

Route 141—5 miles, right through the middle of our major city. It is going to be done in, I think, less than 2 years. Imagine that: 4 lanes, 6 lanes, all the exits, done in 2 years.

They are talking about not being able to get a big project done. We are doing big projects in a little State all the time.

The last thing I would say is that our colleagues JOE MANCHIN and LISA MURKOWSKI cohosted bipartisan meetings a month or 2 ago—6 or 7 or 8 of them—in the afternoon to talk about a path forward on reconciliation and infrastructure legislation, but also to talk about permitting and permitting reform.

Every time we do a major infrastructure bill, we do permitting reform, and we do streamlining. We have done it. We did it last year, and we are going to do it again with the WRDA legislation too.

Later, sometime this fall, in September, October, we will do permitting reform debate and legislation again. We can't do it in the context of reconciliation because the Parliamentarian won't let us do that. It has to be as stand-alone legislation.

We will have the opportunity to do that. People can offer their ideas. We will debate them. We will vote them up, and we will vote them down.

I just wanted to add that for the record.

With that, I guess we ought to ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all time is expired.

The clerk will read the title of the joint resolution for the third time.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The joint resolution having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?

The yeas and nays have been previously requested.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN).

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 283 Leg.]

YEAS—50

Barrasso	Cruz	Kennedy
Blackburn	Daines	Lankford
Blunt	Ernst	Lee
Boozman	Fischer	Lummis
Braun	Graham	Manchin
Burr	Grassley	Marshall
Capito	Hagerty	McConnell
Cassidy	Hawley	Moran
Collins	Hoeben	Murkowski
Cotton	Hyde-Smith	Paul
Cramer	Inhofe	Portman
Crapo	Johnson	Risch

Romney	Scott (SC)	Toomey
Rounds	Shelby	Tuberville
Rubio	Sullivan	Wicker
Sasse	Thune	Young
Scott (FL)	Tillis	

NAYS—47

Baldwin	Heinrich	Rosen
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Sanders
Blumenthal	Hirono	Schatz
Booker	Kaine	Schumer
Brown	Kelly	Shaheen
Cantwell	King	Sinema
Cardin	Klobuchar	Smith
Carper	Lujan	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Warner
Duckworth	Murray	Warnock
Durbin	Ossoff	Warren
Feinstein	Padilla	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Peters	Wyden
Hassan	Reed	

NOT VOTING—3

Cornyn	Leahy	Merkley
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The joint resolution (S.J. Res. 55) was passed, as follows:

S. J. RES. 55

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress disapproves the rule submitted by the Council on Environmental Quality relating to "National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Regulations Revisions" (87 Fed. Reg. 23453 (April 20, 2022)), and such rule shall have no force or effect.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VAN HOLLEN). Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Roopali H. Desai, of Arizona, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Desai nomination?

Mr. SCHATZ. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN). The result was announced—yeas 67, nays 29, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 284 Ex.]

YEAS—67

Baldwin	Brown	Carper
Bennet	Cantwell	Casey
Blumenthal	Capito	Cassidy
Booker	Cardin	Collins

Coons	Klobuchar	Sanders
Cortez Masto	Lujan	Schatz
Cramer	Lummis	Schumer
Crapo	Manchin	Shaheen
Duckworth	Markey	Sinema
Durbin	Marshall	Smith
Ernst	McConnell	Stabenow
Feinstein	Menendez	Tester
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Tillis
Graham	Murphy	Toomey
Grassley	Murray	Van Hollen
Hassan	Ossoff	Warner
Heinrich	Padilla	Warnock
Hickenlooper	Peters	Warren
Hirono	Portman	Whitehouse
Kaine	Reed	Wyden
Kelly	Risch	Young
Kennedy	Romney	
King	Rosen	

NAYS—29

Barrasso	Hawley	Rubio
Blackburn	Hoeben	Sasse
Blunt	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Boozman	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Braun	Johnson	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cruz	Lee	Thune
Daines	Moran	Tuberville
Fischer	Paul	Wicker
Hagerty	Rounds	

NOT VOTING—4

Burr	Leahy
Cornyn	Merkley

The nomination was confirmed. The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, for the information of Senators, the Senate will next convene on Saturday at noon. The next vote will be at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday on a motion to discharge a nomination.

We expect to vote on the motion to proceed to the reconciliation legislation on Saturday afternoon.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

MOTION TO DISCHARGE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, pursuant to S. Res. 27, the Committee on Environment and Public Works being tied on the question of reporting, I move to discharge the Committee on Environment and Public Works from further consideration of the nomination of David Uhlmann, to be Assistant Administrator for Enforcement and Compliance Assurance, Environmental Protection Agency.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the provisions of S. Res. 27, there will now be up to 4 hours of debate on the motion, equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with no

motions, points of order, or amendments in order.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote on the motion to discharge the Uhlmann nomination occur at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, August 6.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

S.J. RES. 55

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I just want to thank my colleagues for the vote that just occurred here on the floor of the Senate. It was a bipartisan victory, 50 to 47, on the Congressional Review Act that I had put forward with all of my Republican colleagues to rescind the onerous, job-killing Biden administration rule that came out in April that would make it harder to build things in America. It would make it harder to employ people, especially our incredibly productive American workers.

So that just passed. That was a repudiation of the Biden White House in a bipartisan vote on the Senate floor.

Here is the thing. Even my Senate colleagues—because I was working the vote pretty hard down there in the well—even my Senate colleagues who voted against it, several of them came up to me and said: You know what. You are right. We have really got to fix NEPA. It is killing the country. It is killing our ability to do anything. So that was an important vote, but a good conversation is starting here.

We have the best workers in the world. If we let them build, we can do great things again in terms of building this country and not let redtape, far-left environmental groups, regulations, and endless litigation stop us.

So I also want to thank all the groups that supported this resolution.

I had a bigger sign down on the Senate floor when I was giving an earlier speech, but the groups that were supporting this legislation are very diverse. There are over 50 groups of men and women who produce things, grow things, and build the country. I want to thank them for the great support of this Congressional Review Act that just passed.

I really want to give a shout-out to the building trades, the laborers, the operating engineers, and the trade unions that are doing such a great job building this country who want to work. They know these regulations are killing workers' ability to get good jobs.

We have a long way to go to fix the broken system of permitting in America and the endless litigation by environmental lawyers who want to stop everything, but today was an important start and an important vote on the floor of the Senate, showing America that a bipartisan group of Senators will stand up to these far-left groups

and say: Hey, you know what? We gotta build. We need to build. And that was the message here.

We are going to try to move this in the House and get it on President Biden's desk. He says he is blue-collar Joe. Well, let's see if he is blue-collar Joe when this comes to his desk and he would veto or not veto something that all the building trades in America support.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

COLOMBIA

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I rise today to discuss the acute dangers to American national security that have formed and are deepening across the Western Hemisphere.

These dangers have coalesced because of the comprehensive and catastrophic policies pursued by President Biden and his administration. Already, nine governments across South America, Central America, and the Caribbean are controlled by socialists. All of these governments, with only one exception, are also overtly and ideologically anti-American. They are committed to undermining American security and to endangering Americans.

This weekend, on Sunday, Colombia will become the 10th government in the region controlled by the hard left when the country's new President, Gustavo Petro, will take office. I am deeply worried that once he does, Colombia will also join the ranks of anti-American forces in Latin America.

Petro is the first openly Marxist to be elected President of Colombia. He was brought to power by Colombia's leftist fringe, including guerrillas and terrorist groups.

Colombians had rightly and for decades resisted Marxism and rejected the hard left. The first reason for this is that Marxists have long been violent guerrillas who have wreaked havoc in Colombia. The second reason is that Colombians are well aware of what has happened in other Latin American countries that have elected or have seen leftists seize power. Cuba and Venezuela, for example, have endured socialist and communist regimes that have tortured, killed, silenced dissidents, have denied freedom and driven countless people into exile, forcing many to flee or be murdered.

People are rightly asking: What happened? The answer, unfortunately, is as straightforward as it is worrying. Joe Biden and his policies happened. The Biden administration seems ideologically committed to systematically alienating our allies and empowering our enemies. In this goal—and perhaps only this goal—they have been wildly successful.

Since Joe Biden has been in office, we have seen forces for evil in Iran, in Afghanistan, in Russia, in China, in Venezuela, and in Cuba gain strength while our friends and allies in Israel, Ukraine, Hong Kong, and Taiwan have felt abandoned and alone. And this pat-

tern has been repeated in the Western Hemisphere.

In Mexico, we are seeing deepening civil unrest and the erosion of civil society. The breakdown of the rule of law across our southern border—a crisis directly caused by Joe Biden's policies and political decisions—poses acute national security challenges and dangers to the United States.

Mexican President Lopez Obrador seems intent on making these trends worse, and when I questioned a Biden State Department official on Obrador's targeting of American companies and the nationalization of energy in Mexico, he wouldn't even admit that those were bad things. And if he is not willing to admit to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the leftist President of Mexico's targeting of American companies and the nationalization of energy in Mexico are bad things, then we can be certain the Biden administration is also unwilling to convey that to Mexico.

When we saw Cubans flood the streets last summer, yelling "Libertad" and waving American flags, the Biden administration couldn't even bring itself to come out with a strong support and statement for the people marching in the streets of Cuba. In statement after statement, as protesters swept into the streets, administration officials failed to unequivocally support the protesters and critically failed to condemn the brutal thugs that the communist regime was sending to assault, brutalize, and silence the speech of Cuban citizens seeking freedom.

When it came to Colombia, the Biden administration went out of its way to undermine and to alienate the pro-American government of Colombian President Duque. President Biden denied Duque a call for the first 5 months of the administration, providing morale and momentum for Duque's domestic enemies. Biden did finally call Duque at the end of June that year—after his helicopter came under attack by anti-government terrorists.

And what was the reward Biden had for the terrorists?

Well, just a few months later, Biden removed the FARC, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, from the list of terrorist organizations. He also dismantled terrorism sanctions on individual FARC members. FARC is an organization of Marxist-Leninist narcoterrorists who, for decades, have killed, kidnapped, and extorted Colombians and seized and murdered American citizens.

FARC continues to pose an acute threat to Colombian security and to American interests in the region, but the Biden administration has treated it like other terrorist groups, with weakness and appeasement and worse. Just last week, House Republicans announced that the administration may well be distributing assistance to former FARC terrorists. So the inevitable occurred; the Colombian far left

gained momentum, and Petro was elected.

This is what happens—this is what always happens—when America abandons our friends. Colombia has been an indispensable ally to the United States. Our relationship stems back 200 years. We have deep economic and security ties. We provide Colombia with almost a half a billion dollars in aid every single year—a testament to the breadth and depth of our ties.

Petro says he will work hand in hand with Nicolas Maduro's oppressive regime in Venezuela. He is looking to work with the National Liberation Army, a terrorist organization in Colombia. He will embrace the FARC. He says he wants to stop oil production and to roll back cooperation with the United States on stopping drug trafficking. In fact, Petro seems deeply committed to weakening and undermining the United States-Colombian relationship.

I hope and pray that he doesn't weaken it. I hope and pray that his rhetoric and language in the past is not carried forward in policies when his administration begins. I want to see Colombia remain a close U.S. ally. I don't want to see Colombia follow the example of other socialist governments in the Western Hemisphere. We know where that leads.

Both Cuba and Venezuela used to be prosperous countries until leftists came to power. Venezuela, in 1950, was the fourth wealthiest country on the face of the Earth. The United States was first. Switzerland was second. New Zealand was third. Venezuela was No. 4. Then socialist dictators came to power, including Hugo Chavez and Nicolas Maduro, and they destroyed much of that mighty nation. The quality of life deteriorated so much in Venezuela that people are literally eating out of trash cans in alleyways as they flee the country by the millions.

In Cuba, when Fulgencio Batista staged a coup and became a brutal dictator in the 1950s, my father was a teenager in Cuba, and he fought against Batista's cruel regime. My father was imprisoned and tortured. He was beaten in a Cuban jail. He had his nose broken. He had his teeth broken out of his mouth. My father fled Cuba in 1957. He came to America—he came to Texas—seeking freedom. He had \$100 in his underwear. He didn't speak English. He washed dishes while making 50 cents an hour.

In 1959, Castro and the communist revolution succeeded there. Shortly thereafter, my father returned to Cuba only to be horrified at the evil and oppression that Castro had brought—at the murder, at the torture, at the suffering, at the poverty. My aunt, my Tia Sonia—his kid sister—was still in Cuba. My Tia Sonia fought in the counterrevolution against Castro, and my Tia Sonia was imprisoned and tortured by Castro's thugs.

This is the future that may well be awaiting Latin American countries

that embrace socialism. This is the pattern we have seen over and over and over again. Petro was elected, but if he follows the pattern of other leftist dictators, it may prove to be the last free election in Colombia.

So how has the Biden administration handled Petro's rise to power, which their own weakness and their own appeasement facilitated? With yet more weakness and appeasement.

Both Joe Biden and Secretary of State Blinken effusively congratulated Petro: How great, an anti-American Marxist and a close ally of ours in Latin America.

They said they looked forward to working with him on shared interests. I hope those shared interests don't include undermining the United States of America.

There is value in clarity. There is value in telling the truth about what socialism does to a country from the bully pulpit of the United States.

If the Biden administration won't support American allies, if they will actively undermine American allies like they did the pro-American government of President Duque's, and if the President won't check our adversaries and stand up to our enemies, then Congress must.

Last month, I introduced legislation that would reimpose terrorism sanctions on the FARC and on FARC-related terrorists. Those sanctions should never have been removed, and doing so highlighted the lack of respect and support for our friends and allies in Colombia. Mere months before the Colombian election, Joe Biden's delisting of the FARC contributed to the election of an anti-American Marxist. My bill is a commonsense first step to restoring America's policy toward Colombia. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted on my bill, and, sadly, every Senate Democrat voted no.

However, much of the damage has already been done, and this weekend, Petro will take office. American policy, I believe, must be recalibrated to acknowledge that reality. Again, I hope and pray that Petro does not lead his country into the camp of anti-American socialists who have become ascendant during the Biden administration, but we would be reckless and maybe even delusional not to take him at his word because that is what he has said he intends to do.

So I will shortly be introducing another bill—the CAUTION Act—the Colombia Assistance Used Transparently by Institutionalizing Oversight Now.

This bill will comprehensively condition all of our aid to Colombia based on what path Petro will choose. If he cuts back defense coordination with the United States, my bill will ensure that he gets no more money for security coordination. If he cuts back cooperation on drug trafficking, my bill will ensure he gets no more money for counter-narcotics. If he refuses to help dampen illegal immigration, my bill will en-

sure he gets no more money for development assistance.

