

of them done before the August State work period.

In a few hours, we will formally begin the process of passing the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 by voting on the motion to proceed. Our meetings with the Parliamentarian have now largely concluded, and we thank her and her staff for their hard work and diligence on such a large bill in such a short period of time. And now that our meetings with the Parliamentarian have largely concluded, we have a bill before us that can win the support of all 50 Democrats.

I am happy to report to my colleagues that the bill we presented to the Parliamentarian remains largely intact. The bill, when passed, will meet all of our goals: fighting climate change, lowering healthcare costs, closing tax loopholes abused by the wealthy, and reducing the deficit.

This is a major win for the American people and a sad commentary on the Republican Party as they actively fight provisions that lower costs for the American family.

As the Inflation Reduction Act works its way through the floor, the American people are going to learn an unmistakable truth about this proposal: It was written, first and foremost, with the American people in mind. It reduces inflation, it lowers their costs, and it fights climate change. For seniors who have faced the indignity of rationing medications or skipping them altogether, the Inflation Reduction Act will lower prescription drug costs and finally cap out-of-pocket expenses.

For families that have fallen behind on the electric bill while trying to stay cool through a heat wave, this bill will lower energy costs and provide the largest investment in clean energy ever in American history. For every child deprived of clean air and a neighborhood where they can play safely outside, away from smog and exhaust fumes, this bill will help reverse air pollution and help clean up communities that have endured the shadow of congested highways and industrial sites. And, as the most significant action of climate change ever, it will help deliver our children and grandchildren the planet they deserve.

The Inflation Reduction Act was written with the American people in mind: families struggling to pay the bills, kids who struggle with asthma and pollution, seniors who can't afford lifesaving medications. This bill is for them.

For many years, many in Washington promised to address some of the biggest challenges facing our Nation, only to fall short. Many have talked about the need to act on climate change, the need to hold drug companies accountable, the need to make the Tax Code fairer. But where previous efforts have fallen short, this Senate majority is on the verge of succeeding.

After years of trying, we will finally empower Medicare to negotiate the price of prescription drug costs. After

years of trying, we will finally cap out-of-pocket expenses and make vaccines free for our seniors.

After years of trying, after years of Americans calling for action—particularly our young people—Congress will pass the largest clean energy package ever. We will cut emissions by 40 percent by 2030, helping us avert the worst consequences of a warming planet. That is a huge goal, and we are going to meet it. We will prevent nearly 4,000 deaths and 100,000 asthma attacks each year by reducing air pollution. We will save Americans money on their utility bill by making it easier for them to tap into clean energy and expand incentives for utility companies to explore cleaner ways to generate power. We will make it easier to finally usher in the era of greater solar and wind power, battery storage, and EVs and bring manufacturing of this technology back to America. We will restore coastlines, regenerate our forests, shield communities everywhere from the danger of droughts and sweltering heat waves.

Through it all, we will create more than 9 million jobs over the next decade—good-paying union jobs—an average of nearly a million a year. So many of those jobs, as I said, will be good-paying union jobs.

From the moment Democrats announced the Inflation Reduction Act, Senate Republicans have fruitlessly tried every approach under the sun to lay a glove on our bill.

First, they said our bill will make inflation worse, only to give up on that once everyone from Larry Summers to Hank Paulson, to seven Nobel laureates said it would do the opposite. Then they tried calling our bill a bill of tax hikes on the middle class before changing their minds and actually admitting that the bill contains no tax rate increases at all for the middle class.

At every turn, they have resorted to the decades-old talking point of calling our bill nothing but wasteful spending, conveniently ignoring that our bill, in fact, lowers the deficit and is completely paid for.

I will grant my Republican colleagues that their task is not easy. By one measure, over 65 percent of Americans support the policies in the Inflation Reduction Act, and other polls reflect the same. Republicans haven't been able to get around the fact that Americans like that we are letting Medicare negotiate the price of prescription drugs. They like that we will close tax loopholes that allow billion-dollar companies to pay zero in taxes. Voices across the country, from Nobel-winning economists to former Treasury Secretaries, to even Republican movie star ex-Governors, have all praised the Inflation Reduction Act as an inflation-fighting, climate-saving, job-creating piece of legislation.

At a time of seemingly impenetrable gridlock, the Inflation Reduction Act will show the American people that

when the moment demands it, Congress is still capable of taking big steps to solve big challenges. We will show the American people that, yes, we are capable of passing a historic climate package and rein in drug companies and make our Tax Code fairer. We are able to make big promises and work hard at keeping them as well.

We know that Republicans will continue their mightiest to try to smear our work before the bill is passed. This isn't our first time going through the reconciliation process, and no one is going to be surprised when the other side comes up with wild, misleading, and wholly partisan amendments that have nothing—nothing—to do with our bill. These efforts will not deter us. No matter how long it takes, the Senate is going to stay in session to finish this bill.

In short, this is one of the most comprehensive and far-reaching pieces of legislation that has come before the Congress in decades. It will help just about every citizen in this country and make America a much better place.

We are not leaving until the job is done. The American people deserve nothing less. So let's get to work today.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that following the vote on the motion to discharge the Uhlmann nomination, the Senate execute the previous order with respect to the Milstein nomination.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXTENDING BY 19 DAYS THE AUTHORIZATION FOR THE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE DOMESTIC TRAFFICKING VICTIMS' FUND

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 4785, which was introduced earlier today.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 4785) to extend by 19 days the authorization for the special assessment for the Domestic Trafficking Victims' Fund.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. I further ask that the bill be considered read three times and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 4785) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 4785

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION FOR SPECIAL ASSESSMENT FOR DOMESTIC TRAFFICKING VICTIMS' FUND.

Section 3014(a) of title 18, United States Code, is amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking "September 11" and inserting "September 30".

