

forward to end the debate on the bipartisan chips and innovation bill. Unfortunately, a number of severe thunderstorms on the East Coast have disrupted the travel plans of a significant number of Senators. To give Members a chance to get back into town safely, I am going to delay tonight's vote on the bipartisan chips and innovation bill until tomorrow morning. I remain hopeful that we can remain on track to finish this legislation ASAP.

#### PACT ACT OF 2022

Madam President, in the meantime, I will now file cloture on another bill that will dramatically improve the lives of millions of American veterans, the PACT Act, which, when signed into law, will be one of the biggest expansions of veterans' healthcare benefits in decades.

As my colleagues already know, because of a technical error, the House of Representatives was unable to take up our version of this bill that we passed in the spring. The House has now fixed their error and has returned the PACT Act back to the Senate. By filing cloture, we should be able to pass this bipartisan piece of legislation before the week is done.

Our nation's veterans have waited long enough to get the benefits they need to treat complications from toxic exposure in the line of duty. So we have every reason in the world to get this bill done with the same bipartisan support as the first time around.

Again, I want to thank particularly Senators TESTER and MORAN, who led the way to pass this bill earlier this year, thank all of our colleagues and our veterans and veterans service organizations for helping push this bill through Congress.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 4346

Madam President, now I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the cloture vote with respect to H.R. 4346 occur at a time to be determined by the majority leader, following consultation with the Republican leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. For the information of the Senate, we expect the cloture vote with respect to the CHIPS and science legislation to occur around 11 o'clock a.m. tomorrow, Tuesday, July 26.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Now, Madam President, I have a cloture motion to the motion to concur at the desk.

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

The senior assistant legislative 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 mo-

tion to concur in the House amendment to S. 3373, a bill to improve the Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant and the Children of Fallen Heroes Grant.

Charles E. Schumer, Jon Tester, Ben Ray Lujan, Richard Blumenthal, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Tina Smith, John W. Hickenlooper, Mazie Hirono, Mark R. Warner, Debbie Stabenow, Jack Reed, Tammy Baldwin, Jacky Rosen, Raphael G. Warnock, Tammy Duckworth, Christopher Murphy, Mark Kelly.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call for the cloture motion filed today, July 25, be waived.

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

#### HOMICIDE VICTIMS' FAMILIES' RIGHTS ACT OF 2021

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3359 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3359) to provide for a system for reviewing the case files of cold case murders at the instance of certain persons, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent 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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 3359) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

#### PACT ACT OF 2022—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

#### CHIPS ACT OF 2022

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I was in the Chamber and heard Senator SANDERS' speech. I appreciate his passion about globalization and what he and I—it brought back—and I spoke to him after he spoke. It brought back to me the memories of standing shoulder to shoulder—he in his second term, I in my first—against the North American Free Trade Agreement and then a few years later standing shoulder to shoulder with him in opposition to PNTR, Permanent Normal Trade Relations, with China.

And we know what that meant, especially in my State and especially in the industrial Midwest, especially in places that the Presiding Officer represents and places like East St. Louis and downstate Illinois and so much of the industrial plants that were steel, especially east of Chicago and Indiana and Illinois.

We are on the verge of a big win for Ohio, a win that will create jobs, will bring down prices, and bring home supply chains.

As a kid growing up in Ohio, I walked the halls of Johnny Appleseed Junior High School with the sons and daughters of union workers: electricians, electrical workers at Westinghouse, sons and daughters of autoworkers from General Motors and machinists from Ohio Brass and carpenters and pipefitters and electricians who built our city and service these large companies.

But by the time I graduated from Mansfield Senior High School, those plants were shutting down one after another. Why? Because corporate America wanted cheap labor.

First, they went to anti-union States in the South. A plant might shut down in Mansfield or Barberton, OH, and move to Alabama; a plant might shut down in Shelby, OH, or Springfield, OH, and move to Georgia; a plant might shut down in Toledo or in Wadsworth, OH, and move to North Carolina or Arkansas or Virginia. They went to anti-union States. They went to anti-union States with low wages. But do you know what? Then those CEOs, all paying themselves a really, really good income, raising—you could see already, then, the average pay for a worker. In those days, when I was, I guess, in junior high school, a CEO made about—the plant manager made about 25 times what the worker made or even a smaller proportion of that. Now it is hundreds of times what workers make because 25 times what workers made just wasn't enough for a lot of these companies.

So then they shut down a lot of these factories in the anti-union, right-to-work South, and they moved to Mexico. They wanted NAFTA to pass—the North American Free Trade Agreement—so they could do it. They wanted PNTR—the Permanent Normal Trade Relations with China—to pass so they could go to China; always in the name of efficiency, always in the name of efficiency, always in the name of efficiency. As you know, Madam President, "efficiency" is business school speak for "pay our workers less."

Those CEOs—and some of you remember these nicknames. These CEOs earned the names of "Chainsaw Al" and "John the Cutter" and "Larry the Knife" and "Neutron Jack." To the CEOs themselves, they may kind of like those names, but they were not bestowed on them out of respect; they were given those nicknames because they were willing always to cut the pay of workers in Mansfield, OH, and hurt those families and partially destroy those communities. They were always willing to do that. So their companies made more money, and they got bigger paychecks, and all the executives in the corporate suites all did much, much better. The workers didn't, the communities didn't, but who really cared.

