

essential daily tasks such as meal preparation, transportation, and medication management. Direct support professionals provide critical home- and community-based services—HCBS—that allow individuals to stay connected with their communities.

As direct support professionals stepped up during the pandemic and provided care while facing increased personal risks as frontline workers, many faced long-standing difficulties such as inadequate wages and benefits. These challenges disproportionately affect racial and ethnic minorities, who comprise 62 percent of the home care workforce, which includes direct support professionals. These issues have led to high turnover and vacancy rates, contributing to a growing shortage of direct support professionals.

Even as this shortage persists and millions of jobs in the field remain open, demand for direct support professionals is expected to increase by at least 1.4 million new direct care jobs by 2026, according to PHI. An insufficient number of direct support professionals will likely mean longer wait lists for individuals seeking assistance, force providers to turn away new referrals, or discontinue programs and services. These circumstances hurt quality of care and put further stress on family caregivers.

Under President Biden's leadership, we have taken steps to invest in home- and community-based services by building up the home care workforce and expanding access to care. I am proud to have voted for the American Rescue Plan Act, which—among many critical provisions—included \$12.7 billion for HCBS. I am also a cosponsor of the Better Care Better Jobs Act, which would build on the funding from American Rescue Plan Act by continuing enhanced Medicaid funding for HCBS for States that expand access to these services and invest in the workforce, such as the direct support professionals.

It is more important than ever that we take the time to recognize the work of those who choose to be direct support professionals. I would like to congratulate two Marylanders who were recognized this year for their work as direct support professionals: Maria Swift of Penn-Mar Humans Services received the American Network of Community Options and Resources' National Direct Support Professional of the Year Award and Tammy Wright of Consumer Direct Care Network received the Maryland State award. Maria and Tammy are making an enormous difference and I appreciate their service to others. I would also like to thank Senators Collins, Blumenthal, Brown, Casey, Kaine, King, Klobuchar, Menendez, Smith, Van Hollen, and Warren for joining me in showing our appreciation for direct support professionals across the Nation and recognizing the essential role they play in our healthcare system.

Mr. SCHUMER. I further ask that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble

be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 767) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

RECOGNIZING AND SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL FORENSIC SCIENCE WEEK

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 768, submitted earlier today.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 768) recognizing and supporting the goals and ideals of National Forensic Science Week.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 768) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2022

Mr. SCHUMER. And, finally—I thank again my colleagues from Oklahoma and Nebraska—I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 3 p.m. on Monday, September 19, and that following the prayer and the pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Pan nomination; further, that the cloture motions filed during today's session ripen at 5:30 p.m.; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Monday's session, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SCHUMER. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senators LANKFORD and SASSE.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

ABRAHAM ACCORDS

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, 2 years ago, almost to the exact moment, I was sitting on the south lawn of the White House in the blazing Sun, where a redhead should never sit, getting a sunburn, on a hot September day in DC, watching leadership of the UAE, Bahrain, Israel, and the United States all shake hands and sign an agreement called the Abraham Accords. It was a remarkable moment in American history.

We have become so accustomed in the last 2 years to this conversation about the Abraham Accords, we lose track that it was just 2 years ago that we had one of the greatest breakthroughs in Middle East peace that we have had in decades.

In 1979, Egypt and Israel came together for a peace agreement under President Jimmy Carter and the Camp David Accords. In 1994, Jordan and Israel normalized relationships under President Clinton. But for 26 years, there were no additional peace agreements and, quite frankly, very few conversations even. It stopped. All the conversation among foreign affairs was that you had to resolve the Palestinian conflict before anything else could be resolved in the Middle East, and for 26 years, all the focus was on that.

The Trump administration came in and put the whole thing on its head and said: What if? What if we work towards peace agreements outside of the Palestinian conversation? If we set that aside, could we still normalize agreements?

Again, most people said: No, that is not possible—until 2 years ago today. Two years ago today, when the leaders of UAE, Bahrain, Israel, and the United States met together and signed an agreement, they started not just a process, they started a conversation and a dialogue. They shook hands and signed an agreement that had remarkable statements in it about religious liberty that we look at and think: The Arab world would not sign that, but they did, quite frankly, because people hadn't asked them to.

There were conversations and agreements made about energy policy, about economic development in a region of the world that many would say that no one will ever meet and this will never get better.

President Reagan once said:

Our involvement in the search for Middle East peace is not a matter of preference; it is a moral imperative.

We are a people of peace. We are a people, as a nation, passionate about religious liberty. We are a people who want to see a nation joining other nations in economic development. It is who we are. It is who we have been from the beginning, and we are at our best when we are expanding that.

Since the signing of that document, several things have happened in that 2-year time period.

The first thing that happened, really, was that in October of 2020, Sudan raised their hand and said: I want to join that agreement. Then, in December of 2020, Morocco raised their hand and said: I want to be in that agreement. It quickly went from four nations to five, to six, all in this ongoing dialogue about peace in the region.

The countries have exchanged Ambassadors since then. Again, that may not sound revolutionary, but it is in that region. The UAE, Morocco, and Bahrain all opened up Embassies in Israel—again, revolutionary. Israel opened up its Embassy—the first ever in the Gulf nations—in Abu Dhabi in January of 2021. It opens up its next Embassy in Bahrain in September of 2021.

