

that definitely speaks to me. I am an outdoors guy through and through. I love pheasant hunting, boating, swimming, running. I will shoot hoops whenever I get the chance, indoors or outdoors, but this is nothing better than doing it outdoors.

When I was a kid, my dad attached a basket to a pole in our backyard, and there was nothing my siblings and I liked better than spending long summer days and sometimes fall days and spring days shooting hoops in our backyard in Murdo.

The outdoors was a huge part of my life as a kid. We spent the long summer days outside, barring the hour every day my mother made us come inside to read. On summer evenings, my dad would take us to get ice cream cones, and then we would drive down to the White River to watch the sunset.

Another outdoor pastime we embraced was hunting. My dad taught my siblings and me to hunt, and I loved going out with him. Pheasant hunting remains one of my favorite outdoor activities, and I get excited every year as the third Saturday in October—the official start to pheasant season—rolls around.

It is a tradition that I am happy to be able to share with the next generation, as my dad shared it with me. There is nothing better than a day spent outdoors with friends and family, followed by a communal meal, sometimes involving pheasant.

Being in the outdoors isn't just enjoyable; I think it is a part of the good life. The health benefits of time spent outdoors are well-established, and I know a day—or even an hour—out in the fresh air always clears my mind and refreshes my spirit.

With more and more of our life spent in front of screens, I think time spent outdoors and disconnected is even more important than ever. I am grateful for all those hours we spent as kids running around outside and for family activities outdoors, like our summer trip to the Black Hills. We used to go out there for Labor Day, stay in this little non-air-conditioned cabin and just enjoy the outdoors.

We would hike, and we would visit caves. We would go to Mount Rushmore, head to the lake—I loved and still love visiting Sylvan Lake in South Dakota.

I loved being there with my parents and siblings, and I loved taking my daughters there on trips like the ones I took growing up. Nobody who visits South Dakota should miss the Black Hills.

I am not sure there is a more beautiful place on Earth—the interplay of light and shadow on the trees and rocks late on a summer afternoon, the endless South Dakota sky reflected in the blue of Sylvan Lake and other lakes in the Black Hills, the Milky Way carpeting the night sky with millions of diamonds. There is no better place to spend time in the great outdoors than South Dakota.

Our State is filled with natural wonders, the Missouri River, Jewel Cave and Wind Cave, two of the longest caves in the world. Together, they offer hundreds of miles of underground passageways to explore, filled with glimmering crystals and remarkable rock formations.

We have the magnificent Black Hills National Forest in Custer State Park, rolling prairies, and, of course, the Badlands. If you haven't experienced the rugged beauty of the Badlands, you are missing out—extraordinary layered rock formations that look like they might have come from another planet, a wealth of fossils.

Everybody should see the sunset over the Badlands at least once in their life, turning the tops of the rocks to a sea of fiery orange.

And, of course, no mention of South Dakota's great outdoors would be complete without a mention of Mount Rushmore, one of our national treasures. Nature got a little help from man here, and the result is magnificent. You can't help but be awed when you see Mount Rushmore soaring up in front of you. And you can't help but feel a little prouder to be a citizen of this great land.

Our Nation's great outdoor spaces need to be cared for so that we can preserve them for future generations—from wildlife enthusiasts to hikers and runners to farmers and ranchers. I am a longtime supporter of the Conservation Reserve Program.

Agricultural producers are familiar with the Conservation Reserve Program, or what we call CRP, which provides incentives for farmers, ranchers, and landowners to take environmentally sensitive land out of production for 10 to 15 years.

The Conservation Reserve Program helps the environment by improving soil health and water quality and providing habitat for wildlife, including endangered and threatened species. I pushed for an increase in the CRP acreage cap in the 2018 farm bill, and the final bill raised that acreage cap to 27 million acres.

Currently, I am working on further improvements of CRP that I will work to get included in the 2023 farm bill. Based on my conversations with farmers and ranchers, I developed the Conservation Reserve Program Improvement Act, which I introduced in March. This legislation would make CRP grazing a more attractive option by providing cost-share payments for all CRP practices for the establishment of grazing infrastructure, including fencing and water distribution.

It would also increase the annual payment limit for CRP—which has not changed since 1985—to help account for inflation and the increase in land value.

This would enhance the appeal of CRP for farmers and ranchers, improving their bottom line while helping to protect the environment and increase wildlife habitat.

Another priority of mine is improving forest management in the Black Hills National Forest to reduce the risk of wildfires and damaging insect infestations.