They lobbied Congress to make outsourcing easier, and politicians were all too happy to do their bidding; first, with NAFTA, as I said, then Permanent Normal Trade Relations with China. That transformation hollowed out manufacturing in Ohio and parts of the Presiding Officer's State in Illinois throughout the Midwest, and then—here is where it hits us most poignantly in our face today—ended up with too long, too fragile supply chains that stretched all over the world.

So, first, my friends' families, my friends' parents lost their jobs and ended up in jobs making a third less or half less, and the communities were never really—many of these communities never really recovered, these proud communities. But now, today, everyone is paying for those decisions to go overseas and to shut plants in Ohio and in the United States to go overseas. Now everyone is paying with higher prices.

Why? A big reason for the inflation we see today is decades of offshoring our supply chains. We need to bring that production back home.

That is what this bill is all about—investing more in America, making more in America, particularly the most critical inputs that cause the most problems right now, like semiconductors.

Think about that. Think about these American companies. They were founded in America. The investment, the research was done in America, but think about this technology that started in this country, was probably patented in this country, was developed by Americans or immigrants to our country, and got tax incentives from our country, but then these companies began to move offshore.

Today, semiconductors that were invented in the United States, 90 percent of them are made overseas. We only make 10 percent of semiconductors in this country. We make 10 percent of semiconductors, but we make zero percent of the highest end semiconductors because these companies all thought, Well, there are more profits overseas. That is the hand we are dealt now.

Over the past year, Ohio manufacturers have faced severe shortages and long waits for semiconductors. Ford and GM plants in Ohio are forced to implement short-term plant closures because of chip shortages.

Ohio manufacturers rely on semiconductors. They all suffer when there is a shortage. Let me just list some of these companies. I believe I have been in every one of these factories or these companies: Ford in Lima, OH, a city just like Mansfield where I grew up; Ford in Avon Lake, I used to live 3 miles from that plant; Jeep in Toledo, my wife and I drive a Jeep made in America with union workers; Navistar in Springfield; Whirlpool in Clyde, I have been to that plant maybe five or six times, fought alongside them on enforcing trade rules; Kenworth in Chillicothe; GE in Evandale, near Cin-

cinnati; STERIS in Mentor; Nucor in Marion; ArcelorMittal in Cleveland; Cleveland-Cliffs in Toledo, in Coshocton, right across the river from Steubenville in Weirton, WV. Half the workers there are Ohioans.

These businesses and their workers need chips. The United States invented the semiconductor. We started the industry. Ninety percent are made overseas. We allowed that to happen because of the corruption of this place, where people were happy to vote to give tax breaks to companies to move overseas for whatever reason. Too many Presidents, from Trump all the way back to Clinton, went along with those corporate interests as those companies betrayed us and moved overseas.

What does that mean today? It means higher prices; it means backorders; and it means we are all paying too much for too many products.

The CHIPS Act is about reshoring those supply chains, investing in Ohio manufacturing, and bringing down prices for every American.

It is not enough to invent technology here. We have seen it over and over. Take a look at the label on a phone, on any smartphone. It probably says "Developed in California," "Made in China." "Developed in California," that means the invention was in California, the research was in California with U.S. investment of tax dollars, one way or the other, but then they made it in China. Why? Because they wanted cheap labor, and they can make more money by making it in China. Now they raise the price because the supply chain is spread all over the world.

So we get tech jobs in Silicon Valley but not the production jobs we need throughout the country because, frankly, people on the coast don't think a lot about what is happening in the internal part of the country—and that is not good enough.

Our national security and our economic competitiveness depend on having a vibrant domestic manufacturing sector, not just a tech development sector on the coasts. When you outsource production, you outsource innovation along with it.

We keep doing this. It is not like these companies where the production is happening are stupid people. These are smart people too, and they are going to take our inventions and our innovation—because we know so much of innovation takes place on the shop floor—they are going to pass us with their brainpower and their innovation and their inventions.

Ohioans know that ideas and improvements come directly from the shop floor. That is why we were so good at it in the forties and fifties and sixties and seventies and eighties. It is why this bill invests in our great asset, the greatest asset, American innovation, American workers.

It allows Intel to move forward in Columbus—10,000 good-paying jobs up and

down the supply chain. This historic investment is going to impact far more than just Central Ohio. When you establish an industry like this, it has ripple effects around the State, around the region, and around the country. It is not just these jobs, it is the way they attract other suppliers. They incubate talent that in turn attracts other business, the way it used to be in this country. It is just the beginning. We will see a lot more companies create a lot more jobs. Ohioans know how to make things. We know what that means.

For our country, it is a decision to invest in American ingenuity, American workers, American communities. It is a big win for Ohio. It is a big win for the American industrial Midwest. It is a big win for our country. It is what I have been fighting for my whole career: good-paying jobs. When you love this country, you fight for the people who make it work.

More manufacturing innovation, more technology stamped "Made in Ohio"—it is how we bury the term "Rust Belt."

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### THE ECONOMY

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, Americans across the country are canceling their vacations, watching their 401(k)s shrink, and they are worrying about their week's grocery bill. Families are making very tight budgets, and they are having to stick to them because the prices have risen to historic highs. The price of ground beef is 36 percent higher than it was this time last year, as much as a steak dinner this time last year if you are buying hamburger meat. Businesses are raising prices on consumers in order to make ends meet. And if the costs of goods and basic services weren't high enough, skyrocketing gas prices have driven everything even higher.