I am not interested in giving anti-American leftists American tax dollars as aid. I believe our foreign policy should use carrots and sticks in order to incentivize other countries to behave in a way that benefits American interests and strengthens our friendships and in a way that discourages countries from seeking to harm and undermine the United States of America.

This is an inflection point, and America must be clear: We don't support Marxists in Latin America. Any leftist leader who chooses socialism will be held accountable by the United States and, at a minimum, will no longer be funded by the U.S. taxpayers to undermine our great Nation.

I hope this bill earns bipartisan support because standing up for the interests of America and standing up to save the United States-Colombian friendship and alliance is a national interest that transcends partisan lines. If President Biden won't stand up for America, then I hope and pray that the Congress will.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

INFLATION REDUCTION ACT OF 2022

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, as cochair of the Senate Recycling Caucus, I am all for efforts to reuse material in a manner that gives it a second life unless we are talking about recycling bad ideas. The reckless tax-and-spend plan the White House and the majority are threatening to bring forth once again is a terrible idea to revive.

The Senate wasted almost all of 2021 chasing this apparition. Now here we are, over a year later, and our economic situation is much more dire. Inflation is over 9 percent—the highest in more than four decades. Many economists predict we are headed for a recession by next year. There are indications that we are already there. Americans feel this daily as prices at the pump and the grocery store eat away at disposable income and as home price affordability becomes a thing of the past.

According to a CNN poll last month, 64 percent of Americans feel the economy is currently in a recession, but President Biden and allies of his think that raising taxes, eliminating jobs, and spending billions more will somehow help. Their wild claim that all of this spending will reduce inflation was almost immediately debunked by the Penn Wharton Budget Model, which found that, if enacted, the bill will have no measurable impact on inflation.

Americans are struggling with high prices at every turn. Yet the majority wants them to pay billions for Green New Deal programs that could exacerbate energy security and food security concerns while using fuzzy math to sell it as fighting inflation.

Their message to Americans is, We are sorry you are paying so much for

every necessity you need, but we really have to plant some trees in Brooklyn.

That is right. Tree equity—a Green New Deal program resurrected for this bill—is the majority’s secret weapon to fight inflation.

As the lead Republican on the Senate Ag Committee, I can attest to how our section of the bill is chock-full of misplaced priorities like this, but worse than that, when it comes to agriculture policy, this bill sets a particularly bad precedent for farm bill programs. If they go down this road, we very well might be looking at reconciliation as the only way future farm bills are actually written. Whoever holds the pen wields the fate for vital programs that farmers, ranchers, and foresters depend on, not to mention nutrition programs that help low-income families and policies that allow conservationists to achieve our shared goals.

We haven’t had a single hearing on this bill. Yet its agriculture title spends \$40 billion—a huge amount allocated, with no input from stakeholders, Republicans, and, quite frankly, most Democrats.

The majority is extending conservation programs until 2031—well beyond the life of the next two farm bills, deliberately taking away Congress’s ability to change the focus of these programs or how they operate.

The bill unilaterally creates a multi-billion-dollar slush fund for farm bill priorities shared by the President and his allies. That is a terrible idea for any legislation, much less a bill that is historically written in a very bipartisan fashion.

The current farm bill passed this Chamber with a record number of “yes” votes on the floor. My goal, as current ranking member, is to top that. To say this reckless bill jeopardizes the chances of that would be an understatement. We have never written a farm bill in this manner. It is antithetical to how the Senate—and the Ag Committee, in particular—should operate. We have a storied history of working together on the Agriculture Committee. Our stakeholders value the fact that we approach the issues they face together rather than as Republicans and Democrats. They appreciate that their voices are heard.

Unfortunately, with this decision, the majority has changed that dynamic. In their zeal to pass their reckless tax-and-spend agenda, they have undermined one of the last successful bipartisan processes remaining in the Senate.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, while we haven’t yet seen any bill text for this reckless tax-and-spend bill, we have seen or we have heard an outline of it, some chatter about it, snippets about it—about what is in this reconciliation bill. So, Madam President, let me state the obvious: Billions

of dollars in reckless spending and major tax hikes—they will not solve the economic crisis our Nation finds itself in. Yet, somehow, this concoction of truly terrible economic policies is exactly what my colleagues on the Democratic side are pursuing.

Let’s start with the tax hikes. In the Schumer-Manchin bill, they have proposed imposing a corporate minimum tax on those big, bad corporations. Well, 50 percent of this change would be borne by the manufacturing industry—an industry that both Republicans and Democrats have been trying to grow. We have been trying to grow that, not harm it with bad policies.

Manufacturers are already struggling to navigate inflation and supply chain crisis, but this bill will punish manufacturers, and there is no question that this would hurt the middle class by raising prices and lowering wages. At a time of historic inflation, manufacturers will have no choice but to pass on higher prices to the consumer.

That is just one part of it. Democrats say the rich should pay their fair share. OK, let’s look at that.

A nonpartisan analysis of the entire bill found that it would cause a \$16.7 billion tax increase for American taxpayers earning less than \$200,000 in 2023. President Biden is going back on his promise and raising taxes for those earning less than \$400,000, and he is doing this during a recession.

What about the claim that this proposal will address inflation? The Penn-Wharton Budget Model, which Senator MANCHIN frequently cites for producing the best economic analysis, found the proposal produces no meaningful reduction in the deficit or with inflation. Any suggestion otherwise is insulting to the intelligence of the American people.

OK, now let’s look at the spending. Why, during a time of significant economic hardship, should the American people be on the hook to fund \$369 billion in incentives to the Green New Deal businesses to promote those energy policies? Can anyone in this Chamber argue with a straight face that subsidizing Tesla purchases will help to ease inflation? I can tell you it certainly will not help working families.

Then there is the \$80 billion for the IRS, which is six times the Agency’s current annual budget. Our folks on the other side of the aisle are once again trying to hire an armada of new IRS agents—87,000, to be exact. This would unleash a wave of new audits. Half of those new audits would hit Americans making \$75,000 or less.

You know, we have been here before. The public does not want this deal. The bottom line: It is clear this economy is not working for the American people.

The Biden administration’s policies have saddled this country with two consecutive months of negative economic growth—which is the definition of a recession—9.1 percent inflation, a negative 3.6 inflation-adjusted decline

in pay for workers, and more Americans than ever before are now holding two full-time jobs.

In the face of all this hardship, we need real solutions, not more of the same backward spending policies.

The cute name that Senators SCHUMER and MANCHIN have come up with for their proposal should not hide these facts. And the facts are massive tax hikes and billions of dollars in reckless government spending. That is the last thing our country needs right now.

So why are we even debating such a terrible bill? A short history lesson may offer some answers. People may recall something called the Cornhusker Kickback—an agreement in 2009 between my predecessor and Senator Harry Reid. In exchange for a special carve-out only for Nebraska to reduce the costs of enacting ObamaCare in our State, my predecessor agreed to vote for ObamaCare. Well, the kickback, once public, it angered and it embarrassed Nebraskans.

History often repeats itself, and from what I am hearing, it seems as though we have a new kickback—the Mountaineer kickback, a deal only for West Virginia; tax hikes and reckless spending that all of us will have to bear in exchange for a pipeline.

I will close by saying again, this is not an inflation reduction bill. Like a bad Hollywood franchise that just won’t die, this is simply the third installment in the “Build Back Broke” trilogy. I hope it does as poorly in the box office as the first two.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I am pleased to join my colleagues in talking about the tax-and-spend bill that is being put forward by our colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

I rise today to discuss the harmful economic consequences that this tax-and-spend bill will have on American families.

Americans are facing soaring inflation that we haven’t seen in generations. In June, the Consumer Price Index was up 9.1 percent from a year earlier. The price increases families are seeing at the grocery store, at the gas pump, and for basic housing needs have far outpaced wage gains and left Americans struggling to make ends meet.

The news last week that our GDP shrank for a second consecutive quarter is only further evidence of this administration’s failed economic policies.

Now, my colleagues across the aisle are doubling down on their failed approach, proposing to increase taxes on nearly every single hard-working American by \$750 billion and spending nearly \$370 billion on a Green New Deal policy.

And, again, don’t just take my word for it. Analysis by the Joint Committee on Taxation shows this bill will increase taxes on millions of Americans across every income bracket, with more than half of the tax increase impacting Americans making less than \$400,000 a year.

Next year alone, the bill will increase taxes by \$16.7 billion on American taxpayers earning less than \$200,000—a clear violation of President Biden's promise to not increase taxes on Americans earning less than \$400,000 a year.

Further, the Joint Tax analysis also shows that the corporate tax increases in this bill would overwhelmingly hurt U.S. manufacturers—U.S. manufacturers—with nearly 50 percent of the corporate tax increase hitting the manufacturing industry.

Manufacturers are already struggling with inflation, supply chain disruptions, and an impending recession. This tax increase would undermine U.S. manufacturing investment in critical research and development and in emerging technologies. And it will also result in higher costs for American families.

Think about that young couple starting out. They have to buy a refrigerator, a couch, furniture—all of these different things. They are going to pay higher prices. I mean, that tax is going to impact them on the manufactured goods they need, regardless of their income or their ability to pay. That is increasing inflation in this country. And inflation is the cruelest tax because it hits low-income people the hardest.

Not only that, the bill, as I say, will actually increase inflation. Analysis by economists at Penn Wharton at the University of Pennsylvania, the Federal Reserve, Moody's Analytics, and the CBO all show that it will not reduce inflation.

When you look at things like the tax on, not just manufacturing but other companies that produce oil and gas, here we are fighting with the highest prices we have seen at the pump in years that people pay every time they pull up to fill up their car. And now with increased taxes, that is going to exacerbate the cost of fuel at the pump. It is going to impact the price of groceries at the grocery store at a time when we are not only fighting inflation but we are fighting economic stagnation—stagflation, something we haven't had in this country since the late seventies and the early eighties.

Economists at the nonprofit Tax Foundation projected this bill will reduce long-term economic output, reduce average wages, and eliminate 30,000 full-time jobs. Let me repeat that. Economists at the nonprofit Tax Foundation have projected that this legislation will reduce long-run economic output, reduce average wages, and eliminate 30,000 full-time jobs in this country.

Rather than tightening our fiscal belt and reducing spending, Democrats are continuing down the same old path that has led to record-high inflation and our economy on the verge of recession.

Increasing taxes and more Federal spending will not reduce inflation. It will not create jobs. It will not lower gas prices, which are still about 60 percent higher than they were just a year ago.

Instead, we should be empowering our domestic energy producers, restoring our energy independence, reducing our reliance on foreign oil imports, and creating more jobs here at home—not eliminating 30,000 jobs, creating more jobs. Less spending, less taxation, less regulation gets this economy growing. This bill does just the opposite.

Democrats are proposing new energy taxes and Green New Deal-style subsidies that will only worsen our current energy crisis and weaken our Nation's economic and our energy security. And energy security is national security.

As part of the \$370 billion in spending on Green New Deal subsidies, this bill includes: \$51 billion to extend and modify the production tax credit to subsidize the already profitable wind, solar, and geothermal industries; \$27 billion to establish a greenhouse gas reduction fund to deploy low-carbon technologies in disadvantaged communities; \$3 billion for a neighborhood equity, safety, and affordable transportation program; \$3 billion for environmental and climate justice block grants.

Further, the bill includes new taxes on natural gas and increased fees and royalty rates for oil and gas produced on Federal lands, which will only result in higher costs for American families at the pump, at the gas station, or their utility bills, and higher prices for goods across the board because all of those goods have to be transported to the grocery store. And now you are going to pay higher transportation costs, and that is going to be reflected in the food prices. So you don't just see it at the pump at the gas station when you are filling your car, you see it at the grocery store.

And with this tax on manufacturers, you are going to see it on all the manufactured goods as well. Low-income people are going to be paying those higher prices, more inflation. That means the tax gets them.

Gas prices are already \$2.25 higher a gallon than when President Biden took office. Diesel prices are even higher—nearly \$2.81 per gallon more than in January of 2021.

In short, look, we need to unleash our domestic energy production, not ask for help from OPEC or Venezuela. We need to unleash our oil and gas resources in States like my home State or the Presiding Officer's home State. We can produce a lot more oil and gas in this country, and we have the best environmental standards.

That is how you bring the price down at the pump: more supply, not higher taxes; more supply, not taxes that will drive prices up and reduce supply when we still have increased demand. That is why we have the inflation in the first place.

The Biden administration policies are creating the inflation and now the stagflation, and this legislation will make it worse. It is going down the same path.

We need to unleash our domestic energy production. We need to get our debt and deficit under control. We need to work on behalf of farmers, ranchers, the ag supply chain to continue to produce the highest quality and the lowest cost food supply in the world. We need to unleash our energy resources.

Those are the things that will increase supply, reduce inflation, and get our economy going so we don't have a recession or stagnation. Those are the things that benefit all American consumers, all American workers, regardless of their income level. This bill does none of those things. This bill makes the problem worse, and it should be rejected.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). The Senator from Ohio.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 6929

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, the men and women at the company Delphi Technologies helped make General Motors the world's largest automaker. Yet those workers lost the retirement they earned through no fault of their own when their company went bankrupt during the great recession.

That was a time—some of us were here then; Senator CRAPO and I were both here then—when Washington bailed out Wall Street, the people who caused the crisis, but left too many Americans like the Delphi retirees—again, who did nothing wrong—on their own.

Now, after years of effort by workers and retirees in Ohio and in other States, it is past time for the U.S. Senate to do its job to restore full retirement benefits for the thousands of Ohioans and tens of thousands nationally of Delphi salaried retirees across the country.

I have been fighting for them and urging the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation to do the right thing since 2009. I thought we had this problem solved years ago when I blocked President Obama's nominee to head the PBGC, Josh Gotbaum. We hoped that would signal to the President that we were serious: PBGC needed to do the right thing for Delphi workers. Unfortunately, Delphi retirees know what happened: He got the job anyway; they didn't get the help they needed.

President Obama didn't do it. The next President, President Trump, promised, went to Youngstown, went to Dayton, promised he would take care of these retirees, and Ohioans voted for him. Ohioans thought President Trump, this time, would be different, that he would do something. Once again, American workers were left on their own.

We kept working. These retirees never gave up. This year, we reintroduced legislation—with Congressman RYAN, a Democrat from Ohio; Congressman KILDEE, a Democrat from Michigan; Congressman TURNER, a Republican from Ohio—to save these pensions. We named the bill in honor of

Susan Muffley, a Delphi retiree so cash-strapped after losing her pension that she avoided seeing her doctor, and she passed away too early as a result.