I have introduced two pieces of legislation during this Congress to help improve management of our national forests, including the Black Hills. Currently on-the-ground management activities, including timber thinning, are significantly lagging in the Black Hills National Forest and other forests throughout the country.

My Expediting Forest Restoration and Recovery Act would require the U.S. Forest Service to expedite treatment of more than 70 million acres of National Forest System lands to reduce the threat of insect and disease infestations and catastrophic wildfires.

My Black Hills Forest Protection and Jobs Preservation Act is also designed to help expedite forest management projects in the Black Hills and elsewhere. The bill, which I introduced with my Wyoming colleague, Senator JOHN BARRASSO, would require the U.S. Forest Service to quickly issue National Environmental Policy Act decisions that are necessary to carry out forest management projects, including thinning of overly dense timber stands in the Black Hills National Forest.

Our bill would also expedite timber production projects in the Black Hills National Forest and neighboring national forests to help maintain the timber sale program that plays a critical role in keeping these forests healthy while also supporting the regional economy.

I am grateful to live in a State that has so much to offer when it comes to the great outdoors. And I will continue to work to protect and preserve our national treasures, and I hope every American will take advantage of Great Outdoors Month to get outside and enjoy our natural world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

FIXING OUR REGULATORY MAYHEM UPSETTING LITTLE AMERICANS ACT

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, for months, American moms and dads have endured an unprecedented baby formula shortage.

All of us know someone that this crisis has personally affected. In May alone, reports showed that the out-of-stock rate jumped from 43 percent to 74 percent nationally. In my home State of Utah, that out-of-stock rate is much higher.

And while the Biden administration made ambitious attempts to invoke the Defense Production Act and fly in formula from other countries, these efforts ultimately provided less than 2 days' worth of formula for our country's hungry babies—less than 2 days.

So yesterday, I took to the floor asking that this body take immediate action to address our Nation's massive

formula shortage by unanimously passing my FORMULA Act, something that I have come repeatedly to the Senate floor in an effort to pass and it has been met with objections so far.

My bill included three measures to accomplish this goal. The first was a regulatory component, one that would remove certain FDA requirements for imported formula, mostly dealing with labeling. And I will explain more about that one in a moment. The second removed the restrictions that limited the availability of formula brands available to WIC recipients. And, finally, the bill temporarily suspended import tariffs on formula, increasing supply and decreasing consumer costs.

These three components would provide immediate relief to anxiety-ridden parents who were forced to scour supermarkets, make dangerous homemade formula, or, even worse, hospitalize their infants.

I need not explain why a problem of this magnitude is so deserving of our immediate attention.

After addressing the Senate on each of these topics, I engaged in a lengthy and substantive debate with my friend and distinguished colleague from Pennsylvania, Senator BOB CASEY. I listened intently to his objections regarding his concern for the safety and quality of formula crossing over our borders.

And while I appreciate my colleague's concerns, I still believe that this body can and must fix this problem, a problem that is, no doubt, the sole creation of the Federal Government. It is no accident, for example, that we are the only country facing this particular shortage.

No other country is dealing with this because our country and our own Federal laws in this area and the way they have been enforced and implemented have caused it.

So I am determined to provide relief to families dealing with this inexplicably, unnecessarily prolonged crisis.

For far too long, the people enduring this mess have gone without answers. And so in the spirit of comity and compromise, I have modified my request by removing the FDA regulatory component of the bill. I hoped that this would resolve any reservations that my colleague from Pennsylvania may have had regarding the safety of these products.

And I should add here, those concerns are not concerns that I agree with for the simple reason that the countries that, under my bill, we would have allowed to produce formula, to have that formula introduced into the United States, they are countries that we have already identified as having safe regulatory systems.

They are countries with regulatory systems that are strong enough, in fact, that we allow imports of their pharmaceutical products produced in those countries because their standards are as rigorous as those imposed by our own FDA.

Nonetheless, I offered to remove that and made that a request for passage by unanimous consent. Still, my friend objected to expanding the range of products available to WIC recipients. Remember, this component to the bill would have simply allowed American moms and dads who were beneficiaries under the WIC program to use their vouchers to purchase any form of formula they would prefer, or more commonly these days, any form of formula that is available. Whereas, right now, the WIC vouchers require you to stick to the brand specified on the vouchers in question.

My distinguished colleague objected also to that version of what I offered, despite the retention of FDA regulatory authority and the fact that wealthy Americans are personally importing these products already from Europe.