This is our economic reality of now and for the future for the next few years. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle and all of us need to start discussing ways to help our country and ease the economic strain, but we are not doing that this week or next week before we go on recess. For some reason, we are hatching plans to spend more taxpayer money to pay for progressive policies and programs that might be needed, but the American taxpayers need help, and they need it now. Americans are suffering, and the Federal Government is not doing its part to help in the economic plan.

Let's take a step back and talk about how our economy got to this point with record inflation. We all remember 2020. The economy was humming along, and then a global pandemic hit all around

our country and the world. It halted everything. It halted production. The economy was shut down. It came to a screeching halt—something none of us has ever seen.

But by the end of the year, the economy was showing signs of life. We were starting to open back up, and we were starting to move around, get people back to work, and get things hopefully back to normal in the very near future. As we rounded the corner, our Democratic colleagues, who took control of the House and the Senate and the White House, inherited an economy that wasn't great but was getting better. But instead of allowing free-market forces to return us to prosperity coming out of this pandemic, President Biden, in his rookie year of office, was like a kid in a candy store. I can remember it like it was yesterday.

He decided to go on a spending spree. He unveiled a plan to pump trillions of dollars into our Nation's economy in an unprecedented amount of government spending. Mere months after Congress passed the first COVID relief bill in December of 2020, our colleagues on the left began crafting a new bill for more Federal spending in early 2021—again, just a few months after the first COVID relief bill was passed in December.

The left disguised a litany of progressive policies and programs as pandemic relief—I will never forget it—pandemic relief. But in reality, as of now—\$2 trillion—less than 9 percent of the bill was targeted to COVID-related spending—9 percent.

Larry Summers, who was Presidents Clinton and Obama's top economic adviser, said the Democrats' spending package "set off inflationary pressures of a kind we have not seen in a generation." He was exactly right. But Democrats pressed forward anyway and passed their so-called COVID relief bill, amounting to almost \$2 trillion in spending—2 trillion. The result: Inflation began to soar. This injection of Federal stimulus into an economy that was already recovering was an economic train wreck. A lot of people saw it coming, even the expert economists.

Production came to a screeching halt during the pandemic, causing supply to plummet. Democrats' efforts to pump excessive stimulus into the economy caused demand to skyrocket. In short, supply went down and demand went up. The result of low supply and high demand has been the worst inflation our Nation has seen in decades.

Despite President Biden's Treasury Secretary claiming that the inflationary spike was just going to be temporary, prices continued to climb. And despite the very real, very clear evidence that their spending was the cause, Democrats moved into the fall of last year engaged in a discussion of even spending more.

In November 2021, Majority Leader SCHUMER said: "Want to fight inflation? Then support Build Back Better"—referring to the name of their next massive spending package.

Our Democratic colleagues dismissed rising prices, saying they were a result of corporate greed. President Biden claimed: "Inflation has everything to do with the supply chain." But he made no mention—no mention—of all the millions and billions of dollars that he had just spent.

Our colleagues on the left pointed fingers at everything but themselves and their reckless spending agenda, and now Democrats are trying to tell Americans that they will lower consumer prices by increasing government spending—again. And, again, that makes no sense. It makes zero sense, no economic sense.

Yes, as our country is under increasing economic stress, Democrats are reviving talks to spend more, which will further increase inflation. So let's be clear on this: This did not work last year, and it is not going to work now. Spending more taxpayer dollars on progressive policies is not the answer. It wasn't the answer last year, it is not going to be the answer this year, and it is going to cause inflation to even go up higher.

Senate Democrats' attempt to rebrand what was once known as Build Back Better is a last-minute attempt to deliver on failed far-left policy priorities before folks head on home and back to the ballot box in November.

This is President Biden's last-ditch effort to enact his administration's social priorities. Make no mistake, Democrats are trying to put lipstick on a pig and have working-class Americans pay the price. It should be telling to every American that the administration does not think of how they can help but how they can hide, how they can try to hide behind a blame game and convince you, the American taxpayer, the American people, that your economic pain is caused by something other than their actions.

The buck stops here in this room, not anywhere else. How they want to remake the country into a socialist state and have the taxpayer foot the bill is the direction we are headed.

Well, I can't say this more plainly: Raising taxes to enact a liberal wish list on policies in the face of a potential recession is a very, very, very bad idea. Americans and businesses would be forced to bear the brunt of billions of dollars in new spending, which would be paid for by raising taxes. For 6 months in a row, Main Street businesses have faced double-digit inflation, causing optimism to plummet to the lowest point in nearly 50 years.

President Biden recently boasted that his spending was "changing people's lives." The President left out that it was changing people's lives not for the better but for the worse.

My colleagues, Americans are struggling. All over this country, they are struggling. Families are using their savings to pay for basic bills. Would-be retirees are delaying their retirement after they have watched tens of thousands of dollars vanish from their retirement accounts.

Farmers, family farms, are shouldering the burden of rising input costs like seed, fuel, and fertilizer. We have got worse things coming if this continues to happen to our farmers.