It is a bipartisan bill. We have Senator PORTMAN and Senator YOUNG on board in the Senate, along with 39 Republicans who joined Congressman TURNER from Dayton voting for this in the House last week. The White House supports it as well. The White House said:

By ensuring that those who put in a career of hard work will receive the pension benefits they earned, this legislation supports a secure retirement for affected workers.

That is what the White House said.

So we have Senator PORTMAN and Senator YOUNG here. We have 39 House Republicans on board. A number of Democrats are on board. The President of the United States is on board.

Promises from President Obama and President Trump—now is the time. These Ohioans and workers across the Midwest earned these pensions. It is past time to restore them. The Senate has that opportunity today.

I hope my colleagues of both parties will join Senator PORTMAN and me.

I yield the floor to my friend from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Ohio, Senator BROWN, and I thank him for working with us on this bipartisan legislation that impacts thousands of retirees in our home State of Ohio.

In the summer of 2009, as the Federal Government took General Motors into bankruptcy, the Obama administration terminated the pension plans covering thousands of Delphi workers. While union employees were protected, these 20,000 salaried retirees, ranging from shop floor supervisors and salespeople to engineers, office managers, were left out. They had spent many years working at Delphi, a major employer and economic engine in Dayton, OH, in Youngstown, OH, and in Sandusky, OH.

These people had followed the rules. They had earned their pensions the American way, through hard work and dedication and contribution. But instead of honoring the promises that had been made to these salaried, middle income employees after 30, 40 years of service, the administration terminated their pensions. People who had worked hard their entire lives and played by the rules saw benefits cut by as much as 70 percent. It is just not fair and no fault of their own, and it has devastated some of them, particularly those who have healthcare issues in their later years, who have not been able to lead the standard of living that they assumed they would, based on the pensions they had.

So it is about fairness, and it is very simple. It ensures that these Delphi retirees receive the retirement benefits they were promised. It would reinstate their pension plan and restore their benefits that were unnecessarily and unfairly reduced.

Some of my colleagues may characterize this as a bailout, but I respect-

fully must correct the record. The Delphi pension was over 80 percent funded when the Federal Government terminated the pensions in 2009 and took over these assets. By the way, it would have been fully funded by the next year based on all the data we now have showing what happened with market conditions. So it was 80 percent funded when the government stepped in and said that it was massively underfunded, and a year later it would have been fully funded.

Despite this, the government, again, treated the pensions as though they were underfunded and slashed the benefits. It is simply about keeping our promises to these workers.

There were 20,000 participants. Some say: Well, that is not a lot of people. Well, to them, it is really important, and it is really important to Ohio. About a quarter of those 20,000 live in our home State of Ohio.

That is why I am proud to stand with them, my colleagues from Ohio, and with others here in this body and over in the House to ensure that fairness is what they get at the end of the day.

This should not be controversial legislation, in my view. I am pleased to say that it has bipartisan support. We just saw 36 Republicans support this on the House side. I encourage my colleagues in the Senate to also support these workers, to make them whole with this legislation so that we can make good on the Federal Government's promise to them.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank my friend Senator PORTMAN for our work together on this.

Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 6929, which was received from the House and is at the desk; 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 with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I appreciate my colleagues' commitment to this issue and to their constituents. As you know, this legislation has been before us for some time now, and there is controversy over it.

This bill would retroactively reinstate pension benefits for a small subset of participants whose pensions have already been transferred to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, or PBGC. That would create a precedent that other plans would follow.

The PBGC exists specifically to cover pension benefits if a plan is terminated. So we should let the system work. This system does not require taxpayer dollars for a bailout or for whatever one would like to call it. That is part of the reason for the objection.

We also have an obligation to be deliberate in how we spend taxpayer money. Before we inject more money into the system, we should explore the implications of this bill, which brings me to my final point. The Finance Committee has not held a hearing—not a single hearing, let alone a markup—on this bill. The Finance Committee exists to examine proposals such as this and to provide all Senators an opportunity to weigh in.

I am willing to work with my chairman, Senator WYDEN, on this and with Senator BROWN and with Senator PORTMAN and other Senators who are interested in the issue so we can see if there is a need and a way that we can address this issue specifically without creating a precedent that would deal with the rest of the entire system that has been put together to address terminated plans.

Because of the need for us to have regular-order deliberation and consideration of this legislation, I must, today, object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank Senator CRAPO. Senator CRAPO and I have worked together on a number of things. He was chair of the Banking Committee the last 4 years. I was his ranking member and worked with him and Greg and his staff on a number of things. I take him at his word.

I know that Senator PORTMAN and Senator CRAPO and I sit also on the Finance Committee. And I am serious about this. I just had a private conversation with Senator CRAPO. He seems serious. I know Senator PORTMAN is.

We have waited too long. There are far too many people. It is not a huge number, as Senator PORTMAN said—not a huge number of people—but it is awfully important to them. I know what it means to a community that is struggling, like the Mahoning Valley and the Miami Valley. Those two communities happen to have hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of these retirees. When their pension shrinks like this, it affects their buying power, it affects their standard of living, and it affects the prosperity of the community.

So we will be back together working on it. I thank Senator CRAPO. I am disappointed, but I thank him.

TRIBUTE TO BILL NELL

Mr. President, I rise today on a cheerful duty, if you will, to recognize Bill Nell, who retired this month after a long career of service, not working in the Senate but sort of working around the Senate.

Bill was deputy director of the Congressional Program at the Aspen Institute, something not particularly known to the public. It is a nonprofit working to bring together diverse perspectives to solve challenges facing the United States and the world.

Bill was the second hire when the Aspen Institute's Congressional Program began. He is one of the Aspen Institute's longest serving employees—35 years at Aspen.

Almost every week, for as long as I can remember, that the Senate and the House were in session, Bill brought together Democrats and Republicans from across the ideological spectrum for breakfast and conversations with leading public policy scholars. Typically on a Thursday morning at 8, you could come, and there would be 10 or 15 or 20 House and Senate Members—fairly evenly divided, depending on the topic, perhaps, between the parties—and a scholar or an activist or someone that Bill generally recruited came in and talked to us.

It helped educate us, for sure. It brought us together in ways that the public doesn't necessarily see but helped us discuss issues with each other. And we learned in so many ways about each other and about these public issues. We learned from experts. We learned from each other.

Bill helped host 636 breakfasts—someone counted them at Aspen—over his career of service. During the hustle and bustle of the workweek, these Aspen breakfasts were a welcome respite where Members of Congress could come to listen and discuss and learn from experts, with little partisanship involved. But Bill had brought in these experts. We learned from them. We learned from one another.

I wish everyone could sit in on those breakfasts and see the thoughtfulness of so many Members of both parties in Congress. It really taught me a lot about partisanship and that most of my colleagues here—I would not say everyone, but most of my colleagues here—are here for the right reasons and want to do a good job, and the thoughtfulness exhibited in those meetings was so important.

Bill was diligent about bringing a balanced presentation of topics and experts at the forefront of their fields. These breakfasts helped us to consider others' perspectives and think about things we might not have thought about otherwise. Sometimes we found common ground, an experience or opinion or a priority that our constituents share. It is how we got things done. Whenever we could find agreement, we worked together to accomplish things for the people whom we served.

It brings to mind one of my colleagues who is about to retire, ROY BLUNT from Missouri. He served with me in the House. I knew him, actually, even before that. He one time said—and he is a conservative Republican, and I am decidedly not. He said:

I have known SHERROD BROWN for 30 years, and we have agreed exactly five times.

Then he laughed, and then he said:

But all five of those are Federal law.

And that is what really matters. Senator CRAPO and I look at the world very differently. Senator PORTMAN and

I look at the world very differently, but Senator PORTMAN and I put together the strongest language ever in Federal law on "Buy American."

We have done a number of issues like that. You may look at things differently, but you find things you can agree on, and you go to town and make it happen.

So back to Bill. Those who work closely with him describe him as one of the hardest working people they know, and you can see that in these records. By virtue of his diligence and his preparation, Bill was able to make his job, which was anything but this, appear effortless.

His longtime colleague, former Ag Secretary, Congressman Dan Glickman, recognized Bill as the "soul of Aspen," as a natural leader and a jack-of-all-trades.

His current boss, until his retirement last week, former Congressman Charlie Dent—Glickman is a Democrat; Dent is a Republican—called Bill an anti-procrastinator when I called him on the phone to talk about him. It is a title rare in a town where "procrastination" seems to be everyone's middle name. Bill's enduring personality is kindness, and he was nothing if not kind. He brought so many together. He made people feel comfortable. He made people heard. I have no idea what his ideology or his party was. We didn't talk about that. He just served and helped us understand. He seemed to have no enemies in doing his job.

In retirement, Bill is spending time back in his beloved Montana, just outside of Yellowstone, one of my favorite places in the country, where I, years ago, took my daughters, as a single parent, on a train to see Yellowstone for a week. He is spending time in his beloved Montana with his beloved wife Cindy, a retired public school teacher and an education activist.

The Aspen breakfast will continue. Bill will be missed by all of us who were blessed by his kindness, his curiosity, and his capability. He made this place work better. He reminded us of the importance of self-government, of democracy. It is up to us to uphold that legacy, to keep working with each other towards a better future for the people whom we serve.

Thank you so much, Bill Nell. We wish you the best in retirement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 4394

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be discharged from further consideration of S. 4394 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; further, 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. Is there objection?

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I am very concerned that this bill would overrule FDA experts and do so without even going through regular order. We should be setting a very high bar for doing anything like this.

I do appreciate my colleague's concern that he is bringing to the floor today for growers in his State. Greening disease is a serious and alarming environmental issue. But skipping regular order here today to override FDA's experts and meddle with its longstanding process for modifying food standards of identity does not get to the root of the problem. So, today, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I regret that that is the case. I understand the argument and if I could explain a little further.

Florida is identified with the citrus industry. People have long understood it. It is a big part of our State. Here is the best way to describe this to people. About 60 years ago, the FDA created a standard for what they consider pasteurized orange juice. For orange juice to be marked with a stamp that says "pasteurized," no less than 10.5 percent of the weight of the juice has to be accounted for by soluble solids, such as naturally occurring sugar. So this is just an arbitrary number.

By the way, the 10.5 percent of the weight has nothing to with the nutrition. It has nothing to with the safety. It has nothing to with the quality.

They had to come up with a number to define the difference between orange juice and something that is not orange juice, and that was the number they came up with.

So for decades, the citrus industry in Florida has been following that specification, and it hasn't been a problem. Then Florida was impacted by this thing called citrus greening, pests that came from Asia, particularly from China. What it has done is it has ravaged the trees. It ravaged the trees to the point where one of the impacts it has is that now the sugar content—you wouldn't notice it if you drink it or if you eat one, but the sugar content of the fruit that is now on the trees, because of the greening, often falls under the 10.5. Again, no one would know. It is not any less safe. It is not any less nutritious. It just falls under that number. Then, obviously, the hurricane we had in 2017 made those problems even worse when they suffered the loss of a bunch of trees.

So now, to meet this arbitrary 10.5 percent threshold, the juice processors in Florida now have to blend in oranges and orange juice that have higher sugar content, and they usually have to import it from a foreign source. Again, there is no health benefit to doing that. In fact, you could probably argue that less sugar is probably better. You wouldn't taste the difference.

You wouldn't know it. If I put two glasses of orange juice in front of you—one with the number they are asking for, which is 10 percent, and the other one with 10.5—you wouldn't notice the difference.

So they have been asking the FDA to change the standard so they don't have to import a bunch of oranges from Brazil and mix it just to be able to hit the sugar content. If they can't do it, the only thing that changes is that the final product can't be marketed as "Florida orange juice." That is really the challenge we are facing.

We would love for this to go through the normal process. The problem is, by the time the FDA makes a decision on it, there may not be any growers left. Let me explain why that is a problem.

These citrus growers sit on valuable land. Every developer in the State is trying to get their hands on that land. They would love to develop it into a mall, into an industrial park. We are facing those problems everywhere. Once you turn farmland into a commercial use, industrial use, a housing development, you never get it back. I have seen farms turned into commercial development; I have never seen a commercial development be turned back into a farm.

Once we lose this land, we lose it forever. We lose it forever. So not only is it important to have it from a food security standpoint but from an environmental standpoint. Having something remain in agriculture, where the people who own it care deeply about the quality of the land and the water usage because it is key to their existence, is a better use of the land than turning it into an industrial park.

But, eventually, these agriculture owners will have to do something. Some have been in the business for generations, but at some point, they cannot grow enough food to justify continuing in business. They have people offering millions and millions of dollars to buy their land from them.

So this simple bill that I filed would provide certainty to the orange growers. By lowering the 10.5 content to 10.0—that is all it does, from 10.5 to 10.0—they will have some level of certainty that they will be able to continue in business.

I regret that there is an objection here today. I understand the desire to follow the FDA process, but I just want to be clear. No one is arguing—who knows about this—that going from 10.5 to 10.0 has any safety issue or anything of that nature. It is literally an undetectable difference, but it would make a big difference for the citrus growers of Florida.

If we are not going to do it this way, I hope we can get a hearing and get this passed. I am not sure if a couple of years from now, we are going to have a citrus industry. If we lose them or lose that land, we will never get it back.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 4469

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, across this country, Americans are facing aggressive attacks on their reproductive freedom. An extremist Supreme Court and radical rightwing politicians have made clear that they see women as second-class citizens and that government—government; not the person who is pregnant but government—should be making decisions about whether or not to carry a pregnancy to term.

In this extraordinary moment, we must do everything we can to ensure that patients get the healthcare and reproductive services they need. That includes protecting patients from the deceptive practices of some so-called crisis pregnancy centers, or CPCs.

Nationwide, there are over 2,500 known CPCs, although some claim that number is closer to about 4,000. Before Roe was overturned, over 16 million women of reproductive age lived closer to a crisis pregnancy center than to an abortion clinic. Now, some estimate that as many as 34 million women do. Today in Massachusetts, CPCs outnumber true abortion clinics by about 3 to 1.

CPCs often lure women seeking legitimate reproductive care, including abortions, into their facilities by advertising themselves as comprehensive reproductive healthcare providers, but this is flatly untrue. Many of these CPCs are not healthcare providers, and they often operate specifically to deceive pregnant women, with the goal of preventing them from having abortions.

CPC websites often feature images of people in white lab coats and promises of services like ultrasounds or STD tests. Yet CPCs rarely employ licensed physicians or offer a full range of reproductive health services. According to one study, 84 percent of CPCs had no physician and 75 percent had no registered nurse even affiliated with the staff. In fact, of the staff that did have some medical training, most work part time or as volunteers. As for the services they provide, the same study found that only 1 out of 607 crisis pregnancy centers provided contraceptive care and 95 percent of CPC offered no prenatal care—none, zero. Most have no doctors, no nurses, and offer no medical care, but they sure have a lot of medical opinions. Nearly two-thirds promoted medically unsound claims, such as offering information about unproven and unscientific abortion pill reversal treatments.