The UAE and Israel have signed comprehensive free-trade agreements. There is now \$10 billion worth of trade in the next 5 years that has been set up between those nations. Trade has begun between Israel and Morocco. In fact, it has increased 94 percent in a year. Trade between the UAE and Israel has increased 88 percent in 1 year. Trade between Israel and Egypt, even, has increased 41 percent in the last year and between Israel and Jordan, with a longstanding agreement, has increased 55 percent.

The UAE and Morocco now have university students who are studying in Israeli universities—something we thought we would never see. The UAE has overhauled its school curriculum to increase tolerance and understanding of other faiths and other religious groups.

Dozens of daily flights are now moving in those Abraham Accord countries, bringing business and tourism. There are even real conversations about water, about energy sharing and development and large economic infrastructure projects.

There are other countries, even, in the region that have started to take notice of this. Countries like Saudi Arabia are now allowing Israeli-bound flights to fly through Saudi airspace. Now, again, that may not seem revolutionary to some, that planes get to fly over them, but, you understand, 2 years ago, that didn't happen. The Saudis made every Israeli-bound flight go around their airspace. Israel and Saudi Arabia have also participated in multi-lateral naval and air drills, alongside UAE, Bahrain, and other countries. It is an enormous shift.

If I can even say this in the region, Israel and Lebanon are very close right now to forming an agreement on what

they call the Blue Line, the border between Israel and Lebanon, including the maritime areas. What does that matter? It is a tremendous development for Lebanon, for their economic development, because there is a large natural gas field just off of Lebanon's coast, but the border has been unresolved for years.

In the conflict between nations and the trust that has collapsed, the Abraham Accords have provided an opportunity and a moment for the nations in the region to say: If peace can begin with UAE and Bahrain and Sudan and Morocco and Israel and recognition and economic development and Ambassadors can be exchanged, who else can engage in economic development?

Let's start with their neighbor Lebanon. To build trust is to also build clear borders. This is real progress in 2 years.

My challenge to the administration and to our State Department is, fan the flame. Keep going on this. We have seen nations begin to do economic development, families meeting other families, school curriculum changing to taking out anti-Semitic tropes, basically, out of their curriculum. We have seen real progress in this area. Keep going. Other nations should be welcomed to be able to join in the Abraham Accords. It is not closed. Other nations can join in that economic development.

There are four of us who began the Abraham Accords Caucus: myself, Senator ROSEN, Senator ERNST, and Senator BOOKER. We launched out the four of us and invited all of our colleagues to be able to join into it. Our focus is to be able to work with the Ambassadors of those nations to say: How can we partner together to bless what has already occurred, and how can we expand into other nations? How can we encourage increased economic development?

Now, there are still very real challenges. The work is not done by any means, but it has at least begun, and progress is taking off—this simple principle of economic engagement, going past all of the government noise and saying: What if we allowed infrastructure to be able to work together? What if we allowed tourism to be able to happen? What if we allowed businesses to work with other businesses in other nations that used to be hostile? How can we engage in such a way that would help?

The four of us in the Abraham Accords Caucus brought to the floor today a resolution to recognize this 2-year anniversary. It sat before all 100 Senators, and I don't know a single Senator who is opposed to that because we all want to see peace in the Middle East. We all want to see that kind of progress, and we all want to see this increase.

So, to our State Department, keep the work going. Keep the conversation going. To nations around the world that used to be hostile to Israel and the

region, why don't we set down the past and prepare our families for the future?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

INFLATION

Mr. SASSE. Madam President, first, I would like to associate myself with the comments of the Senator from Oklahoma and thank him for all of the work he has done on this.

The Abraham Accords are really something to celebrate, something that we should be building on. And there is not a lot of good news right now on a whole bunch of scores, and this is worth celebrating. So commendations on your resolution.

Something we shouldn't be celebrating is inflation, and I wasn't invited, but it looks like there was one heck of a party this week at the White House.

In case folks missed it, President Biden, Majority Leader SCHUMER, Speaker PELOSI, and others gathered on the south lawn of the White House on Tuesday afternoon to clink champagne glasses and celebrate the so-called Inflation Reduction Act, passed along straight party lines last month. James Taylor even flew in for the festivities.

But at the same time that Washington politicians were patting themselves on the back, here is actual reality—not Orwellian rhetoric, not sort of made-up names for legislation to spend hundreds and hundreds of billions of dollars—here is actual reality: Americans are getting slapped in the face with yet another month of bad news. Core inflation grew another six-tenths of a percent just in the month of August, defying even the most pessimistic estimations and analyses heading into those reporting numbers.

Both the Dow and the S&P had their worst day since the very arrival of COVID.

Consumer prices are now up 8.3 percent for the year, but it is worse than that for median-income households in America. Grocery prices are 13 percent more expensive this middle of September than they were the last middle of September.

How do you think about what 13 percent inflation looks like? Here is the way I explained it to my kids: You know, if a year ago today, you went to the grocery store checkout line and you had \$100 in your pocket and you had a cart full of groceries and you paid your \$100 for the \$100 of groceries, if you showed up today at the checkout line at the grocery store with the exact same cart and the exact same hundred bucks, you would then have to awkwardly and in an embarrassed way, in front of the people behind you in line, say: I have to figure out how to take \$13 of stuff off this checkout line because the \$100 that I had last year that bought \$100 of food only buys \$87 of food right now. That is what 13 percent inflation means.