Small businesses are losing profits and making unwanted layoffs to stay afloat. We are going to lose a lot of small businesses, and small businesses made the United States of America.

If Democrats pass their reconciliation bill, nearly 62 percent of Alabama's small businesses and 1 million employees will be at risk of tax increases that they cannot handle in this inflation. I have been hearing from small businesses and small business owners across my State every day. They are worried about their livelihoods and are threatened by the economic policies of this administration.

Let's find ways to bring inflation down, not find ways to take inflation up. And that is exactly what we are doing in this Chamber.

One business owner in Sterrett, AL, told me that his earnings had gone down this year 50 to 60 percent.

It is truly astounding how the Democrats can look their constituents in the face and say that now is a good time to inject more spending into the economy just so they can pay for more progressive policies. It is absolutely absurd. They are expecting blank checks to be paid and be paid for by hard-working American taxpayers. They can't afford it. We are out of money. We are broke. And we need to quit spending the taxpayers' money.

President Biden and the Democrats are putting their agenda above the best interests of the American people, and it is cruel.

The solution to this mess, this huge mess that we have gotten into, is to cut taxes, cut regulations, and cut spending—just the opposite of what the Democrats are trying to do. Just the opposite. To change American lives for the better, Democrats should abandon any—any—discussion of another tax or another spending spree. Americans have had enough. They have had enough of this. They want the American people in this country to survive, and they want us to quit spending money. It is time for us to listen to the people who own this country and not the Federal Government, which thinks they own this country.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

LIEUTENANT RIDGE ALKONIS

Mr. LEE. Madam President, just last night, U.S. Navy LT Ridge Alkonis was forced to leave his wife and three children and report to a Japanese prison. An American serviceman had to explain to his children that although he had done absolutely nothing wrong, he had to leave them, and he had to leave them to be incarcerated in a prison on foreign soil for 3 whole years—a prison inside a land that he had been asked to serve in by his country, to protect that country. And now he is in prison in

that country, having been ordered to prison by that country even though he had done nothing wrong.

While serving his country in Japan, Lieutenant Alkonis, a man who loves the country of Japan, who has spent years there, who had spent years there many years before the U.S. Navy had assigned him to serve in Japan—he served there for 2 years as a missionary. He learned the language. Both as a missionary and as a member of the U.S. Navy, he has continued his acts of community service in every community where he has lived and served. He is a model, an upstanding citizen in every respect. He is a decent, kind, intelligent, hard-working officer, and a loving husband and father.

It is while serving in Japan that he was involved in a car accident. It was a car accident that resulted from a tragic, unforeseeable, unforeseen medical emergency.

Now, that accident left two people dead. I speak sincerely when I say that my deepest sympathies go out to the victims of that accident, along with their families and their friends and their loved ones. I can't begin to imagine their sense of loss and confusion and hurt and even anger associated with the horrific accident.

It is important to note, however, that this was, in fact, an accident. In no way, shape, or form do the facts of the case suggest otherwise—quite to the contrary. All of the facts in evidence indicate that this is what happened, and yet the Japanese court continues to insist that Lieutenant Alkonis somehow had some culpability, that he did something wrong. They continue to float the false narrative that he fell asleep while driving as a result of his own carelessness or negligence. That simply is not true.

The accident occurred at 1 p.m. a little over a year ago—at 1 p.m. in broad daylight. Lieutenant Alkonis was well rested and had no reason to be tired or drowsy. In fact, he was having a conversation with his daughter when he passed out mid-sentence. He remained unconscious despite his daughter's repeated attempts to yell and scream and kick the seat. Alkonis did not wake in response to his daughter's cries, nor did he wake even upon impact when the accident occurred. No matter how deep a sleeper, anyone would be awakened by either of these events, but he didn't. He remained unconscious even after the collision.

It is important to note that eyewitnesses reported that Lieutenant Alkonis's color had drained from his face, which is precisely consistent with what would happen with someone who has suffered from a syncopal episode like this one. He was too weak to even open his car door after he finally regained consciousness in the wake of the accident.

It is simply disingenuous that Judge Kumiko Maesawa would offer such a simplistic view by stating that Alkonis should have pulled over if he felt

drowsy. It flies in the face of the evidence and the experiences of everyone at the scene, including—and especially—his family, who were present at the time. The comments are even more egregious considering the fact that the Japanese authorities didn't even so much as bother to conduct a thorough investigation into the medical event following the crash. They appear to have been willfully inclined to disregard pretty clear indications of a medical emergency. Apparently, it wasn't what they wanted to find. So they didn't find it. So they didn't conduct the thorough investigation that needed to be conducted. He was even denied a medical evaluation before the Japanese police subjected him to 26 days of rigorous detention and custodial interrogation before he was so much as charged.

This is not how friends treat each other. This is not how one friendly nation treats another nation when one nation sends its best and its brightest and its bravest, including people like LT Ridge Alkonis, to go and fight to protect that country. That is not how we treat each other as nations.

The U.S. Navy did conduct an investigation, the same kind of investigation that should have been conducted by the Japanese authorities but the Japanese authorities didn't conduct. And in that investigation the U.S. Navy, very thorough in its approach, concluded that Lieutenant Alkonis, in fact, lost consciousness, and the loss of consciousness was attributed in that thorough investigation to something known as acute mountain sickness. There were no drugs in his system. There was no alcohol in his system. Nothing like that had anything to do with this crash. And yet, even after the Navy concluded that he was not at fault, Lieutenant Alkonis did everything within his power to remedy the situation, because being the brave, patriotic, decent, kind, loving American that he is, he was heartbroken over the fact that an accident had occurred that he was involved in and that two people had lost their lives.