Deception is at the heart of the operation for many CPCs. The director of a crisis pregnancy center in Texas explained to the Washington Post how she revamped operations so her center could pull in more people who were seeking an abortion. The director paid thousands of dollars to ensure that searches for phrases like "need an abortion" would lead people to her center, and she filled the website with phrases like "I want an abortion" and promised "CONFIDENTIAL ABOR-

TION CONSULTATION—NO COST TO YOU." The website is so deceptive that the director said she even receives angry calls from anti-abortion advocates who want to know why her center even talks about abortion, to which she replies: "How else do you get an abortion-minded girl to know that you are there?"

Deception is wrong. No one should be deceived directly or indirectly about the services they can access or the risks of receiving care. That is particularly true for someone under great stress and time constraints who is coping with an unplanned pregnancy.

That is why I am glad to introduce the Stop Anti-Abortion Disinformation Act with Senator MENENDEZ and why I am joining him today in calling up this legislation for a vote. Our bill directs the Federal Trade Commission to prohibit deceptive or misleading advertising related to the provision of abortion services. It also empowers the Commission to enforce these rules and collect penalties from organizations that violate the law. This is far from a radical proposal. For more than 100 years, the FTC has been authorized to prosecute entities that use deceptive practices.

And let me be clear. Any crisis pregnancy center that operates fairly, disseminates factual information, and is clear about what services it does and does not provide would be free to continue its work.

This bill is not about preventing parents from receiving diapers or other supplies if they have chosen to continue a pregnancy. This is about organizations that deliberately deceive women and girls who are seeking help to terminate a pregnancy. Unfortunately, deception is at the heart of the typical CPC's business model.

As the director of a CPC explained, the deception begins when women search for an abortion provider. The deception then continues once women walk through the doors of a crisis pregnancy center.

I just want to tell you a bit about the experience of a young woman living in Massachusetts who visited a crisis pregnancy center earlier this year. After finding the facility, which promised a "free abortion consultation," this woman was asked to fill out forms to disclose personal information. She was repeatedly lied to about how far along she was in her pregnancy. She was told falsely that terminating her pregnancy would increase her risk of breast cancer and depression and that an abortion could mean that she could never become pregnant in the future. Sadly, her experience is not unique.

Here is the kicker. Women and girls visiting CPCs, like this young woman, often fill out forms and answer questionnaires requesting both personal identification and personal health information, which women provide because they believe they are in a medical facility that will protect their privacy. But because CPCs are not

healthcare providers, these women have no legal protection, and these centers have no legal obligation to protect those data. These unlicensed facilities are not subject to Federal privacy laws like the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, or HIPAA. This means that crisis pregnancy centers could pass along private information about who was seeking an abortion, where that person lives, and so on—information that, in the wake of the Dobbs decision, is particularly dangerous.

The evidence of abuse is overwhelming. It is time to crack down on deceptive and misleading practices that many crisis pregnancy centers employ because the last thing that a woman seeking reproductive care should have to worry about is whether she is being tricked, lied to, or deceived about the medical care she seeks.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague Senator WARREN for beginning this debate, and we will move to a consent shortly. I want to thank her for working together with me on this most important issue.

At this moment, there are millions of women who face an uncertain future after the repeal of *Roe v. Wade*, millions of women who no longer have the right to make their own decisions about their own bodies. It is a heart-wrenching choice, no doubt one of the hardest decisions anyone will ever have to make.

But in the midst of this, in this post-*Roe* landscape we find ourselves in, there are organizations, as has been discussed here, known as crisis pregnancy centers that are preying on the fears of women, exacerbating the problems caused by the Dobbs decision.

Make no mistake, crisis pregnancy centers are anti-abortion organizations that cloak themselves in benign language about “providing answers” and “offering advice.”

They have an agenda; namely, to steer women away from abortion through a combination of guilt, concealment, harassment, and downright lies.

Crisis pregnancy centers in my State of New Jersey pretend that they are there to educate, support, and empower women facing unplanned pregnancies. And yet at the bottom of their websites, in very small print, you will find a disclaimer that lays it all bare.

Crisis pregnancy centers do not offer or refer for pregnancy terminations or birth control. Information should not be relied on as a substitute for professional and/or medical advice.

That is a disclaimer. You can hardly read it, but it is there. This is pulled straight from the web page of one center in my State. I will repeat that ending again.

Information should not be relied on as a substitute for professional and/or medical advice.

Ironically, this is the only objective and accurate piece of information you will find on the site and others like it.

As Senator WARREN mentioned, crisis pregnancy centers are not required to have a physician or a registered nurse on staff. Very few of them do.

They are not required to provide contraceptive care or even stick to medically sound claims. And because they claim to only provide so-called education services, they can promote blatant lies about how abortion increases risk for breast cancer.

Women in America do not deserve to be lied to. They shouldn't be preyed upon during moments of vulnerability or any other time. When assessing healthcare, they shouldn't have to shift to what is real and what is not.

And they certainly shouldn't have to parse through the carefully constructed language of crisis pregnancy centers that promote an anti-choice agenda.

Our bill, the Stop Anti-Abortion Disinformation Act, would empower the Federal Trade Commission to issue rules prohibiting false advertisement of abortion services. It would allow the FTC to penalize those who are found in violation. And it would provide greater oversight over crisis pregnancy centers that profit from the pain of unplanned pregnancies—sometimes while double-dipping on the taxpayer's dime.

Senator WARREN and I are leading this bill to end the practice of deceiving women and girls through false advertisement. We are leading this bill to promote truth in advertisement, to end misinformation and disinformation, and to protect women from harassment. Yes—harassment.

As Senator WARREN said, crisis pregnancy centers have no duty to uphold HIPAA privacy protections—the most significant information that you can give about your health and the status of your health and your condition. You do that thinking that you are in a medical center. And now you have given all this information that has enormous consequences to it if it is misused to these deceptive entities.

And after divulging personal information to them, they can freely sell it to scammers who would want to take advantage of them.

So I ask my colleagues, let's end the assault on bodily autonomy and the right to access reproductive care.

Let's end the barrage of attacks on their healthcare. Let's end deception in any delivery of any service. Let's end the fraud in any delivery of any “service.” Let's end the barrage of attacks on their healthcare.

Join us in passing our bill so that in the hardest moment of their lives, women all across our country can rest assured in knowing that what they are getting is the truth, not some biased agenda pretending to be medical advice, not some one-sided talking point that steers them toward one outcome, the truth—the truth.

Pregnant women in America deserve the truth, and that is what this bill

does. To oppose our unanimous consent request is to promote deception, is to promote fraud. I don't think anybody really wants to do that.

As in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Commerce Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 4469 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; further, that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, I rise in objection to this bill because it is an outrageous attack on life-affirming pregnancy resource centers. As a pro-life obstetrician, I have had the pleasure and honor of delivering over 5,000 babies, and I can attest to the life-saving, critical, and comprehensive care and resources these centers provide moms in need.

These pro-life charities not only help women in poverty choose life instead of abortion, but they also help women after babies are born. They also provide clothing and diapers and housing assistance and nutrition and sometimes just putting an arm around their shoulders and helping them get to their next appointment.

This legislation seeks to shut them down all around the country on the grounds that they purportedly spread disinformation about abortion.

Under this bill, charities could be fined \$100,000 or 50 percent of the revenues earned by the ultimate parent entity of the charity for violating the act's prohibition on disinformation related to abortion.

Now, I ask you, who would determine what counts as prohibited disinformation? There is no doubt it would be bureaucrats with a pro-abortion agenda. Is this not an infringement on our First Amendment rights?

This bill would turn the FTC into a national abortion disinformation board with an agenda of suppressing speech and spreading pro-abortion propaganda.

Nationally, pro-life pregnancy resource centers outnumber abortion facilities three to one, and that is a good thing—that is a great thing—and in some States by as many as 11 to 1. Knowing that many women choose abortion because they feel pressured that they have no other option, the pro-life movement has placed tremendous resources into these centers, which exist to offer alternatives to abortion, usually at no cost.

But right now in America, pregnancy resource centers are the ones in need of protection as zealous, pro-abortion terrorists have spent the past 2 months firebombing and vandalizing pro-life pregnancy centers all across the Nation.

These criminals, these terrorists do so not in the name of abortion access

but in retribution for daring to defy the ruling abortion regime and for daring to stand on the side of good in this spiritual battle.

There have been more than 60 pregnancy resource centers and offices that pro-life groups have attacked and vandalized since the draft Supreme Court opinion was leaked in May.

Pro-abortion domestic terrorists have claimed responsibility for these crimes.

Congress should be taking up the legislation instead to affirm, grow, and protect pregnancy resource centers and praise citizens for their great work, for volunteering to help and serve their community.

And Attorney General Merrick Garland should abide by his oath of office and prosecute the law. Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. While my colleague is still here, I would like to propound a question to him through the Chair.

Does the First Amendment allow you to promote fraud? Does the First Amendment allow you to promote deception? Is it great work to lie to someone about what you are providing them? Is it great work to allow someone to get your vital health information believing that you are a health provider and then being able to use that private information?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. To answer my colleague, the fraud and deception is occurring in the abortion clinics. I could tell you story after story of patients crying in my office who went to Planned Parenthood for a pregnancy test and were scheduled for an abortion, coming to my office wondering, Do I have to do this abortion? That is where the fraud and deception is occurring, that these women aren't being told about the potential complications of these abortion procedures.

They are not being told that these abortion pills are going to cause pain and cramping and bleeding, that they could end up in the emergency room as well. They are not told about the complications from the abortion procedures. That is where the fraud and deception is present.

You talk about this as reproductive services. You are afraid to say the word "abortion" in these clinics. That is the fraud and deception. This isn't reproductive services. These are abortions. This is taking the life of the unborn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Could I ask a question then because I am a little confused by what has just happened here. I presume deception is wrong whoever does it. So if we just said no deception around pregnancy services, would you be willing to support this?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. And just as a reminder, questions need to be asked through the Chair.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Questions need to be asked through the Chair.

Ms. WARREN. Yes, I am asking you that question, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, we could never support any part of this legislation. I think the deception and fraud is occurring on the part of abortion clinics. This is a threat to our First Amendment rights, and like I said in my opening remarks, this is just simply unacceptable.

And that is why we continue to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, if I may continue to ask my colleague through the Chair, is it right, no matter who gets the information by fraud, to give your most private health—surely, as a doctor, the Senator would say that no one should give up their health information to an entity that does not preserve it under HIPAA laws.

So could the Senator not join us if we limit it to fraud that ultimately has that fraud create the insecurity of HIPAA information?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, I think this is not the place to try to rewrite legislation. Of course, I am against all fraud. I think all fraud is bad. I am all for the truth. I am all for protecting patients' personal information, but I am also here proud to say what these great clinics do. I am not sure what you are even accusing them is even true. I have not witnessed that. The pregnancy clinics that I have seen do great work for these folks. They truly do sit down and talk with them. They give them a hand up. They do so many great things.

So I don't know where this fraud and deception is coming about, except that they are talking to women and saying: Do you realize your baby has a heartbeat? Do you realize your baby can feel pain at 14 weeks? Do you realize that your baby recognizes the voice of your husband right now?

So I think those are great things to share with patients; that how wonderful life is; that we are all wonderfully, beautifully made in the womb; that life begins at conception. I think that is all the truth that should be shared with them.

So, no, I don't think there is anything you could do with this legislation to change it that I could support, and I continue to object.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, then can I ask through the Presiding Officer another question, and that is if we are

not talking about the fraud part, can we at least talk about collecting health information that any so-called crisis pregnancy center—I am sorry—is the Senator leaving, the one who said that it is important to protect private healthcare information?

That at least we could agree that private healthcare information—I guess the Senator is just going to walk off the floor.

So the question would have been how about agreeing that anyone who collects information about pregnancy and collects medical and personal information has to be bound by HIPAA so that that information is fully protected. That would be my question.

But since there is no one here to answer it on the Republican side, I guess we will have to leave it for today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I would like to answer the Senator's question, and that makes eminent sense that we would protect HIPAA information, regardless of who is in a position to maybe have access to collecting it. And therefore, in the first instance, you shouldn't collect it, if you are not a medical entity, but if you do, you should be ultimately bound by the same guarantees that anyone else would be guaranteed. You know, it would baffle me that particularly a medical professional, a doctor, would suggest that HIPAA information is something that we shouldn't protect.

I think that at a minimum, we should all be able to agree to that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, this is a reminder again why I am so honored to fight alongside Senator MENENDEZ.

I don't think anyone should be deceived, and particularly a woman who is seeking information about termination of a pregnancy, and I don't believe anyone's private medical information should be shared.

The idea that these crisis pregnancy centers gather information from women who believe they are giving it to a medical provider and that that information will be protected and that that is not the case is truly despicable.

Thank you again, Senator MENENDEZ.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 4774

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, gas prices are 64 percent higher in my home State of Kentucky than they were in January of 2021. This means Kentuckians are paying \$1.43 more for gas than they were at the beginning of last year.

For average Americans already struggling to put food on the table, sky-high gas prices are a daily punishment.

Every additional dollar an American spends on a gallon of gas is a dollar not going towards their mortgage, their retirement, or their children's college fund.

Rising prices are robbing Americans of the chance to plan for the future, as

they struggle to make ends meet in the present.

In an attempt to address rising gas prices, President Biden announced on April 12 that he would allow the sale of E15 gasoline this summer. Then-White House press secretary Jen Psaki had this to say about this decision:

[This] waiver [that President Biden passed to allow E15] is a critical step to address the fuel supply crisis and . . . build real U.S. energy independence, support American agriculture and manufacturing, and save Americans money at the pump. At current prices, E15 can save a family 10 cents per gallon of gas on average and many stores sell E15 at even greater discount and today's waiver will allow families to pay that lower price for months to come.

So this is a policy supported by President Biden, and it is currently the law since he is waiving the regulation.

E15 is a gasoline blend containing up to 15 percent ethanol. It is a renewable fuel typically made from corn. A 2008 study published in Atmospheric Environment found that ethanol-based fuels like E15 emit up to 16 percent less carbon dioxide than traditional gasoline.

A more recent study published by the U.S. Department of Energy's Argonne National Laboratory found that these fuels emit up to 23 percent less carbon dioxide and provide a cheaper alternative to typical gasoline, and yet the Clean Air Act currently prohibits the sale of E15 during the summer. So we sell it for 9 months of the year; we forbid it for 3 months of the year. But companies can't get used to either selling it or making it or distributing it because of the disruption during the summer.