MOTION TO DISCHARGE—Continued

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

FLOODING IN KENTUCKY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, Eastern Kentucky is again facing the threat of stormy weather and flash floods this weekend. Emergency responders have been on the ground since the flooding began and will continue their critical role in the coming days. We are making sure the Federal Government is stepping up as well.

In addition to the Governor and State lawmakers, I have been in personal contact with the President, Secretaries Mayorkas and Becerra, and FEMA Administrator Criswell going back to the beginning of this emergency.

FEMA has been on the ground since day one, providing enormous help with search and rescue operations. Once rebuilding begins, their role will only be more important.

With the President's major disaster declaration, FEMA is now authorized to send financial assistance directly to the flood victims. These funds will be critical to those who lost their homes in the flooding, especially since many lack flood insurance. To reach remote residents, FEMA representatives are going door-to-door and speaking directly to survivors in shelters to make sure everyone who qualifies for help actually receives it. The Agency has already approved hundreds of thousands of dollars for affected Kentuckians.

FEMA is also helping pull together a wide swath of Federal Agencies to supplement the Kentucky National Guard and State agencies. The Forest Service is already on the ground, clearing debris from roadways. The Small Business Administration is issuing loans to help employers rebuild. The Army Corps of Engineers is ensuring all dams in the region remain operational.

The Federal response so far has been extraordinary.

I have been proud to stand with the Governor and Kentucky's entire congressional delegation to help expand the number of counties receiving assistance and streamline the aid. Kentuckians can visit my official website

to see the full list of services offered by our Federal disaster response Agencies.

The Federal Government has done an excellent job so far. The crisis is far from over.

Soon, I will visit the region myself to meet with flood victims and listen to their concerns, and then I will take what I hear from my constituents back to Washington and ensure we stand by their side as we rebuild bigger and better than before.

INFLATION

Madam President, now on an entirely different matter, a year and a half ago, Democrats misread a 50–50 Senate as a mandate for \$1.9 trillion in party-line reckless spending. The result has been the worst inflation in 40 years.

With Democrats in charge, working families are having to spend thousands of extra dollars each year just to tread water. Grocery costs are through the roof. Energy bills are skyrocketing. Gas prices are more than \$1 higher than on Inauguration Day. American families are trapped in an inflation spiral, where many workers have earned pay raises on paper, but even those bigger paychecks buy them less and less every time they go to the store.

Because of Democrats' historic failure on the economy, the American people have lost their patience. Ninety percent say they are feeling anxious about inflation. Only 28 percent like what President Biden is doing about it, and just 22 percent think we will be in any better shape after another year of Democratic leadership. But, amazingly, Senate Democrats are misreading the American people's outrage as a mandate for yet another—yet another—reckless taxing-and-spending spree. Democrats have already robbed American families once through inflation, and now their solution is to rob American families yet a second time.

Democrats want to ram through hundreds of billions of dollars in tax hikes and hundreds of billions of dollars in reckless spending—and for what? For a so-called inflation bill that will not meaningfully reduce inflation at all and will actually make inflation even worse in the short term; for a so-called economic bill that will kill American jobs and hammer our manufacturing sector; for a so-called climate bill that will have no meaningful impact on global temperatures whatsoever; for a so-called prescription drug bill that will result in fewer lifesaving medicines and higher prices for the new cures that are invented. Every fact I have just laid out has come from non-partisan experts and academics.

Democrats' bill will do nothing to meaningfully cut inflation. Hundreds of billions of dollars in tax hikes on a struggling economy will help kill American jobs everywhere, except the IRS, that is, where the bill would fund the hiring of—listen to this—86,000 new tax collectors plus new cars and new computers.

Jacking up Americans' electricity bills and gas prices in order to sub-

sidize rich people buying luxury cars and new appliances will not make one dent in the future trajectory of global temperatures.

Democrats will choke off the development of new lifesaving medicines if they pretend that making things cheaper is as simple as passing a law saying they ought to be cheaper.

Survey after survey, poll after poll has proven that none of this nonsense is what American people want Democrats to focus on. The American people don't want hundreds of millions of dollars in Green New Deal waste. They want less inflation, not more. American families don't want tens of thousands more IRS agents. What they would like are more Border Patrol and ICE agents. American families don't want Democrats policing what kinds of stoves and clothes dryers they can put in their homes. What they want is for Democrats to actually start policing our city streets.

Democrats have decided their first economic disaster justifies a second economic disaster. The working people of this country feel very, very differently.

Now, on a related matter. I want to drill down on Democrats' plan to take a buzz saw to the research and development behind new lifesaving medical treatment and cures. The American people have enough common sense to know that the government can't actually make something cost less by making it illegal to raise the price. Let me say that again. The government can't actually make something cost less by making it illegal to raise its price. This was the logic of college sophomore socialism. It is not fair that a certain thing costs more than we like. Why doesn't the government simply pass a law making it cheaper?

Well, the world would be a lot easier for everybody if things actually worked that way. It would certainly be easier to be a member of Congress. We could just vote to set the price of everything in America, snap our fingers and everybody in the country would enjoy \$5 smartphones, \$10 TVs, and \$100 pickup trucks. What a concept. Why hasn't anybody thought of this genius idea before?

Well, of course, people have thought of it before. Plenty of governments have tried crude price-fixing—Cuba, Venezuela, the old Soviet Union, not exactly thriving paradises, not pinnacles of prosperity, well-being, or innovation; not the examples we would want to follow.

Everybody wants prescription drugs and complex medicines to be more affordable. Everybody wants to help struggling families. That is the goal we all share. But you know what would not achieve that goal? Empowering some Biden administration bureaucrat to sit down at a desk and arbitrarily name the price that manufacturers can charge.

Democrats' policy would not bring about some paradise where we all get