And while I find this unfortunate, I was still determined to make an argument and to, ultimately, formulate an agreement consistent with that argument to fix a problem that our Federal Government has made and has created and in which it has made no discernible progress in its attempts to resolve it.

So, again, in the spirit of comity and compromise and a willingness to do absolutely whatever it takes to provide whatever relief we can provide to hungry babies throughout America suffering from malnutrition, I modified my request yet again. This time to include only the provisions related to the tariff suspension.

And while I am hopeful that we will be able to come together to address the concerns of my colleagues and pass the first two provisions of my bill as well, I hope to report today to families across the country that my legislation has achieved unanimous support and passed the Senate.

This would be an incredible win for families and for hungry babies nationwide. My bill would make meaningful headway in dealing with an issue that some doctors call "the worst crisis of their careers."

By suspending the import tariff on formula imports or providing cheaper access to formulas to individual consumers and to retailers alike, no longer will access to these safe formulas be limited to a select group of wealthy individuals because, again, wealthy individuals have been able to pay the higher prices and suffer the inconvenience of going online or otherwise making a special order on their own of these European formulas.

Again, these European formulas from the countries that we are talking about—countries covered by the bill—are countries that produce safe, effective formula and that are regulated by regulatory bodies that are every bit as stringent as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. And on that basis, in fact, we import pharmaceutical products from those same countries.

Currently, formula is produced in those countries, countries like France

and Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Babies there do just fine on those formulas. In fact, they do great. And some American families have been able to benefit from those formulas as they have ordered it online, but they pay higher prices, and they have to deal with restrictions that make it more difficult to access those things. So this bill will open that up.

This is relief that really is long overdue, particularly for Utahns who have the largest families, the most children per capita, and, also, the highest birth-rate.

Not coincidentally, those are some of the same reasons why the baby formula shortage is felt so acutely in Utah, but it is being felt acutely throughout the United States.

I hope that we can come together and pass even more meaningful reforms that will help solve the problem completely and once and for all.

I am grateful, however, that the countless hours of behind-the-scenes work and successful negotiations with my colleagues on a bipartisan basis have resulted in a win for the most vulnerable Americans. Passing my FORMULA Act is a victory for families and for babies in Utah and everywhere else in the United States.

And so, to that end, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 372, S. 4261.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 4261) to suspend duties and other restrictions on the importation of infant formula to address the shortage of infant formula in the United States, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. LEE. I ask unanimous consent that the Lee 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. 5130), 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 "Fixing Our Regulatory Mayhem Upsetting Little Americans Act" or the "FORMULA Act".

SEC. 2. DUTY-FREE TREATMENT OF IMPORTS OF INFANT FORMULA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—During the 90-day period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, infant formula shall enter the United States free of duty and free of quantitative limitation.

(b) INFANT FORMULA DEFINED.—In this section, the term "infant formula" has the meaning given that term in section 201(z) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321(z)).

The bill (S. 4261), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

JOSEPH WOODROW HATCHETT
UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE
AND FEDERAL BUILDING—Continued

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

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

The Senator from Colorado.

S. 2938

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. Mr. President, next month marks an anniversary that nobody wants to celebrate: 10 years since 70 people were shot and 12 killed while sitting in a movie theater in Aurora, CO.

At the time, it was the largest mass shooting in American history. Since then, several shootings, like the Pulse Nightclub and the Las Vegas shooting, have surpassed that grim milestone.

Most Senators have a similar story of some sort of a mass shooting in their State that killed people who were trying to enjoy a movie or worship God or shop for groceries like the 10 people murdered last year in a supermarket in Boulder or sitting in a fourth grade classroom. Mass shootings have become uniquely American, a problem that has grown consistently in the 23 years since the Columbine school attack shook us all. There were seven school shootings that year. Last year, there were 42.

The Aurora shooting happened when I was Governor, and it has stayed with me, as those things do. Friday, July 20, 2012, almost 10 years ago—it was a local premiere of “The Dark Knight,” and it was a packed house. Every seat had a person in it, a person with loved ones and ones who loved them who expected them to come home that night.

I arrived the next morning at the scene and walked into the command center that the FBI and the police were using. Aurora Police Chief Dan Oates showed us a video of the crime scene that had been taken by police shortly before, using a hand-held camera. The images haunt me still: popcorn everywhere mixed with bullet casings, random clothing, and blood. There was blood all over the seats and the floor.