Under the current law, gas with up to 10 percent ethanol, commonly known as E10, can be sold during the summer. But, inexplicably, the law treats E15 differently, even though the higher ethanol blend is better for the environment.

American drivers ought to be able to access E15 year-round. Prohibiting its sale in the summer months artificially restricts the supply, especially when Americans are paying historically high prices for a gallon of gasoline.

What we are asking to do today through this legislation is not to subsidize ethanol, not to force people to use ethanol, but to allow people to use ethanol at an E15 basis, a little bit higher than we are allowed to use already.

Republican and Democratic Presidents have both waived this rule. This is essentially what the law of the land is other than we are having to suspend the law to get what we have. The last President and this President have both waived the rule that we are trying to repeal today.

Both Presidents Trump and Biden approved the removal of barriers to the sale of E15 during the summer months; but in Congress, we have it in our power to permanently allow the sale of E15.

If we only do it by Presidential waiver, there is never enough certainty for

people in the marketplace to decide to sell it year-round because they are worried that at any one moment a President will flip a switch, and then we will go back to banning it again.

The EASE Act, which is what we will be asking to pass today, is a bill that will allow the sale of E15 year-round and will provide relief for Americans on the road—not only this year, but every year. This change is long overdue. I have advocated this policy for 7 years. I first introduced this legislation in 2015.

Passing the EASE Act would benefit consumers, farmers, and the environment by increasing access.

So as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 4774, which is at the desk; further, 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. Is there objection?

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, what my colleague from Kentucky is attempting to do here is to really short-circuit the bedrock public health protections in the Clean Air Act.

And make no mistake. This is a major policy change; not a minor change. It would have far-reaching impacts. For example, this policy would clearly make food even more expensive; it would make air quality worse. And it is not even eminently clear that the impact on gas prices would necessarily be negative.

So, fundamentally, this is the kind of sweeping policy that should actually go through the committee of jurisdiction—in this case, the Environment and Public Works Committee.

So I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

INFLATION REDUCTION ACT OF 2022

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support the swift passage of the Inflation Reduction Act.

In the wake of COVID-19, global supply chains have been strained. There has been shipping disruptions, and Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine has added to this. As a result of these many factors, inflation is up in almost every single country across the globe. The United States is among the world's wealthiest and most productive and diversified economies, but no nation on Earth is immune to the forces of inflation, particularly when it comes from so many different directions.

Let's remember also, 2021 was a huge year for U.S. economic growth. In fact, last year, the U.S. economy grew at its fastest pace since 1984. Our unemploy-

ment rate is back down to 50-year lows, wages have risen for many, and there is a job literally for any American who wants to work and is looking for work. Nobody thought that type of growth was sustainable, especially with the global economic headwinds we are facing and will continue to face.

The fact is that Americans are forced to pay inflated gas prices at the pump because of the immoral and illegal invasion of Ukraine by Vladimir Putin, because of the cartel—OPEC—that controls prices, and because of our failure so far to invest in clean energy, and that has made our economy crack.

So the question before us is: How do we help our economy gain firmer footing and lower prices for consumers; how do we make our country more energy independent; and how do we strike a blow for fairness and financial responsibility and make things better for families, businesses, and communities?

The Inflation Reduction Act accomplishes all of those goals. It makes forward-looking policy adjustments and investments to shore-up the economy. It takes long overdue steps to help lower out-of-pocket costs for things like energy, prescription drugs, and healthcare. It will strengthen America's energy independence and enhance our national security by moving production lines and jobs from China and other places back to the United States.

And don't just take my word for it. A wide array of economic experts have confirmed this bill will ease inflation in three ways: by lowering energy costs for families and small businesses, by cutting healthcare costs for millions of Americans and by ensuring wealthy Americans and large corporations pay their fair share.

Republican and Democratic Treasury Secretaries have said this, as have over 120 of our Nation's leading economists, including seven Nobel Prize winners. The Inflation Reduction Act will also reduce the deficit by more than \$100 billion, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. And budget experts agree, it will save another \$200 billion by empowering and equipping the IRS to crack down on tax cheats and enforce tax laws already on the books.

So independent arbiters are clear: This bill is good for the family budget and for the national budget. It is good for the health of our communities and our planet.

And here are some of the highlights. Let's start with the cost of prescription drugs. According to Families USA, nearly 3 in 10 American adults—that is about 80 million people—have not taken required medicine due to its high cost. For decades, the drug companies have taken advantage of every avenue to keep prices high.

They argue that the cost is justified in order to fund research and development, but that is not really what is happening. The bottom line is, drug companies are not playing fair. In fact, they are charging inflated prices even

on old medications, insulin being the classic example. Developed more than 100 years ago, the developers basically made their product available to everyone. They did not insist upon patent protection. Yet, the price of insulin, of a 100-year old drug, has gone up dramatically.

The Inflation Reduction Act will put the brakes on this type of profiteering. Under this bill, the government will finally be allowed to directly negotiate lower drug prices for Medicare beneficiaries. And I am fighting to include, as I mentioned before about insulin, a \$35 cap on insulin costs for millions of Americans in this bill. And I must applaud Senator WARNOCK for his leadership on this effort.

It is long past time to get this done. The Department of Veterans Affairs already does it and saves veterans and taxpayers billions of dollars a year. The Inflation Reduction Act would also limit drug price increases to the rate of inflation. It also caps out-of-pocket costs at \$2,000 annually for older adults buying prescriptions from pharmacies. It would also provide free vaccinations for seniors, and it helps keep health insurance affordable for millions of Americans.

Let's not forget, cutting healthcare costs for millions of Americans is a direct attack on inflation. So the benefits here are both health-related and economic.

Now, let's talk about how the bill will reduce energy costs and address climate change. The American people recognize that climate change is a serious threat. It fuels extreme weather, environmental degradation, and natural disasters. We are witnessing these phenomena at this moment all across the country. And, frankly, I haven't seen the kind of rapidity and severity of storms like this in sheer number in my time.

This is a result of our neglect of the climate crisis. And I must also applaud my colleague Senator WHITEHOUSE because he has been a voice since his first day here in this Chamber about the dangers of climate change, the cost to families, and the cost to our environment.

Of course, all of these climate effects lead to food and water insecurity, economic disruption, and, indeed, human conflict. One of the areas which is most concerning to our Defense Department officials is the follow-on effects of famine and disruption of economies. It usually creates a whole generation of young people without any gainful employment but with access to weapons, which leads to instability and violence—threats to the whole world. And eventually threats to us.

Just this week, we had a hearing in the Banking Committee on the economic costs of climate change. One witness cited a particularly eye-popping statistic from OMB, that our lack of action on climate change costs the Federal Government up to \$2 trillion per year. That is \$2 trillion with a T.

So the cost of our efforts to reduce this will be more than exceeded, according to this number, by the benefits. And good economic analysis suggests, when you have a proposal in which benefits far outweigh cost, that proposal is something to consider.

The Inflation Reduction Act stops kicking the can down the road and takes urgent, overdue action to confront climate change and economic challenges head on. I don't have to remind anyone here that we have been talking about climate change for years and years and years. And now, we have a real opportunity to take positive steps. And if we don't, what we see now is upsetting, to say the least, but it is accelerating and you can sense the economic crises and the environmental crises we see all around us will grow.

Now, this legislation would invest \$369 billion in affordable clean energy, energy security, and initiatives to help combat climate change and make America more energy independent.

I will give you a very good example up in Rhode Island. We have the first offshore wind field in the United States off of Block Island. It was built and provided up to 300 workers—union workers mostly—with good jobs. It will continue to help employ people as it is maintained. It has provided us, the whole region, with an example of where to go. And now, you have significant wind farms that are being proposed in Federal waters off of Massachusetts and off of Long Island. This will bring energy without pollution. That is something that will benefit all of us, both in our pocketbook and in our well-being.

This is really a historic investment. And the savings will pay off for families and the planet month after month, year after year. It is something that we owe the next generation because right now, we are prepared to hand off to the sons and daughters and grandsons and granddaughters a world that is environmentally challenged, to say the least. And they will look back on us and say: You had an opportunity, and you failed.

We cannot fail.

Now, a report by nonprofit group Rewiring America found that the tax incentives included as a part of the \$369 billion dedicated to climate change initiatives in the bill would save the average household \$1,800 per year on energy costs. This will incentivize the use of heat pumps, the use of solar panels—a much more practical and cost-saving energy tool than what is available today.

The Inflation Reduction Act also sets up America to out-innovate and out-compete other countries and strengthens domestic clean energy manufacturing and reinforces our supply chain, making America more energy independent and self-reliant.

I want to make the important point that under the Budget Act, this bill must be paid for. And rather than cut Medicare or Social Security as some of

my colleagues on the other side like to suggest, this bill strikes a blow for fairness when it comes to our Tax Code. It sends a signal to the middle class that wealthy individuals who wish to avoid taxes will no longer be able to easily evade taxes because we are enforcing the auditing mechanisms at the IRS so that the laws are followed more scrupulously, and that will result in benefits to all of us.

It sends a signal to working families that the 150 most profitable companies will pay a minimum tax of 15 percent rather than zero, as is sometimes the case. It is not fair for a multi-billion dollar company to game the tax system to avoid any payment, while a truck driver or a custodian is paying 20 percent of their income to taxes—or even more.

It sends a signal that private equity and hedge fund managers who claim their income is carried interest will have to step up and pay more. Indeed, as the President stressed, this bill is written so that no family that makes under \$400,000 will see their taxes go up. That is what the President promised, and that is what this legislation will do.

So no one should be out making the claim that this hurts the middle class and the tax cuts will be paid for by them. In fact, it increases the taxpayers in our system. And any examination of our present system shows it is grossly unfair.

I will end with the words of the five former Treasury Secretaries, including one appointed by former President George W. Bush, who all agree that the Inflation Reduction Act will, in their words, “help increase American competitiveness, address our climate crisis, lower costs for families, and fight inflation—and should be passed immediately by Congress.”

Let me also quote over 120 leading economists who shared a similar message, writing: “This historic legislation makes crucial investments in energy, health care, and shoring up the nation's tax system. These investments will fight inflation and lower costs for American families while setting the stage for strong, stable and broadly-shared long-term economic growth.”

This isn't a partisan issue for economists, and it shouldn't be a partisan issue in Congress. The bottom line is that Congress has an opportunity to help lower prices for consumers and invest in scalable new energy technologies and solutions that will strengthen our economy and make the U.S. and the planet more secure, more prosperous, and more resilient.

We must seize the moment. The time to act is now. Generations from now, they will look back at this moment and ask the question: Did we stand up for them, for this country, for the planet, and for the future, or did we fail?

I urge us all to stand up and succeed.

I yield the floor.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3012

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, before the COVID-19 pandemic, few people other than scientists and national security experts were familiar with gain-of-function research. Now, as we continue to search for the origin of this pandemic and begin to learn more about the dangerous research that has been largely kept from the public eye, it is becoming a household phrase.

Before we get started on the current state of play, I would like to give a brief history of this research and how the Federal Government has poorly, perhaps even negligently, approached its oversight and funding.

In late 2011, over a decade ago, the NSABB, which is the NIH's advisory board, stopped two scientists from publishing an avian influenza gain-of-function study. Why? Because they were afraid that this study would educate bioterrorists. That is right. In 2011, a decade ago, scientists had figured out how to make H5N1—a highly pathogenic avian influenza—more contagious, which would have been catastrophic for American agriculture.

Dr. Fauci personally called both scientists and convinced them to volunteer to pause their experiments. In early 2012, Dr. Fauci encouraged all influenza scientists to voluntarily pause influenza gain-of-function research and told them:

It is essential we respect the concern of the public domestically or globally, and not ask them to take the word of the influenza scientist.

Dr. Fauci was obviously concerned about the public's perception out there. Dr. Fauci also, almost prophetically, stated that he worried about “unregulated” laboratories, perhaps outside of the United States, doing work “sloppily” and leading to an inadvertent pandemic. “Accidental release is what the world is really worried about.”

In 2014, after several biosecurity accidents in U.S. research labs, the Obama White House implemented the gain-of-function moratorium on influenza, as well as MERS and SARS research, because of the potential risk of lab accidents and inherent gain-of-function danger. These two moratoriums clearly demonstrate that the U.S. Government and the NIH, our primary public health Agency, understood the risk associated with this research and understood the threats it posed.

Despite this pause, though, certain viral gain-of-function research projects continued at the University of North Carolina, research that was later shared with a Chinese virologist named Dr. Shi, the Bat Lady. She was famous for her copious amounts of research conducted on coronaviruses that live in bats.

Outside of the North Carolina studies, Dr. Fauci failed to heed his own call on U.S. scientists to pause their gain-of-function studies and offshored the paused research to China not just once and not just recently but practically continuously for over a decade. It is disturbing that one of our top public health Agencies directed this risky research to be offshored while encouraging the pause on that exact same research here in the United States.

In 2012, Dr. Fauci gave a new grant to Peter Daszak's EcoHealth Alliance, a company that America will soon know the name of all across America. He gave a new grant to Peter Daszak's EcoHealth Alliance for avian influenza research in China, which was truly gain-of-function research.

In 2014, Dr. Fauci gave another new grant, another gain-of-function grant, to Dr. Daszak and EcoHealth for SARS research in China. Through these grants, Peter Daszak partnered with the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

In late 2017, the NIH announced a lift on the gain-of-function pause, apparently without consultation with the Senate-confirmed State Department or with national security leadership. Significantly, there was no Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy in place, with only an Acting HHS Secretary at the helm. The NIH essentially lifted the moratorium on their own by slipping it in between administrations and self-policing.

Today, we can't see the research records from Dr. Fauci's offshored projects because the Chinese Communist Party has the possession—or at least supposedly has the possession—of EcoHealth's records, and the NIH resists in sharing theirs.

By all accounts, Dr. Fauci and EcoHealth's research in China led to the COVID-19 pandemic and Dr. Fauci's worst fears that a lab accident in a foreign lab would become a reality.

At a very important hearing yesterday at the Capitol, hosted by Senator PAUL, before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Spending Oversight, Dr. Richard Ebright, a renowned microbiologist, declared that it was indeed possible that this research did lead to the outbreak of COVID-19.

Dr. Steven Quay and Dr. Kevin Esvelt, other expert witnesses on the panel, agreed that viral gain-of-function offers no civilian use or benefit. Let me say that again. Both of these doctors agreed that viral gain-of-function offers no civilian use or benefit but that it is so risky that it can cause a pandemic that will have a worse impact than a nuclear attack. It is indeed a weapon of mass destruction.

