the Justice Department and communities across America. She has spent nearly a decade working at OJP during the Obama and Biden administrations, and she has served as the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General for OJP since 2021.

Throughout her career, Ms. Solomon has led efforts to lower recidivism, improve parole systems, and equip members of law enforcement with the tools they need to combat crime. Previously, she worked at Arnold Ventures and the Urban Institute, where she spearheaded policy research on policing, prisons, and crime-reduction programs.

A graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Ms. Solomon has distinguished herself—both inside and outside of government—as a foremost expert in creating a more efficient, evenhanded criminal justice system that protects our communities and our families.

In a testament to her qualifications and temperament, Ms. Solomon has been endorsed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Correctional Leaders Association, and several former OJP officials.

After more than 5 years without a Senate-confirmed head of OJP, Ms. Solomon's confirmation is long overdue. With her years of experience within the Agency and her deep insights into our Nation's criminal justice system, she will be ready to lead OJP from day one.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for her confirmation.

VOTE ON SOLOMON NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Solomon 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 59, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 86 Ex.]

YEAS—59

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Romney
Bennet	Hirono	Rosen
Blumenthal	Kaine	Sanders
Booker	Kelly	Schatz
Brown	Kennedy	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Shaheen
Cardin	Klobuchar	Sinema
Carper	Luján	Smith
Casey	Manchin	Stabenow
Collins	Markey	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Tillis
Cornyn	Merkley	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Moran	Warner
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warnock
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Fetterman	Murray	Welch
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Graham	Padilla	Wyden
Hassan	Peters	Young
Heinrich	Reed	

NAYS—40

Barrasso	Fischer	Ricketts
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Hagerty	Rounds
Braun	Hawley	Rubio
Britt	Hoeven	Schmitt
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Capito	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cramer	Lummis	Tuberville
Crapo	Marshall	Vance
Cruz	McConnell	Wicker
Daines	Mullin	
Ernst	Paul	

NOT VOTING—1

Feinstein

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WELCH). 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.

The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

FIRE GRANTS AND SAFETY ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session and resume consideration of S. 870.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 870) to amend the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 to authorize appropriations for the United States Fire Administration and firefighter assistance grant programs.

Pending:

Schumer amendment No. 58, to add an effective date.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 870

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture motion with respect to S. 870 be withdrawn and that the only amendments in order to the bill be the following: Lee No. 80; Scott No. 81; Hagerty No. 72, as modified; Van Hollen No. 85; Sullivan No. 83; and Paul No. 79; that if offered, the Senate vote in relation to the amendments listed at a time to be determined by the majority leader following consultation with the Republican leader; that following disposition of the above amendments, amendment No. 58 be withdrawn; that the bill, as amended, if amended, be considered read a third time and the Senate vote on passage of the bill; that 60 affirmative votes be required for the adoption of these amendments and passage of the bill, with the exception of the Sullivan and Paul amendments; and that there be 2 minutes for debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees prior to each vote, all without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. For the information of the Senate, the vote on the Lee amendment will be at approximately 4:30 p.m. today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

S. 870

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am delighted that the Senate is proceeding to consideration of the Fire Grants and Safety Act.

This bipartisan legislation, which my colleague from Michigan, Senator PETERS, the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, and I have introduced, is cosponsored by our fellow congressional Fire Caucus chairs: Senators MURKOWSKI, TESTER, and CARPER. Our bill would extend critical FEMA fire prevention programs, some of which are set to expire at the end of this fiscal year.

Mr. President, your State of Vermont and mine are a lot alike. Firefighters are critical to the safety of our communities, whether they are small or large.

Firefighters across Maine and the country courageously serve their communities. Recognizing their commitment in 2000 and 2003, I helped create FEMA's firefighter grant programs as part of a bipartisan effort to ensure that firefighters have the adequate staffing, equipment, and training to do their essential jobs as effectively and safely as possible. At that time, I was the chair or ranking member of the Senate Homeland Security Committee.

The Fire Grants and Safety Act would reauthorize four critical firefighting and emergency services programs: the U.S. Fire Administration, which provides training and data to State and local fire departments, as well as education and awareness for the public; the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, known as the AFG, which helps to equip and train firefighters and emergency personnel; the Fire Prevention and Safety Grant Program, which provides resources to carry out fire prevention education and training; and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Program, better known as the SAFER Program, which helps our local fire departments recruit, hire, and retain additional firefighters.