You know, there is a tradition in the Japanese culture, a tradition that is in so many respects admirable. It is known as the "gomenasai" tradition. Under the "gomenasai" tradition, when something awful happens, there is an attempt made by those involved in an incident or resulting in loss. You go to the family, the loved ones of the deceased, and offer something to offset it. We may think of it in rough terms here as a crude approximation of restitution. It is not exactly that, but it is a significant, profound gesture of remorse of the fact that the incident happened at all. In fact, he paid over \$1.5 million to the victims' families, more than what would ordinarily be considered customary within the "gomenasai" tradition.

He has expressed deep and sincere remorse, and despite all of this, despite all of his efforts through the

"gomenasai" process, despite all of these mitigating circumstances, despite the deep remorse, and despite the noble, unblemished record of distinguished service to the U.S. Navy and to Japan, despite using every resource at his disposal to make things right, he is still in prison.

I find it nothing short of inexcusable that an American who experienced a medical emergency should be treated so poorly by an allied nation that he is protecting. Japanese nationals convicted of the same crime are routinely granted leniency. In fact, 95 percent of similarly charged defendants get a suspended sentence; meaning, even if they are charged, even if they are convicted, 95 percent of them don't actually have to do prison time because their sentence has been suspended.

Clearly, the Japanese judicial system is trying to make an example of Lieutenant Alkonis, perhaps stemming from a history of disputes over our status of forces agreement. But I will note here that those disputes have absolutely nothing to do with Lieutenant Alkonis. No, he is being targeted here because he is an American and because he was in the unfortunate position of having suffered a medical emergency that resulted in tragedy.

This is no way for a friendly nation to treat a friendly nation. These conversations are difficult because we have a great relationship with Japan. We have been allies for a long time. We have had a good relationship under our status of forces agreement. So these conversations are difficult, but not in spite of the fact that our Nations are friendly but because they are friendly, we need to have difficult conversations, just as sometimes it is only a friend who can approach a friend and speak the truth.

How, I would ask, can we possibly ensure justice for the thousands of American men and women who serve our country abroad when they face prejudice because of their status as Americans and as American servicemen and servicewomen?

Lieutenant Alkonis represents our best—our very best, the best of the best. If our servicemembers can't get fair treatment from the country they have been tasked to defend—especially those who, like Lieutenant Alkonis, represent the very best ideals of the U.S. Navy—then maybe it is time to revisit key portions of our status of forces agreement with Japan. If their due process protections aren't sufficient to protect someone like Lieutenant Alkonis, to make sure that he has an adequate opportunity to build his case, to prepare to meet his accusers, to gather exculpatory evidence, then something is wrong with the status of forces agreement.

I am still not entirely convinced—not at all—that there weren't violations of the status of forces agreement. In fact, it appears that there were here. But to the extent the status of forces agreement is insufficient to deal with those,

then we need to reopen that because this is too high a price to pay.

We are willing to make sure that there are consequences to people who disobey a law, who engage in bad behavior on foreign land. But to have a situation like this one, where someone through no fault of his own, just as a result of a tragic medical emergency of which he had no prior warning whatsoever, to have him sent to prison for 3 years bereft of his friends, his family, his career that he so deeply loved, his children, to whom he is everything—this is wrong. We deserve better than this from an allied nation, especially a nation with which we have such a generally good relationship, as we do with Japan. And so I sincerely hope and pray that Ambassador Emanuel, Secretary Blinken, and the Department of Defense will immediately take every step possible to negotiate with their Japanese counterparts and bring Ridge home.

I call upon the President of the United States to intervene directly with his counterpart and bring Ridge home. I call upon all sympathetic ears within the sound of my voice to plead not only with decision makers in Japan but with almighty God to bring Ridge home. We need that to happen. It is not just about Ridge Alkonis and his family. It is about the security and confidence needed by every service family in the American Armed Forces. Deployed whether in Japan or anywhere else, they need to know that we have their backs. They need to know that while they are in the service of the United States of America, we will watch out for them; that when a foreign country makes a tragic mistake, as they have done here, we will continue to advocate for them until we bring them home.

I call on my colleagues to join me in the effort to bring Ridge home.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### UKRAINE

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I come to the Senate floor once again this evening to talk about the brutal and illegal, unjustified invasion of Ukraine by Russia and what we can do—what more we can do here in this Chamber and this Congress to be able to help the people of Ukraine.

This is the updated map that tells the story of what is going on on the battlefield. You can see this light-blue color here indicates that the Ukraine forces are on the move and making progress. But in the meantime, Russia, back in 2014, took Crimea, part of the Donbas. Now they have taken more of that territory.

So the fighting we will talk about tonight that is most fierce is taking

place here in the east and now increasingly here in the south. This is where the battlefield is, but that is not the only place where things are happening.

Remember, this is a country—Ukraine—that just wants to live in peace with its neighbors. It has no interest in war. And this is Russia's assault on that country, starting in 2014 and now in this larger assault. But it is not just here on this battlefield. Russia is actually sending missiles into the heart of Ukraine.