Despite warnings and past lab accidents, our public health Agencies, like the NIH, continue to fund this weapon-of-mass-destruction research, often in China nonetheless. In fact, at one point, the NIH paid for more viral gain-of-function experiments than the De-

partment of Defense, according to hearing testimony given by Dr. Fauci on this topic in 2012.

Shockingly, Congress has minimal insight into the amount of research that the NIH performs. There is no transparency in the risk evaluation process, and there is no proper oversight.

Recently—and this is news—our office learned that the USAID is currently paying \$125 million to the Washington State University Paul Allen School for Global Health to collect potential pandemic pathogens in high-risk areas for outbreak. Once collected, these samples are being used in dangerous gain-of-function experiments through their DEEP VZN grant. This project initially partnered with five countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, but it could expand to others.

The university researchers are collecting, storing, and experimenting on these pathogens in foreign laboratories in each country. Even worse, these hazardous research techniques are being taught to foreign researchers while experimenting with potentially deadly pathogens in laboratories where the United States has no regulatory control or authority. No process exists to screen U.S. researchers or foreign researchers by intelligence analysts for their potential as threat actors. The United States has no ability to control who the technology or the deadly pathogens are shared with in these foreign labs and cannot enforce proper storage techniques.

The USAID is putting everyone at risk right now. Our U.S. public health Agencies, like the NIH and the CDC, cannot be entrusted to oversee risky research with the current guardrails that are self-selecting and self-policing. Certainly, our U.S. Agency for International Development cannot be entrusted. Yet Federal Agencies continue to dispense funds for gain-of-function research.

Dr. Fauci recently came before Congress and publicly declared that he had no intention to stop using U.S. taxpayer dollars to fund Chinese Communist Party research projects.

Folks, this is a national security issue. Since January of 2020, I have been trying to sound the alarm on this virus—on this issue, on this weapon of mass destruction—but it is largely falling on deaf ears in Congress and with the current administration. Yesterday's HSGAC hearing was the first time Congress had examined this subject since the outbreak of COVID-19. Unfortunately, none of my colleagues from across the aisle bothered to show up for this hearing, clearly declaring that this was not a priority for them. Additionally, mainstream media has attempted to bury concerns about gain-of-function research and the possibility of a lab leak.

This is unacceptable. We must pause this research until national security experts can help create appropriate risk metrics, guardrails, and processes for this research.

It is important to note that it is estimated that this research only comprises less than 0.1 percent of all biomedical research and less than 1 percent of virology research. Dr. Richard Ebricht testified that because gain-of-function research of concern can cause pandemics, this small part of the biomedical research enterprise is highly consequential and requires effective oversight. Certainly, that current oversight is not effective.

This is a bipartisan national security issue. And anyone who studies this issue in depth will conclude that viral gain of function is a weapon of mass destruction.

Anyone who examines this will conclude that COVID is like a nuclear hand grenade, with its pin pulled out. It has already killed a million people and can kill millions more. Every witness will conclude, like we did yesterday, that the potential is much worse than any type of benefit from this research.

This COVID virus is likely a product of U.S.-funded gain-of-function research. The research has produced no benefit in 10 years and with seemingly no benefit on the horizon.

This is why I brought my legislation to the floor today to place a moratorium on all Federal research projects, grants to universities and other organizations conducting gain-of-function research and risky research on potential pandemic pathogens. This is an urgent matter that must be acted on today.

As if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be discharged from further consideration of S. 3012, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; further, 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. Is there objection?

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Reserving the right to object, earlier this year, when we passed the PREVENT Pandemics Act out of our HELP Committee in an overwhelming bipartisan vote, we were able to include amendments from my colleague from Kansas and others to bolster oversight of the federally funded research involving pathogens of pandemic potential and make sure that we do have appropriate guardrails in place.

I appreciate the leadership my colleague from Kansas has shown on this issue. I know it is important to him. However, I am concerned this new bill brought forward today is far less targeted than the provisions the Senator from Kansas and I worked on within PREVENT and would have significant and unintended consequences for U.S. biomedical research.

Instead of passing this bill, I would respectfully ask my colleague from

Kansas to keep working with me and Ranking Member BURR to get his related provision and the rest of our PREVENT Pandemics Act across the finish line.

I thank the Senator from Kansas for his work and his focus on this issue. I really think we can continue to make bipartisan progress in the next few weeks on getting the PREVENT Pandemics Act and the Senator's provision he and I worked on into a good place and finally getting that much needed package signed into law.

For those reasons, I object today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Kansas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 4778

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague for her kind comments. Certainly, the chairwoman has my commitment to continue to work with her on the PREVENT Pandemics Act as well.

But if my colleagues do not agree with placing a full moratorium on gain-of-function research, I ask for unanimous consent to adopt the SAFE Risky Research Act, which stops Federal funds from being used to conduct risky research with countries that threaten our democracy and public health.

We recently learned that USAID has been paying for this dangerous research in China. We know that this research is being conducted in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, but we don't yet know all the other countries where they fund this risky research.

What we do know is that, despite their relationship with the State Department, this funding is being dispensed by USAID without State Department security consultations, oblivious to the proliferation potential.

Federal Agencies that oversee national intelligence maintain lists of countries that may pose a risk or threat to national security. The Department of State, for example, maintains a list that includes Burma, the People's Republic of China, Iran, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and others.

This legislation is common sense. We shouldn't be collaborating on dangerous research with our adversaries.

I think it is obvious that all members of our committee agree with us. They support this bill and this legislation.

On March 15, the HELP Committee held a markup where this amendment—the same text that is in this bill—was unanimously adopted in the bipartisan PREVENT Pandemics Act. I appreciate Chairwoman MURRAY working so hard collaborating with us.

During the markup, she supported this, specifically stating that it threads the needle in terms of protecting biomedical research enterprise while taking steps to address some of the concerns she has heard from other committee members.

Given the inherent risk, NIH's unwillingness to fully cooperate with con-

gressional oversight, and Senate Democrats' objection to taking the needed step of placing a complete moratorium on gain-of-function research, we must at least pass this narrow approach today.

As if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 4778, which is at the desk; further, 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. Is there objection?

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Reserving the right to object, I do appreciate the Senator from Kansas's focus and leadership on this issue.

I am glad we were able to work together to include a provision similar to this bill in our PREVENT Pandemics Act that we did pass out of the HELP Committee by an overwhelming vote earlier this year.

Along with Ranking Member BURR, we are very focused on getting the PREVENT Pandemics Act passed into law. These reforms are overdue and vital to keeping our families safe.

The Senator's provisions within that package, as well as many others, are really key to making sure that our country is prepared for future pandemics.

I do hope we can continue to work on this bill in a bipartisan way and get it passed and put into law shortly. So while I look forward to continuing to work with the Senator from Kansas on this issue within the PREVENT Pandemics Act package, if he is asking today for unanimous consent to pass it, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAINE). The Senator from Massachusetts.

INFLATION REDUCTION ACT

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, 12 years ago, the U.S. Congress was on the precipice of passing historic climate legislation—legislation that may not have been perfect but would have cut carbon pollution by 80 percent by the year 2050, and it would have set us on a path to a healthier, cleaner, safer world.

Unfortunately, despite that bill passing through the House of Representatives, a bill which Congressman Henry Waxman and I were able to craft and to move through the House of Representatives, even though the Senate and the Senate Democrats had a supermajority, that legislation was ultimately defeated by the same legislative body, the U.S. Senate, that I serve in today. In 2009, the U.S. Senate chose to do nothing rather than something substantial that would give us a fighting chance against this generational crisis, which is why we have spent the

last 12 years in the climate wilderness, with full-blown Republican obstructionism and no meaningful congressional action on climate justice all the while. That wilderness literally burns to the ground because of climate change.

In the intervening decade, we have suffered the consequences of climate inaction. Weather that used to be extreme is now the new normal, and that normal is deadly. Our addiction to fossil fuels has put communities at risk—worsening asthma, cancers, and disease in general—and has exposed working people to criminal price gouging from Big Oil and Big Gas.

Throughout this summer, the United States has experienced devastating heat waves, putting 100 million Americans under heat warnings across the country. People are dying in Kentucky. Children are dying in Kentucky as a result of the extreme rain and floods—rain that still hasn't stopped. Those are so-called 100-year floods. Well, now they are happening on a weekly basis—in Kentucky. Over and over again, communities throughout the United States are facing deadly wildfires, storms, and droughts, all of which have become more frequent and more severe over the last 12 years.

But instead of giving up after that missed opportunity more than a decade ago, we reengaged. We rebuilt and reenergized a stronger, smarter climate movement, one that expanded carbon calculators to include climate justice; one that swapped complicated carbon trading systems for direct funding for environmental justice communities in our country; and one that exchanged an environmental-above-all strategy for a 21st-century contract with communities, with the promise of climate justice, well-paid union jobs, and cuts to climate pollution so all of our children and grandchildren can thrive on a livable planet.

So let me be clear. The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 is not the Green New Deal that America wants and needs. I wish it were. But I have learned a hard truth throughout my years in Congress: Perfect ideas can only live on through imperfect legislation.

As the author of both the Green New Deal and the Waxman-Markey climate bill, I know we cannot wait another 12 years for billions of dollars in investment to fight the climate crisis. This is not the bill we wanted. It is not the bill I would have drafted. But we need a package now to fight for and resources to fight with.

This bill will not correct every economic injustice in our society or rectify the economic disparities between Big Oil billionaires and working families, but it starts a process that we absolutely need to level the playing field.

The Inflation Reduction Act makes sure that every billion-dollar corporation finally pays a higher tax rate than a preschool teacher. Last year, a preschool teacher in Massachusetts paid 8

percent of their average \$39,000 salary in Federal taxes. ExxonMobil paid only 2.8 percent of their \$9.3 billion U.S. earnings in Federal taxes. Chevron paid a mere 1.8 percent of their \$9.5 billion in U.S. earnings in Federal taxes in 2021. A kindergarten teacher in Massachusetts paid 8 percent on \$39,000 of income.

Who did more for America last year—all of our kindergarten teachers or the executives at ExxonMobil and Chevron? Who contributed more to our society?

That is our challenge right now to pass this legislation because the status quo is immoral. It is outrageous. And unless we pass this bill, that disparity is perfectly legal. They can evade their responsibility to contribute to solving the problem which they created: the climate crisis.

Right now, they are letting preschool teachers contribute more than they are to a problem that families across our country are suffering from. By passing the Inflation Reduction Act, we can make sure that Big Oil finally pays more in taxes than preschool teachers. We can take that revenue and reinvest it into clean energy and healthier communities.

This bill will not give the climate movement the trillions needed to confront the crises of systematic racism, economic inequality, a broken health system, and climate injustice. But thanks to our relentless fighting, this bill contains a historic \$60 billion in environmental justice investments.

Let me say that again: \$60 billion will be in this bill to begin the process of rectifying the problems for Black and Brown and indigenous communities all across our country who have always been the victims of climate change, of environmental injustice.

This has never happened before in any bill in U.S. history. It is in this bill, finally. Now, that is the message of the Green New Deal. That was something that was driving FOX News and the oil companies crazy when we said we have to rectify environmental injustice as well as part of the Green New Deal. It is in this bill. It is in this bill, \$60 billion. And that will begin to start righting the wrongs brought by polluters in our most vulnerable communities.

This could be a downpayment on clean air and safer communities everywhere, not just the suburbs, which have always breathed cleaner air than inner-city communities because they don't plant these oil and gas and other facilities in the suburbs; they put them right next to what they believe are the least powerful communities in our country.

We know this bill will not get us to the critical mark of 50 percent emissions reductions, 2005 levels, by 2030, which is the baseline of what we need to meet our 2050 targets. However—however—this package gets us to 40 percent reductions economy-wide, and, more importantly, it puts our economy

on an emissions reductions trajectory that positions us to enact more clean energy and climate justice provisions in the future to meet the 50 percent goal. Securing these emissions reductions now is the start which we need, and we need it now.

This legislation reflects the largest single investment in climate justice and environmental protection in our Nation's history. And it meets the climate test. First, it reduces emissions, creates good-paying union jobs, and provides funding so that we can begin the long process of repairing historic harms in our environmental justice communities with that \$60 billion investment.

Second, the bill lowers energy costs for consumers. Price-gouging and tax-dodging big oil companies are charging Americans more than \$4 a gallon for gasoline, shaking money out of their pockets at the pumps all across our country. And what we are going to do is just point to the electric vehicle owners who pay an equivalent of 75 cents a gallon right now in our country in order to go the same distance. And we are going to open up this opportunity to tens of millions of additional Americans once we pass it.

The Inflation Reduction Act provides tax credits to low- and middle-income Americans so they can buy a new or a used EV, break their addiction to Big Oil, and save money on their daily commutes.

And, finally, the Inflation Reduction Act will make sure we make things in America again. The domestic manufacturing tax credits in this bill for the first time ensure that we will build electric vehicles, solar panels, wind turbines here in our own backyard, in the United States. American-made infrastructure means good-paying union jobs. And a new study released today shows that this bill will create—get ready—9 million new jobs in our country. That is what we are talking about. That is what we will be debating on the floor of the U.S. Senate over the next several days.

And I am especially proud of a provision I authored with Senator CHRIS VAN HOLLEN and Congresswoman DEBBIE DINGELL that would fund a national climate bank to ensure vulnerable American communities will have access to capital to invest in local clean energy projects and fuel a new generation of entrepreneurs from disadvantaged backgrounds.

How big is this program? Twenty-seven billion dollars and a climate bank that communities across the country can apply to at the lowest possible interest rates for their greening of their housing units, the greening of any other part of their community. And what McKinsey has estimated is that for every dollar that is in the bank, \$27 billion, it will unleash \$7 to \$10 of private sector investment—meaning we are looking at \$200 to \$300 billion that are going to get unleashed just in this section in that one program.

And critical Defense Production Act funding will ensure that we have robust domestic supply chains to install heat pumps in American buildings and responsibly source critical minerals for clean energy technologies made in America.

We have to break this whole addiction that we have not only to foreign oil coming into our country but also being dependent upon other countries for the clean energy technologies. We are going to do it here. That is what this bill says. We are going to tell people we don't need your oil any more than we need your sand. We are going to do it right here. We are going to build the technologies right here in our country.

So my time in Congress has taught me this: We cannot let the perfect be the enemy of the good. Ending up with nothing might be a viable political option, but it is not a viable planetary option. This is a good bill with broad-based appeal that lowers costs for consumers, fights inflation with deficit reduction, protects our environment with critical justice investments, and provides affordable healthcare access to all Americans.

In 2009, zero was an option, which this Senate took. Zero is not an option we can take. We must pass this legislation. And we will begin a pathway for generations to come that says: We understood your anger. We understood why you as a younger generation believe that the system had failed you and that it had not provided the solutions which you deserve.