Since October of 2020, fire departments across Maine have received just under $12 million from the AFG and SAFER grant programs. These critical investments in local, rural fire departments supported replacements of decades-old fire engines and obsolete breathing apparatuses. They also allowed for the hiring of additional firefighters, thus helping to ensure that Maine communities continue to provide excellent public safety services to our residents.

I have visited many of the fire stations around the State, and I have seen firsthand the difference these Federal grant programs make in improving the safety of our firefighters who risk their lives to protect ours. Many of the fire stations in Maine are decades or even a century old. They need updated equipment. They need better breathing

equipment. They need better fire engines. That is the purpose of many of these programs.

They also are helped by these programs in getting a sufficient number of firefighters and emergency medical personnel. Fire chiefs across the State of Maine tell me of the critical importance of these programs in helping their local fire departments keep their communities safe. And that is one reason that this bill has such broad support from the International Association of Firefighters, the International Association of Fire Chiefs—the list goes on and on and on.

Failure to reauthorize these programs would lessen the ability of our firefighters to perform their vital jobs and thus would reduce the safety of the public. So I urge all of my colleagues to support the swift passage of this legislation to support our firefighters. We simply cannot allow these vital programs to expire.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I rise today to highlight the importance of supporting the brave men and women who protect us every day in all 50 States. As I laid out on this floor last month, the fires that we face are getting worse, not better. Every day, there are more fires ravaging our communities and more folks relying on firefighters for protection.

Just last week, almost 4,000 acres in our neighboring State of New Jersey were scorched by the Jimmy's Waterhole fire, forcing evacuations from something like 170 buildings and homes.

In Pennsylvania, over 2,500 acres were burned and over 150 homes threatened, forcing the Pennsylvania Turnpike to temporarily close.

Let me just make this as clear and as strong as I can. We have to support our firefighters. We have to support our firefighters so that when they bravely run toward danger to help others, they are well prepared; they are properly trained and equipped.

That is one of the reasons why I continue to colead the Fire Grants and Safety Act with my colleagues on the Congressional Fire Service Caucus. Firefighters put their lives on the line for us every day—every day—and it is our duty to provide them with the necessary support that they need.

I am proud to join alongside Senators GARY PETERS, SUSAN COLLINS, and LISA MURKOWSKI in fighting for this crucial legislation to better ensure that our firefighters are armed with the tools that they need to get the job done on behalf of other people.

Today, I want to talk for a few minutes, if I could, about the Fire Grants and Safety Act and how it will actually have an impact on communities not just on the east coast, not just on the west coast, the middle of our country, but all over the United States of America.

At a high level, this bill reauthorizes three critical Federal programs that support the local fire departments. Let me break it down just a little bit, if I could.

First, this legislation will reauthorize the Federal Emergency Management Agency Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response—also known as the SAFER Grant Program. The SAFER Grant Program provides funding for career, for volunteer, and some combination of local fire departments to increase the number of men and women on duty at any point in time.

The job of a firefighter can be incredibly demanding, and baseline industry standards include protocols like 24-hour staffing to make sure our communities have adequate protection of all hours of day and night.

The SAFER Grant Program also provides funding to recruit staff so that we can ensure staffing needs can actually be met. For example, SAFER grants could help ensure that more personnel are properly trained and available on the ground to assist in major fires in the areas that need it the most.

In States like Delaware, where the majority of our firefighters are volunteers, it is particularly important that staffing needs are met and resources are provided so that all first responders are ready to take on each day that lies ahead of them.

The Fire Grants and Safety Act also reauthorizes the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program. The Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program helps local fire departments and EMS organizations to fulfill equipment and training needs, like firetrucks and protective gear, all of which lead to a more effective emergency response.

But firefighters do a whole lot more than just put out fires—I think the Presiding Officer and other of our colleagues know. Annually, there are over 36 million emergency calls that fire services across the country respond to.

Let me say that again. There are over 36 million emergency calls that fire services respond to across the country. That is not going down. That is going up. I think it increased about 20 percent over the last dozen or so years.