Aurora Mayor Steve Hogan and I spent the afternoon visiting hospitals all over town. We visited almost every surviving wounded victim. In the days and weeks and months after that day, we had the gun debate in Colorado. Of course, we had the debate. What kind of a State would we be if we were too scared to go to a movie? The debate was difficult and hard to find agreement.

Guns are a tradition in the West, and Colorado is no exception. We became the first purple State to successfully pass gun safety laws. Coloradans, including the vast majority of gun owners, wanted to get something done. That led to universal background checks and a ban on high-capacity magazines; not everything—not everything—that we wanted but steps that made a real difference. We didn’t want dangerous people to have guns.

One night while I was Governor, I came home tired and cranky in the midst of working on these gun laws. I made the mistake of complaining to my 11-year-old son Teddy. Teddy couldn’t find it in him to understand why it was so hard. He asked me: Dad, why don’t you just make the decision? It is easy. Get the facts, make a decision, check, next.

I started to explain, and he repeated: Get the facts, make a decision, check, next.

He said: Every day I go into school, and I have to learn something completely new that I didn’t know existed the day before. If I don’t get it completely right, the next day is misery because everything is based on the day before.

Teddy was right about one thing: The facts do matter. Part of our problem has been not having good data. Many assume passing new laws like background checks or magazine limits wouldn’t work because crooks don’t buy guns from legal dealers. The facts proved that they very much do. In 2013, 2,782 convicted felons tried to buy a gun in Colorado and were stopped. Even last year, nearly a decade later, 3,539 convicted felons were blocked from buying a gun. Laws can work to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people.

The solutions are often straightforward. Nonpartisan facts and basic data help us cut through the noise of division. Guns can be a divisive issue, to say the least, but we don’t accept that there is no room to get things done.

The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act proves that. For the first time in three decades, Congress is poised to pass gun legislation that will make Americans safer, and it is based on the very simple principle: We all agree we should keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people.

The bill will give States the resources to implement red flag laws to prevent people who are a danger to themselves or others from buying or having guns. It will finally close the boyfriend loophole that allows convicted domestic abusers to get firearms. It will strengthen background checks for 18- to 21-year-olds and take mental health into account and will crack down on strawman purchases that allow criminals to dodge background checks altogether.

Now, these are commonsense proposals, and I am heartened to see that they are going to pass with bipartisan

support, but we all know there is more that needs to be done to reduce gun violence in America.

The question is, What is next?

For that, we can turn to Teddy’s wisdom as an 11-year-old. What we need is a common set of facts that both sides can accept and can act on.

In 1970, Congress created the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to respond to the public outcry over fatal vehicle crashes. By 2019, there were 60 percent fewer vehicle fatalities than in 1970. So in that period from 1970 to 2019, fatalities were reduced 60 percent, even though there are now 2½ times as many cars on the roads.

The Agency’s strength is in its strictly nonpartisan research. It conducts a survey and a detailed analysis of vehicle fatalities across the country and forms an objective basis to evaluate vehicle safety standards and procedures—things like whether airbags and seatbelts can make a difference or what size and shape child restraints should take, essentially every safety feature in our cars today.

Why can’t we have something similar for guns? We now have more gun deaths in America than we have deaths from car crashes, and yet for years, we could barely discuss possible solutions.

So while this Chamber is working together, let’s make sure we measure the success of these bills that we are about to pass. Let’s think about establishing a research body that will create an objective baseline of hard facts, not conventional wisdom. The path forward is as simple as my 11-year-old son knew it to be a decade ago: Get the facts, make a decision, check, next.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as Senators are preparing to return home to their home States over the Fourth of July, it is frustrating to me that we once again kick the can down the road on providing needed funding to address the ongoing COVID pandemic.

For months, the administration, scientists, and healthcare experts have raised the alarm that we don’t have the resources we need to stay ahead of this virus. And actually with COVID, if you are not staying ahead of it, you are slipping behind, to the detriment of all Americans.

To keep our recovery afloat, we have robbed Peter to pay Paul. Earlier this month, the administration announced that it is repurposing \$10 billion that we appropriated in Congress—\$10 billion—to purchase additional vaccines and additional therapeutics because our stocks are running low.

The action by the administration, unfortunately, was necessary. Projections indicate that as many as 100 million Americans—100 million Americans—nearly 1 in 3, will be infected or reinfected with COVID this fall and winter as our immunity from this disease wanes.