So let's pass this bill and keep fighting the cities and States and in the White House and in Congress so that we can finish the job in the years ahead, meet our climate targets, and finally pass the Green New Deal that our country deserves.

This is our moment. And the beauty of it is that there is a poetic justice in it. And it is that Chevron only paid 2.8 percent on their profits last year. ExxonMobil only paid 3 percent on their profits last year. They are the ones who are going to pay for the solutions to the problems which they created. They are going to be the source of the funding because we are going to force them to finally pay their taxes, to pay their fair share of the dues to live in this great country.

That moment of justice is arriving. And it is justice. They are the ones who should be paying for this. They are the ones who have a moral, political, and economic responsibility to pay for this bill. And they right now are screaming; they are absolutely angry that we are going to take this action. But I will tell you this. We are going to be forced to do it with no Republican support because the GOP now stands for "Gas and Oil Party." It now stands for "Gang of Polluters." That is the GOP of today. And they are going to say: Oh, my goodness, look at all the socialism that is going into this package for wind and solar and all-electric

vehicles and batteries. And you know what this young generation's response is? What do you call tax breaks for oil, gas, and coal for 100 years? If that is not socialism, what is? And all we are looking for is fair treatment for the renewable energy revolution because once we give them the same kinds of incentives, get out of the way because we are going to have that revolution that young people in our country have wanted for so long.

So it is all on us, the Democrats. It is our moment to deliver for the American people and guarantee the resources we need to keep fighting for the future we deserve.

And, by the way, after we have created those 9 million new jobs, that is forever going to be a new political constituency in our country. They are going to be saying to Senators who are going to vote no today: What are you doing? You are voting against my new job that has been created?

And so this is just the beginning. And we are going to telescope the timeframe ultimately in order to finish the job.

Yes, we are now in a sprint to solve the problem because every night on every TV station, the lead stories are: floods and fires and every other imaginable consequence of climate change. And it is time, the moment has arrived, and the U.S. Senate, with only Democratic support, is ready to take the action that the younger generation in our country has been ready for.

I thank you for giving me the opportunity of being here.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

INFLATION REDUCTION ACT OF 2022

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I wanted to come down here tonight to talk a little bit about the bill that we have in front of us this weekend, the Inflation Reduction Act. I have been in the Senate for 13 years, and I think this is one of the most important pieces of legislation that we have ever considered.

Let me just say, also, that the Presiding Officer and I have been here for a long time, and there have been weeks and weeks and weeks, months, years that have gone by here where it felt like we haven't gotten anything done.

What an amazing moment to be here when we have a bipartisan infrastructure bill that we passed with the biggest investment in our infrastructure since Eisenhower was President. We passed the first bipartisan bill to overcome the NRA just a few weeks ago. Last week, we were able to pass the CHIPS Act to bring back semiconductors to the U.S.A. and the PACT Act, the veterans bill last night.

Today, we are here to talk about the Inflation Reduction Act. It is quite an amazing moment in our democracy and, I think, in the country's history. It is not the subject of my speech tonight, but I want to say, with the Presiding Officer on the floor, that there might be a reason to think that we are

at a moment in our country's history when we are actually ready, finally, to turn the page on the trickle-down economics that have created such an unfair economy for so many families and so many young people in this country and create, once again, in the United States, an economy that, when it grows, it grows for everybody, not just the people at the very top.

This bill fits into that. The bill on infrastructure fits into that. The bill on the semiconductors fits into that, as well.

If you look at the agenda Washington has pursued for the last 40 years or so, it is pretty simple: Let the big corporations do whatever they want and call it "freedom"; cut investments in working families and our future; and instead of grappling with the income inequality we have, instead of grappling with the economic mobility that we have, cut taxes for the wealthiest people in the country, cut taxes for the largest corporations in the country, hoping that those tax cuts will somehow magically trickle down to everyone else and pay for themselves. That has never happened.

Here is what happened instead: 40 years of an economy that has worked really well for the wealthiest people and corporations but hasn't worked very well for anybody else; an economy with income inequality higher than at any time since the 1920s, where the top 0.1 percent of Americans, a mere 160,000 families, hold basically the same amount of wealth as the bottom 90 percent of Americans, nearly 145 million families—160,000 families, the top 0.1 percent, hold as much wealth as the bottom 90 percent, 9 out of 10 Americans, nearly 145 million families—where kids—I am sad to say this in front of the kids here tonight—have a 50-50 shot of earning more than their parents, where that number used to be 90 percent; that charges families more for their healthcare than any other industrialized country in the world; that forces seniors in this country—and only in this country—to cut their pills in half or skip prescriptions or decide whether they are going to be able to eat or take their medicine; that is shackled to a global fossil fuel market dictated by tyrants like Vladimir Putin, despite our abundant resources at home and despite the urgent threat from climate change.

That is the legacy of the past 40 years of trickle-down economics. As I have said many, many times on this floor, we can't survive another 40 years like the last 40 years and expect to hold onto this democracy. I don't think we can survive another 10 years like this and expect to hold on to this democracy with this failed agenda.

Working families can't sustain it. Our democracy can't withstand it because, when people feel like they have lost the sense of opportunity for themselves and their families no matter how hard they work, that is when, you know, throughout human history,

somebody shows up. Some self-interested politician shows up and says: I alone can fix it. You don't need a democracy. You don't need the rule of law. You should expect your public sector and your private sector to be hopelessly corrupt, and you are a sucker if you don't believe that because people are going to take advantage of you.

We need a new agenda for America. I am pleased to say that we are closer, I think, tonight—this weekend—than we have been in a long time to pursuing one.

It started with the American Rescue Plan. It continued, as I said earlier, with the bipartisan infrastructure law we passed this year to rebuild our country and the bipartisan innovation bill that we passed last week to help us compete with China and bring thousands of good-paying jobs back home.

And, now, I hope we are close to passing the next part, the Inflation Reduction Act. This bill will lower costs for millions of families—at the pharmacy, at the pump, and on their monthly energy bills and insurance premiums. It will do more to achieve energy independence and fight climate change than anything that we have ever done as a nation.

And unlike the Trump tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans, which added \$1.9 trillion to the debt, notwithstanding the arguments that we have heard going back to Ronald Reagan—the false arguments that we have heard going back to Ronald Reagan—that these tax cuts will pay for themselves. Once again, of course, they didn't pay for themselves. And unlike that, a \$1.9 trillion hole blasted into our deficit when unemployment was only at 3.5 percent. Every cent of that money was borrowed just for the privilege of giving tax cuts to the wealthiest Americans. Fifty-two percent of that bill went to the top 5 percent of Americans. We borrowed every single cent to do that.

That would be no different than when the Presiding Officer was the mayor of Richmond, VA, and if he said to the people of Richmond: I have a really good idea for how we could spend a lot of money, but we are going to have to borrow money to do it.

And they said: Well, that sounds like a lot of money that you are borrowing. Tell us what you are spending it on. Are you using it for our roads and bridges?

No.

Are you using it for the parks?

No.

Are you using it for education, for mental health, which we desperately need in this country? Are you using it to transfer the local economy to greener energy?

No.

What are you using it for, Mr. Mayor, they would say.

And the answer is: I am going to borrow this massive amount of money, and I am going to give it to the two wealthiest neighborhoods in Richmond

and hope that it is just going to trickle down to everybody else.

I am not making it up. That is the theory. That is the policy. And that was the theory and the policy when Ronald Reagan was President. That was the theory and policy when Donald Trump was President.

And unlike those bills, every single cent in this bill is paid for. More than that, it cuts the deficit by over \$300 billion. If you listen to my Republican colleagues, at least some of them and the way they complain about this bill, you would think it was some sort of Bolshevik takeover of the U.S.A. It is ridiculous.

I think, sometimes, they just don't even want the public to know what is in this bill because what is in this bill is so popular with the American people.

Let's start with healthcare. For the first time ever, this bill requires Medicare to negotiate drug prices on behalf of the American people.

The Presiding Officer and I wrote a bill called Medicare-X. We introduced it, I think, in 2017, to create a public option so that everybody in America could have the benefit of choosing between their private insurance and public insurance. That is not in this bill. But in that bill, we said that Medicare ought to negotiate drug prices for seniors. This would allow Medicare to use its market power to drive down the costs of prescription drugs. That is going to save families thousands of dollars, and it is going to save our country billions of dollars.

The only reason we have not passed that is because special interests have succeeded at tying Medicare's hands so that pharmaceutical companies could keep charging Americans prices that no other developed nation in the world would tolerate—Americans like Julia from Denver. Her dad has a heart condition. He pays \$6,000 a month for medication. That is \$72,000 a year for something he needs to take for the rest of his life. That is outrageous, but I hear stories like that every day all over Colorado.

The Inflation Reduction Act also would cap out-of-pocket costs for seniors to \$2,000 a year so they aren't spending down their retirement to buy medication. I know seniors in Colorado who literally spend their entire retirement trying to figure out how to get the medication they need, the medication they have been prescribed by a doctor. The choices they have to make look unlike any other choices any senior has to make in any other country in the world.

I was with some people in Pueblo recently where one of the people said: I have three inhalers, but I can't afford the three inhalers. So I can only take one of them at a time, and I have been getting sicker and sicker as a result of that.

Another person in the room had worked her entire life at the local newspaper, and she was telling me that she was having to cut her medications

in order to make it through economically.

On top of that, this bill has a 3-year extension for tax credits to help millions of Americans pay for their health insurance, including over 150,000 Coloradans who are going to be able to afford their health insurance in ways they couldn't.

The second part of this bill closes tax loopholes for about 200 of the biggest corporations in America—those with over \$1 billion in profit. This comes directly from a bill that I wrote with Senator WARREN and with Senator KING. Today, these corporations use armies of lawyers and accountants that no middle-class family has, no working family has, no small business has to pay almost nothing in classes.

Last year, Chevron paid an effective rate of 1.8 percent. Bank of America paid 3.5 percent—3.5 percent. That is after the Trump tax cuts cut the corporate rate and took it down to, I think, it was 20 percent—which, by the way, there was no consensus to do. The consensus was at 25 percent. Here you have companies paying 1.8 percent, and 3.5 percent in the case of Bank of America. Amazon paid 6.1 percent. They might want to fire their CFO because they are paying a little more than the 1.8 and the 3.5. AT&T paid negative 4.1 percent. That means they got money back from the Treasury in tax credits.

In Colorado, a typical firefighter, teacher, or police officer has an effective tax rate of somewhere around 16 to 22 percent. So, on the one hand, you have working Americans paying 20 percent of their income in an economy that has barely lifted their incomes in 40 years, while billion-dollar corporations are paying virtually nothing.

I had a conversation the other day with a "Teacher of the Year" from Colorado. She is from Glenwood Springs. She said that she wasn't complaining, that she was just making an observation. She said 70 percent to 80 percent of her colleagues in the middle school in which she teaches and at the high school in Glenwood Springs have to work two and three jobs just so they can afford to live in Glenwood Springs.

Do we think it is all right for her to have to pay 22 percent of her income in taxes and the biggest corporations in America that are making more than \$1 billion in income don't have to at least pay 15 percent, much less the 20 percent gift that Donald Trump gave them when the number that everybody had basically agreed to was 25 percent? It is no wonder that Americans think this Tax Code is rigged against them.

We start to fix that problem with this bill. It is not everything that I would have wanted. I think we have a lot more to do to make this Tax Code fairer, not the least of which is to make permanent the expanded child tax credit that I worked on with SHERROD BROWN, CORY BOOKER, and KAMALA HARRIS; and the earned income tax credit that I worked on with

SHERROD BROWN to give working people the biggest tax cut they had in generations. That is one of the things that is not in this bill that I feel really terrible about.

This bill also is limiting something called the carried interest loophole. Most Americans have no idea what that is because 99.999999 percent of Americans are not hedge fund managers; they don't benefit from this loophole to lower their tax rate and pay less than their assistants or than their secretary.

That hasn't stopped my Republican colleagues from telling the American public that this bill would tax working people—that is what they are saying. And I guess that is true if by “working people” they mean hedge fund managers. Over half of them base their business in the Cayman Islands or billion dollar corporations. We are increasing their taxes—that is true—but there is nothing in this bill that is raising taxes on American families—nothing. Nothing.

It is amazing to me that people that I meet that simultaneously support the Trump tax cuts for the wealthiest people on the theory of trickle-down economics and are opposed to this bill on the theory that somehow the taxes that we are raising on, literally, the wealthiest humans in our country and the wealthiest corporations are somehow going to trickle down to people in the workplace. It is never going to happen. It never has.

The last part of this bill contains energy. And, first, I think it is important for us to have some context. It has been nearly 50 years since the 1973 oil crisis spurred America to seek “energy independence.”

It has been more than 30 years since NASA scientist James Hansen urged Congress to fight climate change, I think at a hearing held by my predecessor Tim Wirth. And until now we haven't had a plan, we have had no plan to accomplish either.

We haven't just stalled—in some cases, we have actually gone backward. At home, right now, our use of coal has increased during the Biden administration. Abroad, Germany has been forced to reactivate coal plants after Putin's attack on Ukraine, while other EU nations plan on rationing natural gas or turning on their coal plants.

Instead of leading the world with a coherent approach on these issues, Washington has been deadlocked in the same old, tired politics around climate and energy. And as usual, the American people have paid the price.

They have paid it at the pump with incomes that have barely budged in this economy. In Colorado, we have paid for it in homes incinerated by record wildfires, mountain passes washed out by mudslides, fields withering in extreme drought that nobody has seen for 800 years, the Colorado River in crisis, and a galloping fear that the American West will somehow be unrecognizable to our grandchildren.

When this deal fell apart 10 days ago or so, whenever it was, my heart was broken as a result of it, because I thought about what Colorado has been going through. And I thought about—I had to call and explain to my 22-year-old and 21-year-old and 17-year-old daughters that once again we had failed.

And their sense of disbelief, of incredulity—which, by the way, I think is shared with every single member of their generation in this country, whether they are Democrats or whether they are Republicans or independents or if they don't even know what political party they are in. How can you not deal with this? How can you place this burden on us?

And if we pass this bill, we are going to be able to look the next generation straight in the eye and say: We are actually living up to our responsibility to you, at least with respect to climate. And that fills me with joy. And that is the reason to support this bill and feel good about it.

We can't afford another 10 years of dysfunction on these issues. This transition should have started 25 years ago—25 years ago.

And in my opinion, we urgently need a plan, an energy policy that secures the energy our economy needs and relentlessly lowers climate pollution.

In other words, we need a plan for clean energy independence. And we can start by being honest about where we are; I think that is really important.