You see this town here, Vinnytsia. This is where, recently, a missile exploded, killing civilians, children. Last week, I talked about Liza, the young girl who was killed in that bombing. Everyplace in Ukraine is subject to this kind of bombing. We have heard from Kharkiv. We have seen it in Kyiv and other towns all throughout Ukraine.

Another part of this brutal assault on Ukraine has to do with blocking the ports. Here is Odesa. This is the largest port. But there are several ports along here that have been blocked by the Russians. The Russian Navy is not allowing exports from Ukraine to be sent to the rest of the world. This, of course, is hurting Ukraine's economy, which is the whole idea. But it is also preventing the export of millions of tons of grain, which is creating a global food crisis, threatening the lives of millions of people around the world, particularly in Africa where they rely heavily on Ukrainian grains coming out of these ports.

After weeks of discussions—really, the last couple of months—finally, on Friday, Ukraine, Russia, Turkey, and the United Nations agreed to facilitate the export of Ukrainian grain. According to the U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres, who has been working on this for months, this provides a “glimmer of hope” in alleviating the global food security crisis.

One part of the agreement that was reached in Turkey was that Russia would not attack facilities in these Ukrainian cities. Specifically, the agreement prohibited “any attacks against merchant vessels and other civilian vessels and port facilities engaged in” the export of Ukrainian agricultural products. So there is an agreement to allow the grain to go but also a specific agreement not to attack merchant vessels, civilian vessels, port facilities that were involved in export.

The ink was quite literally barely dry when Russia violated the terms of that agreement. Within 24 hours, the Russians fired four missiles at Ukraine's largest port, Odesa, which, again, is critical to exporting the grain from Ukraine. By striking the port infrastructure, they violated the agreement right after signing it.

Here is the port. You can see the damage that was caused. There were actually four missiles fired from warships into Odesa. Two of them were intercepted by anti-aircraft weaponry—thank God—but two destroyed

part of Odesa's port infrastructure, therefore violating the agreement.

I guess we all learned that Russia can't be trusted, so we shouldn't be surprised. But violating its international obligations less than 24 hours after agreeing to them may be a new low.

Oksana Markarova, Ukraine's Ambassador to the United States, put it well this weekend when she said:

We will do everything in order to perform and fulfill our part of the deal. When Russia is violating it, they are clearly showing who they are and that they need to be stopped.

She went further and said:

Everything Russia is doing in Ukraine is a violation of pretty much every international law. Attacking a sovereign country . . . is a war crime.

She is right. Ambassador Bridget Brink, our Ambassador to Ukraine, also criticized Russia for this brazen attack. She said:

The Kremlin continues to weaponize food. Russia must be held accountable.

I talked before on this floor about this specific Russian attack on the grain bins in Odesa and other port cities, where they literally have targeted food that is supposed to go to starving people.

President Putin apparently believes that this global food and energy security crisis—the two crises—are to his advantage. He is seeking to pressure energy dependent Europeans and pressure countries which rely on Ukrainian grain to join him in forcing Ukraine to surrender.

Fortunately, it is not working. Countries in the region, in fact, are rallying around Ukraine more than ever. Why? Because they know they could be next.

Vladimir Putin has said his ambition is to fully restore the borders of the old Soviet Union or the Russian Empire. And in recent years, he has learned the lesson that the West may not stand in his way.

A few global leaders, as an example, stood up to President Putin when he invaded Georgia, a country that continues to be, in part, occupied by the Russians. That was 2008. And not enough stood up to him in Ukraine in 2014 when, as we saw in this previous map, Russia brazenly invaded and took over Crimea and parts of the Donbas.

When it comes to 2022, it has been different so far. And we should commend all those countries that have stood up and stood with us. We now have a chance to actually stop this assault, to stop what Russia has been doing, and to teach them a different lesson, to protect Ukraine and other countries in the region that Russia may have set its sights on.

The free world has rallied. Freedom-loving countries—almost 50—from around the world have come to Ukraine's aid. Specifically, over 42 of them have provided military assistance; others have provided humanitarian aid by way of food and nutrition and economic health.

The weapons that have been provided have made it easier for Ukraine to defend itself, to take out some of the

Russian artillery that was sitting back and firing on the Ukrainian positions with immunity because it was so far back the Ukrainian artillery couldn't reach it. The new weapons have been helpful in dealing with that.

The U.S. has provided Ukraine with a specific weapon to help in that regard called the High Mobility Artillery Systems, or HIMARS, and they have been critical to the Ukrainian military as they hold off the Russian invaders and allow the Ukrainian military to be on the offensive in some of these areas.

A step in the right direction came last week. I commend the administration for sending Ukraine four more HIMARS systems. They now have 12 in operation and four more units on the way to the front lines. That is good, but they need more. What the analysts suggest is they need 40 or 50 just to be able to push the Russians back.

Officials in Ukraine have made the need for these systems clear, by the way, for a long time—since early March. I have echoed that need since that time. Why? Because I was hearing it directly from the Ukrainians, from their military experts.

So it took us a while, but it turns out the Ukrainians were right; these systems are effective. GEN Mark Milley, who is the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has said that the HIMARS strikes are “steadily degrading the Russian ability to supply their troops, command and control their forces, and carry out their illegal war of aggression.” That is from General Milley.