Just a few weeks ago, in my own State, a strong, dangerous tornado struck Southern Delaware in the area of Sussex County, our southernmost county, near a community called Greenwood and another community called Bridgeville. It was our firefighters who showed up to lead people to safety.

We lost a grandfather when the tornado struck Bridgeville, as I recall. I think he was in his seventies. He left behind a family.

Ensuring that funding is provided for EMS alongside fire services is critical to the emergency response.

Finally, the Fire Grants and Safety Act will reauthorize the U.S. Fire Administration to provide leadership, to provide coordination, and to provide training for first responders and healthcare leaders. Responding to emergencies is no small undertaking. It is a huge undertaking. In addition to our firefighters, healthcare leaders help to guide the disaster response by making sure that people are taken care of, both during and after emergency response.

The U.S. Fire Administration also plays a critical role in that coordinated effort, ensuring that our first responders are ready to handle hazards, from saving lives to preventing loss of homes and personal belongings.

Beyond the initial response, the Administration collects fire data, conducts important research and prevention methods, and hosts public safety information and fire service training. This proactive approach assists local fire departments in handling future emergencies and creates a more comprehensive approach to fire safety.

The lifesaving work made possible by these three Federal programs must continue, and we have the opportunity here in the Senate to make that happen. Last month, we came together—Democrats and Republicans—to vote to take up the Fire Grants and Safety Act. That vote passed by a whopping 96 to 0. As the Presiding Officer knows, that doesn't happen here every day, and it is a testament to the power of bipartisanship. It is also a testament to the critical role that firefighters play in communities across America.

Today, we will improve our emergency response, and we will make sure that our firefighters have, if not everything they need, more of what they need. I am pleased that our President has announced his support for this legislation. I want to strongly encourage our colleagues and friends over in the House of Representatives to do their part once we have taken care of business here and send the Fire Grants and Safety Act to the President's desk.

Mr. President, I want to go back a little in time. I remember a time when my sister and I were young and playing with other kids in our neighborhood. Maybe our cousins were with us. We had a firetruck. In fact, we had a couple of little firetrucks. We would take turns being a firefighter. Some days we would put out fires, and other days we would respond to imaginary weather events that endangered our community where we lived.

Later on, decades later, my sister would have her kids—a son and daughter—and my wife and I had a couple of boys, and one of their favorite toys was firetrucks. On more than a few occasions, they and their friends would come over to our house to play, and we would bring out the firetrucks.

They didn't have anything else to do but fight fires. For them, it was just

fun. They loved doing it—doing it with their neighbors and friends—and loved doing it with their cousins who might be visiting with us. That was fun for them.

In the real world, being a firefighter can be enormously satisfying. I don't know that I would say it is fun. It is dangerous, and there is a chance that someone will get hurt trying to help out other people, and the risks can be, as we know, great. I just want to make sure that those young kids who grow up to be firefighters—like the ones whom we honored this past month in the Bridgeville Fire Company in Southern Delaware—I just want to make sure they know that we value them. We value their service. We value their willingness to risk their own lives on behalf of other people, including people they may not even know.

In the legislation that is before us, we have the opportunity to make that clear to firefighters around the country—States large and small, east and west, blue and red—how much we value them and the service they provide to so many of us.

That is what I have today. I don't see anybody else yearning to address our colleagues.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

VLADIMIR KARA-MURZA

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I come before the Senate this afternoon to address the disturbing matter of Vladimir Kara-Murza and to call on the State Department to act and act decisively now on behalf of Mr. Kara-Murza.

Vladimir Kara-Murza is a courageous Russian leader and outspoken opponent of the dictatorship of President Putin there in Russia and a leader in the democracy effort in his home country of Russia.

Many colleagues, myself included, know Vladimir Kara-Murza personally. I admire him. I consider him a friend. Other Senators will remember who Mr. Kara-Murza is after I remind the Senate of his history.

Mr. Kara-Murza was the right-hand man of the late Russian opposition leader Boris Nemtsov. I say the late Russian leader because he was assassinated within the shadows of the Kremlin in 2015, after a career of courageous, outspoken opposition to the dictatorship in Russia. That was Boris Nemtsov.

His assistant and right-hand man, Kara-Murza, was just this week sentenced to a 25-year prison term in Russia, having already served 1 year in prison for the simple offense of speaking out on behalf of freedom and democracy in Russia.

