Inspector General may not require by subpoena the attendance and testimony under subparagraph (A) of—

“(i) any current Federal employee; or

“(ii) any witness as part of any criminal proceeding.

“(2) The authority to issue a subpoena under paragraph (1) may not be delegated.

“(3)(A) The Inspector General shall notify the Attorney General of the intent to issue a subpoena under paragraph (1).

“(B) Not later than 10 days after the date on which the Attorney General is notified pursuant to subparagraph (A), the Attorney General may object in writing to the issuance of the subpoena if the subpoena will interfere with an ongoing investigation and, if the Attorney General makes such an objection, the Inspector General may not issue the subpoena.

“(C) If the Attorney General does not object in writing to the issuance of the subpoena during the 10-day period described in subparagraph (B), the Inspector General may issue the subpoena.

“(4) Before requiring by subpoena under paragraph (1) the attendance and testimony of a witness, the Inspector General shall, to the degree practicable—

“(A) notify the witness of the intent of the Inspector General to issue the subpoena; and

“(B) provide the witness an opportunity to attend and testify voluntarily.

“(5) Whenever requiring by subpoena under paragraph (1) the attendance and testimony

of a witness, the Inspector General shall, to the greatest extent practicable, travel to residence of the witness, the principal place of business of the witness, or other similar location that is in proximity to the residence of the witness.

“(6)(A) Along with each semiannual report submitted by the Inspector General pursuant to section 5(b) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App. 5(b)), the Inspector General shall include a report on the exercise of the authority provided by paragraph (1).

“(B) Each report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include, for the most recently completed six-month period, the following:

“(i) The number of testimonial subpoenas issued and the number of individuals interviewed pursuant to such subpoenas.

“(ii) The number of proposed testimonial subpoenas with respect to which the Attorney General objected under paragraph (3)(B).

“(iii) A discussion of any challenges or concerns that the Inspector General has encountered exercising the authority provided by paragraph (1).

“(iv) Such other matters as the Inspector General considers appropriate.

“(7)(A) The authority provided by paragraph (1)(A) shall terminate on May 31, 2025.

“(B) The termination of authority by subparagraph (A) shall not affect the enforceability of a subpoena issued under paragraph (1)(A) before the date of such termination.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (d) of section 312 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) SEMIANNUAL REPORT.—Paragraph (6) of subsection (d) of such section, as so added, shall apply beginning on the date that is seven months after the first day of the first fiscal year beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

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

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

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the bill, as amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

Hearing none, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (S. 2687), as amended, was passed.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

#### VETERANS’ EMERGENCY CARE CLAIMS PARITY ACT

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 1875 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1875) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide a deadline of 180 days for the filing of claims for payment for emergency treatment furnished to veterans, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Rounds substitute amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to, that the bill, as amended, 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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 5026) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Veterans’ Emergency Care Claims Parity Act”.

#### SEC. 2. CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT FROM DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR EMERGENCY TREATMENT FURNISHED TO VETERANS.

(a) TREATMENT FOR NON-SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1725 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (h); and

(B) by inserting after subsection (e) the following new subsections (f) and (g):

“(f) SUBMITTAL OF CLAIMS FOR DIRECT PAYMENT.—An individual or entity seeking payment under subsection (a)(2) for treatment provided to a veteran in lieu of reimbursement to the veteran shall submit a claim for such payment not later than 180 days after the latest date on which such treatment was provided.

“(g) HOLD HARMLESS.—No veteran described in subsection (b) may be held liable for payment for emergency treatment described in such subsection if—

“(1) a claim for direct payment was submitted by an individual or entity under subsection (f); and

“(2) such claim was submitted after the deadline established by such subsection due to—

“(A) an administrative error made by the individual or entity, such as submission of the claim to the wrong Federal agency, under the wrong reimbursement authority (such as section 1728 of this title), or submission of the claim after the deadline; or

“(B) an administrative error made by the Department, such as misplacement of a paper claim or deletion of an electronic claim.”.

(b) TREATMENT FOR AND IN CONNECTION WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES.—Section 1728 of such title is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection (c):

“(c) No veteran described in subsection (a) may be held liable for payment for emergency treatment described in such subsection if—

“(1) a claim for direct payment was submitted by an individual or entity under subsection (b)(2); and

“(2) such claim was submitted after a deadline established by the Secretary for purposes of this section due to—

“(A) an administrative error made by the individual or entity, such as submission of