The Ukrainians are an effective force when they are armed with the right weapons. Officials have said that with the help of HIMARS, Ukraine has taken out Russian command posts, ammunition depots, air defense sites, radar and communications nodes, and long-range artillery positions. These are all “high value” targets, and destroying them has saved Ukrainian lives and saved some of the shelling of Ukrainian cities.

There also seems to be some progress in sending Ukraine other tools to help them fight, particularly in the air. The U.S. Air Force top general hinted last week that Ukraine may get fourth-generation fighter jets from the United States or from other allies, and he left open the option to train Ukrainians on how to use them. These fourth-generation fighter jets could include U.S. F-16s, the Gripen from Sweden, the Rafale from France, and the Eurofighter from the European Union.

Some of Russia's most devastating strikes, of course, have come from the air, either from aircraft or from missile strikes. Earlier in the war, you remember, there were many who talked about creating a no-fly zone in Ukraine. That never happened.

NATO was not willing to move forward with the no-fly zone. But by providing Ukraine with advanced aircraft, we could empower Ukrainian fighter pilots to impose their own no-fly zone over critical areas of the country.

Two weeks ago, I sent a letter to Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin and to General Milley urging them to expedite more military assistance to Ukraine, including “fourth-generation fighter aircraft and necessary flight training.” The reason we included that in our bipartisan letter is because we had heard from Ukrainian fighter pilots who came over here several weeks ago and met with us.

I am the cofounder and cochair of the Ukrainian Caucus. We put together a meeting. It was very powerful to hear their words. But they said they know how to fly these planes. And with regard to the details, they could learn them quickly. And it would make a huge difference.

It has made a huge difference with what they have, which are aging Soviet aircrafts, MiGs, and not enough of them. But we have got to move quickly if we do this because we have to keep Russia from gaining more ground. And we have to save more lives.

Training Ukrainian pilots on modern Western aircraft will take some time; and, as we have seen, even a day delay can mean the difference between life and death. So let's get started.

There is also the battle being waged on energy, and that is, in a sense, just as important as what is happening on the battle front. Why? Because Russia gets its funds from energy proceeds. That is what is funding the war machine. And they continue to leverage Europe's dependency on their oil and gas as a political and economic weapon.

This is plainly seen as President Putin continues to play games with Europe's gas supply. Europe depends on Russia for, now, about 20 percent of its natural gas imports. That is down from around 40 percent last year—so a significant reduction, reducing by half their dependency.

But with regard to that 20 percent, President Putin is tightening his grip and retaining his leverage on Europe by decreasing supplies, by driving prices upward, and by lining his war chest even further. By the way, his attempts to divide NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance, have not worked. Over Russian objections, NATO will soon be expanding rather than dividing or contracting.

Instead of splintering last Tuesday, I was proud to vote in committee to advance the ratification of Finland and Sweden's NATO applications.

As Republican Leader MITCH MCCONNELL said recently “adding these nations into the fold will only strengthen us.” I agree.

Finland, by the way, has the European Union's longest border with Russia. It has a very capable air force and other parts of its military. In response to Russia's aggression, they have increased their defense spending by 70 percent, and Sweden is targeting military spending at the NATO commitment level of 2 percent GDP as soon as possible and already possesses an innovative and effective defense industry.

In fact, the Swedish weapons that are in the market today are some of the most advanced in the world. Adding Finland and Sweden to NATO will strengthen the alliance's security in the north, particularly the Arctic region and the Baltic Sea.

I just learned a little while ago that we are going to vote on their applications to join NATO here on the Senate floor this week or next week. That is great news. I hope my colleagues will join me in a prompt and strong showing of support, and I think they will.

This is going to be one of the things that brings this Congress together, because this is in all of our interest—in NATO's interest, in America's interest, and certainly in Ukraine's interest.

It is a clear demonstration to Ukraine that NATO's open-door policy is alive and well and that the alliance will continue to welcome applicant countries that meet the criteria for membership. I believe NATO should begin that process with Ukraine, allowing them to enter the next step of NATO membership by earning what is called the Membership Action Plan, the MAP process. This plan provides a formal roadmap for NATO membership that is long overdue, in my view.

We need to show Ukraine the world stands with them. And NATO is a defensive alliance. NATO is about protecting countries in the region.

Last week, Congress had the privilege to hear from someone who knows how critically important it is that we stand with Ukraine right now. We heard from Olena Zelenska, President Zelenskyy's wife. She gave a very powerful speech to the Congress about the horrors of the war and about the desperate need for more advanced weapons from the United States and allies.

She painted a vivid picture of life in Ukraine right now. Her moving words about her own family and about the effects this traumatizing war has etched in the memory of Ukraine's children I thought was particularly poignant.

She said Ukraine needs weapons to wage a war, “not [to be used to wage a war] on somebody else's land, but to protect one's home and the right to wake up alive in that home.”

“To protect one's home and the right to wake up alive in that home.” That is what this is about.

In a TV interview during her visit here, Ms. Zelenska talked about the trauma children have faced and said that she hopes their childhood can be given back to them at some point. She said:

Before the war, my [nine-year-old] son used to go to folk dance ensemble. He played piano. He learned English. He of course attended sports club.