Today, 60 percent of our power generation comes from fossil fuel; only 20 percent comes from renewables. Over 90 percent—90 percent of our transportation relies on fossil fuels, and less than 3 percent uses electricity. Across the economy, 80 percent of primary energy consumption still comes from fossil fuel. Renewables are just 12 percent.

We have made some progress, but to hit our emissions targets, renewables have to scale from 12 percent today to at least 60 percent by 2050.

That is why, even under the most ambitious projections, some fossil fuels will likely remain in our energy mix for decades, even through 2050. Don't take my word for it; that is not me saying it. These projections are from the National Academy of Sciences, the International Energy Agency, and Princeton. And that is the reality that they confront us with.

So when I hear politicians and others whip up Twitter with promises to reject every permit for new infrastructure, they ignore this reality. And I worry that we cede the scientific high ground to critics of climate action, who then paint climate advocates as disconnected or deluded or even dangerous to the economy. And the only thing that wins is our fossil fuels. The only thing that wins is coal.

And I worry sometimes that these claims also repel the very Americans we need to support our energy transition. If our position in the short term is to oppose every new piece of infra-

structure, we are essentially forcing America to choose between scarcity and higher prices, to choose between either less energy or higher prices.

I was in Belgium and, with our colleague CHRIS COONS, met with the deputy prime minister there who said—we were on our way to Scotland for the climate conference, and he said: We have to meet these climate targets. We have to meet these climate targets in 2050.

And then he said: But I don't know how we are going to meet them and not lose the middle class.

And I said: What do you mean by that? And he said: I don't know how we are going to meet them and not have yellow vests break out all over Europe.

And we are seeing that now. We are seeing where Putin has cut off Russian oil and Russian gas because of his invasion of Ukraine—the challenges that it creates in democratic societies when it comes to energy. There is no country in the world better positioned on this question, better positioned to lead this transition to clean energy than the United States of America.

There is not a country in Europe; there is not a country in the Middle East. China is not better positioned than we are on this. We are the best positioned country in the world to lead this transition.

In fact, I think we are the only country in the world that can lead this transition—which, by the way, is why it was such a tragedy when it looked 10 days ago like this bill wasn't going anywhere, because then the rest of the world looks at us and says: Why should we do anything if the country that is most capable of being able to do this can't do it?

And what I want to assure you is that these outcomes of scarcity or higher prices, neither of those outcomes are going to support the broad and durable support that we need to be able to not just pass climate policy but keep it the law of the land and make sure that it lasts until the next generation of Americans can pick it up from us and say: Thank you for putting us in a decent position; we are going to finish the job.

And then if we can't pass this bill and we can't make progress on climate change, then what we have, instead, is our current policy, which is the status quo, which drives up prices, is bad for our national security, and is terrible at reducing emissions. That is where we are today. That is why coal is up, as I said, during the Biden administration.

For a successful transition, we have got to smooth the path with domestic energy production now to stabilize prices and bridge our way to a clean energy economy tomorrow. And to do that, we need every tool on the table.

This means deploying renewables like wind and solar, which my State has led in. We need to do it at record rates. We need to invest in next-generation technology from carbon capture to hydrogen to advanced nuclear.

That means we need to recognize the role that natural gas has played in our transition. Over the last 15 years, replacing coal with natural gas has accounted for 60 percent of our national carbon reductions, and that is really good. But we need to do a lot better because the time is ticking. And now we have the opportunity, because of this bill, to secure America's position as the global standard for production—modeled on our example in Colorado, where we passed the first law to capture fugitive methane when Senator HICKENLOOPER was our Governor—by driving down methane pollution and strengthening cleanup and monitoring across the supply chain.

The last thing we should accept is the leaking pipes that the status quo allows when we have tools available to do better.

And we can't accept the painful price shocks that the American people have to bear because of our lack of a coherent energy policy.

Fortunately, this bill lays the foundation for a responsible energy policy for the country, and it has the largest investment to fight climate change in the Nation's history. And it is full of proposals I have worked on for years, proposals to rapidly deploy clean energy and to provide industry the long-term certainty it needs, to boost American manufacturing for wind and solar and batteries to power electric vehicles and our energy grid, to invest \$14 billion to help rural communities transition from fossil fuels, along with over \$25 billion for environmentally friendly farming, conservation, and forest health.

We also have an opportunity in this bill to address the drought that is ravaging the American West and to do it in a way that measurably improves the situation of the Colorado River Basin, reflects the interest of the people of my State and other States in the Upper Basin, and actually deals, finally, with the long-term causes of the crisis that we face.

When you add it all up, this bill would put us on track to reduce carbon pollution 40 percent by the end of the decade. That is light years ahead of where we would be without it.

But even if you don't care about climate change, you should still like this bill because it lowers costs for families. How does it do that?

By increasing the supply of American energy with a responsible approach while reducing demand for oil and gas by putting more renewables and electric vehicles on the market.

According to a recent study, this bill would reduce the average family's electricity bill by hundreds of dollars a year. From my perspective, as I said, this transition should have started 25 years ago, and we can't wait any longer. Now is the moment to act.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine should finally rid America and our allies of the delusion that we can continue to rely on foreign dictators for our energy

needs. It should remind us how foolish we have been to surrender the lifeblood of our economy to the whims of tyrants.

So nearly 50 years after the 1973 oil crisis, let's make this the year that we finally pass a coherent plan for America's energy independence. Let's finally organize our thinking and advance a plan that liberates us from foreign energy and tackles the threat of climate change head-on.

And while we are at it, let's reforge the engine of American manufacturing to produce the clean energy we need and to create thousands of good-paying jobs along the way.

Let's support our European allies by exporting cleaner American energy so they don't have to rely on coal or Russian gas to heat their homes through the winter.

There is no country in the world better prepared than the United States to lead this effort. And this bill will do more than anything we have ever done to strengthen our hand in this regard.

In another era, a proposal like this would have received 70 votes on the Senate floor. Every provision in here is a victory for common sense and a victory for the American people over special interests and the status quo.

Frankly, I don't know how many people can go home and say they voted against a balanced approach to achieve energy independence, fight climate change, and lower costs for families at this moment in our history.

I don't know how you would go home and say they voted to preserve tax loopholes for hedge fund managers and billion-dollar corporations that no American family can even imagine as they are paying the rates of taxation that they are paying or how they voted to let pharmaceutical companies continue to gouge the American people instead of letting Medicare negotiate on their behalf; how they voted against reducing our deficit by \$300 billion.

But that is the choice we have in front of us. To me, it is a choice that is obvious. We have got to pass this bill. We need to seize the moment to lower costs for the American people, to make our Tax Code a little fairer, to secure our energy independence, and spark a new era of clean energy manufacturing and innovation to support our allies and lead the world in a fight against climate change and, hopefully, hopefully, leave something a little bit better for the next generation of Americans.

I thank my colleague from New Jersey for his patience.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I was happy to listen to my colleague from Colorado's erudite exposition of what the opportunity is before us and what it means for the American people, and so I very much appreciate it.

TRIBUTE TO KEITH ROACHFORD

Mr. President, I come to the floor today for a very important reason. I

rise not to introduce a bill nor to ask my colleagues for unanimous consent. No.

I am here for one simple reason, and I want to make sure that the C-SPAN cameras are capturing this moment for posterity.

I come to the floor today to honor Keith Roachford, a member of my staff who has faithfully served the State of New Jersey, the U.S. Senate, and the United States of America for more than 35 years.

As you can see from Keith's face, it is clear that he had no idea this was happening. We told him he was coming for another reason, and I don't think we would have gotten him otherwise.

But, nonetheless, I rise today because, after 35 years and 18 Congresses, Keith is retiring from the Senate, and as result, I wanted to come to the floor to send him off with a tribute befitting his legendary career.

A native son of Willingboro, NJ, Keith has served not one, not two but four U.S. Senators for the Garden State. He is the very definition of institutional knowledge, and countless fellow staff members can attest to his experience, which has saved the day on more than one occasion.

Keith has sometimes said that he has been here so long he came with the furniture. It is a classic Keith line, a glimpse not only into his sense of humor but also his view of how staff work behind the scenes gets things done.

Now, that may be the case, but today, Keith, I rise to shine a spotlight on your illustrious career.

To start, I would like to share some of the stories that his colleagues have sent me:

Keith has not only been a mentor to me, he's also been a friend to anyone lucky enough to come into contact with him.

When I think of Keith, the words that come to mind are helpful, generous, thoughtful—a patient and understanding team player.

Another one said:

He is so kind to everyone, from interns to the Chief of Staff, and is always—always—willing to share his knowledge with others.

So it brings me immense joy to speak these words into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD so that, like Keith's legacy, they may stand the test of time.

But beyond his accolades, beyond his track record and sterling reputation, Keith, at heart, is a humble man. I know it isn't easy for him to be sitting here, listening to me shower praise on him, but to that I say: Well, you are still on the payroll so you will have to bear with it.

But above all, Keith is a family man, a devoted husband to his wife Sandy and an incredible father to his beloved children, Rick, Daniel, and Lauren.

He is a man that every day for the last 36 years has braved the brutal beltway traffic to come into work in the Hart Senate Office Building. And he is a man that every weekend has made a similar trip with his family to attend

services at St. George's Episcopal Church here in DC.

Keith credits his faith for guiding him throughout his life, and he would be the first to tell you that it has been a moral compass for him, season after political season. But as the Book of James asks, "What good is someone who says they have faith but does not have works?"

Fret not. In addition to his duties as senior warden of the Vestry at St. George's, Keith takes the time to give back to his community. He is a member of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew. He serves as the secretary of the convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, and he is a Boy Scout leader.

At every opportunity, he goes out of his way to give back. It is a trait he learned growing up. As the son and grandson of public servants, Keith was taught from an early age that service to others is the highest calling.

His grandfather was a transit operator for the city of New York, while his father, a veteran of the U.S. Army and the New Jersey Army National Guard, worked for the sanitation department for 37 years. It is no surprise, then, that Keith has followed in their footsteps. He is a throwback to a previous era, one where individuals spent years, if not decades, working for the same organization.

I know Keith never intended to spend 36 years working in the Senate. He used to joke with colleagues that he came to Washington fresh out of the college just to try it out. But in the process, he has gone from working as a constituent liaison, to mail director, to deputy chief of staff, and so much more.

Today, Keith is an indispensable resource for our legislative staff. He is our go-to person for appropriations, defense, veterans' issues, homeland security, and the budget.

He has had a hand in passing countless initiatives for our office, from supporting community development financial institutions to shoring up supply chains and expanding senior housing, to inserting provisions in the PACT Act—that is how we got him here, telling him that is what we were going to talk about—that addresses the needs of veterans suffering from Gulf war illness.

Keith has had a hand in far too many legislative wins to count, but suffice to say, the legend of Keith Roachford has led to what we call "the Roachford Rule," which is simple: With every appropriations letter I sign on to, with every bill I cosponsor, for something to pass the Roachford Rule, it needs to have a tangible benefit for New Jersey families.

Much like the man it is named after, the Roachford Rule is about connecting what we do here in DC to the people whose lives it affects back home.

Long after Keith has left the Senate, his rule will live on, a testament to his relentless pursuit of good government,

a trademark for a public servant devoted to the common good, a namesake that all of us in this Chamber would do well to emulate.

I will end with this: Last March, I came to this floor to rebuke the words that a colleague used in reference to the January 6 attack. I won't use the time to rehash what I said; instead, I will use this time to once again lift up the bravery and the courage of the man who compelled me to act.

Late one night, Keith sent me an email that outlined the pain and the outrage he felt after reading our colleague's comments. In personal terms, he relayed how his entire life he has had to endure—in overt and covert ways—the harmful legacy of racism and the stain of White supremacy.

Knowing Keith, it could not have been easy to type that message to his boss, a sitting U.S. Senator.

But as I said in that speech, there comes a time when you either ruffle some feathers and speak the truth or you fail to do justice to the values you hold dear.

The U.S. Senate is a better institution, and I am certainly a better Senator, for having Keith Roachford work in these Halls. He is man of principle, a man of God, a man who has put every ounce of his being into the work that New Jerseyans have sent us here to do.

He is the first person to tell you that he is not perfect, the first to say that he has certainly seen it all over 36 long years of service, but, by God, I cannot help but feel so thankful, so grateful that we have been blessed with his presence. He is a calm and steady hand that has helped guide our office since 2006.

He is the quiet one, the one who keeps his powder dry and plays the long game; the one who never loses sight of the ultimate goal, which is to improve the lives of hard-working American families.

John Madison, one of the Framers of our Constitution, once said:

If men were angels, no government would be needed.

I have never met an angel, but I have worked alongside Keith Roachford for 16 of those 36 years. He has served with me longer than any other of the U.S. Senators he has worked with. And it is why I can truthfully say without pause or equivocation that Keith Roachford is truly doing God's work here on Earth.

When Keith first mentioned to me that he was thinking of leaving, he said the most incredible thing. He said:

You know, Senator, it's just that with the pandemic and with work from home, I've just gotten to spend more time with Sandy and the kids.

We don't want to wait any longer to get started.

We make breakfast and we take walks. . . .

I just don't want to wait any longer to do that.

That is Keith in a nutshell. That is who he is. So I want to congratulate Keith on an incredible 36 years of Sen-

ate service. We are going to miss you, certainly so. But to you, to Sandy, and to your three children, we wish you all the best on a well-deserved retirement.

Thank you, Keith.

I yield the floor.

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

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 967, 994, 1094, 1095, 1104, 1126, 1127, 1128, 891, 892, 893, 1114, 1123, and 1069 through 1077; 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; and that the President be immediately notified Senate's action.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nominations of Nasser H. Paydar, of Indiana, to be Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education, Department of Education; David Applegate, of Pennsylvania, to be Director of the United States Geological Survey; Susie Feliz, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Commerce; Donald R. Cravins, of Maryland, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for Minority Business Development (New Position); Jaime Areizaga-Soto, of Virginia, to be Chairman of the Board of Veterans' Appeals for a term of six years; Kathryn Wheelbarger, of California, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the United States Institute of Peace for a term of four years; Michael K. Singh, of Illinois, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the United States Institute of Peace for a term of four years; Jonathan Wingate Burks, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the United States Institute of Peace for a term of four years; Edward Gabriel, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the United States Institute of Peace for a term of four years; Nathalie Rayes, of Massachusetts, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the United States Institute of Peace for a term of four years; Mary Green Swig, of California, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the United States Institute of Peace for a term of four years; Yohannes Abraham, of Virginia, to be Representative of the United States of America to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, with the rank and status of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary; Shirley Sachi Sagawa, of Maryland, to be a