Now, she said:

The only thing he wants to do is martial arts and [learn] how to use a rifle.

It is a 9-year-old boy.

At the Polish border and at the Moldovan border, I have had the opportunity to visit with refugees as they have come across from Ukraine. It is



all women and children, grandmothers, mothers, aunts—the men staying behind to fight.

This war is taking away these kids' childhoods and replacing them with war-torn memories. Those children who fled Ukraine in the early stages of the war are now growing up, making friends, and going to schools in foreign countries. Seven or 8 million Ukrainians left Ukraine. They are far from home, and they want to go home.

And those who stayed in Ukraine are in constant fear that the next Russian missile may hit their home, their town, their city. Many will never have the opportunity to get their childhood back.

First lady Olena Zelenska has even started her own initiative to address the serious mental health impacts of Russia's war against her country. Although underreported in most media outlets, Russia has forcibly deported millions of Ukrainians to Russia or Russian-controlled territory in the Donbas, including hundreds of thousands of children.

Once outside of Ukrainian territory, these children are taught to be Russian, not Ukrainian, in a deliberate attempt by Russia to wipe out the national and cultural identity of Ukrainians.

Combined with Russia's consistent denial of the existence of Ukraine's nationhood and identity, these actions must be acknowledged for what they are: genocide. And it is important that the United States and the rest of the world recognize these acts as such.

That is one reason why the world must call out Russia for what is happening in Ukraine. Last Thursday, five Senate colleagues and I joined Senator RISC, the top Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, on which I served, in introducing a bipartisan resolution condemning Russia's actions in Ukraine as genocide.

I know "genocide" is a really powerful word. It has a long history, and it has serious implications. Many people are understandably hesitant to use it. But the facts in Russia's atrocities are clearly genocide.

Article 2 of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide defines genocide as any of several acts "committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group."

Two of the acts in the definition are "killing members of the group" and "causing bodily or mental harm to members of the group." Only one of those criteria is necessary for genocide. Russia all too clearly fits all of these parts of the definition of genocide.

Its forces have killed and wounded innocent civilians all across Ukraine. Last week, I spoke about little Liza who was killed in Vinnytsia. This is the aftermath of the bombing in Vinnytsia. I have also heard about the "target practice" that Russian soldiers have bragged about that they did in

Severodonetsk, shooting at innocent civilians like it was some kind of a game.

And we cannot forget the horrors of Bucha, where Russian forces massacred over 1,300 innocent civilians, some with hands tied behind their backs. This included 31 children. And the mental toll of this war has, of course, also been extreme.

Our Senate resolution also includes a clause about my resolution from 2018 commemorating the 85th anniversary of Holodomor, the Soviet Union's famine genocide against Ukraine from 1932 to 1933. Unfortunately, Russia has a history of committing genocide against the people of Ukraine, and that continues to this day.

The world needs to let the Russian commanders and the Kremlin officials know we see the war crimes being committed, and they are being recorded. Perhaps that would have some sort of effect on what actions they take.

The trickle-down effects of this war are heart-wrenching. We have all seen the images, the videos on social media of innocent civilians caught in the crossfire. But not only that, it is what this war has created: the countless children who are now orphans.

I have talked about this in the past, but according to Under Secretary of State Victoria Nuland:

Russia makes orphans, and then steals those orphans, up to 1,000 Ukrainian kids being stolen and taken and given to Russian families to potentially never be found by their families.

That is very concerning. Let me say that again. She is saying that Russia takes these orphans and steals them and gives them to Russian families to potentially never be found by their Ukrainian families.

So there are all these young boys and young girls who watch their fathers and their brothers and their uncles and, sometimes, their moms go to war. Many of them never come back home.

There are young boys like Ms. Zelenska's, a 9-year-old, who now wants to be a soldier. And there are the children who will never be with their family in Ukraine again.

That is where we are today. A merciless authoritarian who needs to flex his power against a nation that just wants to live peacefully—nothing more than to live in peace with their neighbors.

This is a struggle between freedom and democracy and self-determination on the one hand and aggression and conquest and tyranny, authoritarianism on the other.

Our choice is clear. At this critical juncture, let's continue to work with our allies to provide Ukraine with what they need to protect that homeland, to defend that democracy. We need to help Ukraine, and we need to do more, and we need to do it now. We need to move quickly. We need to live up to these important words from Ukraine's First Lady last week. When she was here in the Congress talking to us, she said "While Russia kills, America saves."

Let's continue to save. Let's continue to save lives every day, and let's save our democratic ally Ukraine—a proud nation that is simply fighting for its survival.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). The majority leader.

## MORNING BUSINESS

### ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY  
COOPERATION AGENCY,  
Washington, DC.

Hon. ROBERT MENENDEZ,  
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,  
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 22-49, concerning the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Australia for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$235 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

JEDIDIAH P. ROYAL  
(For James A. Hursch, Director).

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 22-49

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Australia.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:  
Major Defense Equipment \* \$157 million.  
Other \$78 million.  
Total \$235 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):  
Eighty (80) Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missiles—Extended Range (JASSM-ER) (AGM-158B with telemetry kits and/or AGM-158B-2 configurations).

Non-MDE: Also included are missile containers and support equipment; JASSM training missiles; weapon system support; spare parts, consumables, accessories, and