Over the years, Vladimir Kara-Murza has spoken up against President Putin's invasion of Ukraine. He has spoken out against the suppression of human rights in Russia.

He has worked with members of Congress. He has worked with Senator CARDIN. He has worked with Senators like me and with former Senator John McCain. And he has been instrumental in getting us to pass and getting the administrations to sign important human rights legislation, like the Magnitsky Act, which has now been signed by 35 or more countries internationally, to crack down on those individuals within a dictatorship regime who have benefited from the violations of human rights.

How has Mr. Vladimir Kara-Murza paid for this offense of speaking out on behalf of democracy and freedom? He is the one who has twice been poisoned by the Putin regime—on two occasions. And they fumbled it twice. Now they have a third chance to kill him, and it may be that, unless the State Department acts quickly, the Putin regime may finally get their wish and see the obituary of Vladimir Kara-Murza.

His life is in danger now. Because of his previous poisonings, both of which he recovered from, he has suffered already from polyneuropathy. After a year in prison, he has lost 40 pounds. He has lost feeling in both of his feet now and is losing the feeling in one of his arms. That is the situation he finds himself in, the week when he was sentenced to a 25-year prison term simply for speaking out on behalf of freedom. Even under Russian law, a statutory scheme that none of us would approve of—even under Russian law—a diagnosis such as this would lead to the release of any prisoner, but not, apparently, for Vladimir Kara-Murza. Predictably, the Russian courts have violated their own law to keep him detained.

Today, we read about many victims of Russia's despotism. We have been talking this week about former U.S. Marine Paul Whelan, who has been sitting in a Russian prison since 2018 under fabricated charges, and then the recently detained Wall Street Journal reporter, Evan Gershkovich.

Those two individuals need our support and are getting the support of the State Department—the same support that Mr. Vladimir Kara-Murza needs now and that the Senate should demand of the State Department.

The State Department has the capability, as they have done for these two other prisoners, Gershkovich and Whelan. They have the ability to designate Mr. Kara-Murza as ''wrongfully detained'' under the Levinson Act. This classification would make the release of Vladimir Kara-Murza a top U.S. Government priority.

Granting this designation would be a major step forward and would raise this case to the highest level of attention within the State Department and with regard to their negotiations with the Kremlin. It would give negotiators new tools to act strongly and quickly. Strong action and quick action is needed now to save the very life of Vladimir Kara-Murza.

Efforts on his behalf could be conducted alongside the efforts that are being initiated for Mr. Whelan and Mr. Gershkovich, which I very much support.

I implore the State Department to elevate this case also and save the life of Vladimir Kara-Murza, and I implore all Members of Congress to join me in urging our government to take immediate action to support all three of these gentlemen.

Let's resolve that our government and our State Department act in every way possible to gain the release of these prisoners and in particular this prisoner whose life is hanging at the very moment by a thread.

I met with Vladimir Kara-Murza's wife only yesterday. She had met with the State Department, along with her attorneys, along with some advocates. Clearly, she fears for the life of her husband.

She is a resident of Northern Virginia, by the way, with two small children.

She fears for the life of her husband, and she worries about the future of herself and her children, but also she wonders why the State Department would not act in the most forceful way possible, and that is with this designation of ''wrongfully detained.''

Senator CARDIN and I will be speaking to Members of the Senate and the House about this. We will be passing around a letter to sign to the Secretary of State urging that this matter be given the highest consideration. And perhaps we can diplomatically obtain the release of this courageous person who has committed no crime and save the life of Vladimir Kara-Murza.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 80

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, wildfires pose a significant threat to the safety and well-being of our citizens, particularly those living near Federal lands. One way to protect against wildfires is with the use of fuel breaks.

Fuel breaks are—think of them as firewalls, firewalls for our communities. They are manmade areas with a reduced fuel load that are set up to act as a barrier to slow the spread of a wildfire. They slow it down and make it so the fire can't spread as quickly.

In 2021, Congress created a series of categorical exclusions specifically for the creation of fuel breaks. That was good. They were intended to protect communities adjacent to Federal land from the devastating effects of wildfires. However, the Federal Agencies responsible for implementing these

exclusions have been bogged down by regulatory delays.

These delays are really problematic, and they are adding up, especially in certain parts of the country where there is a lot of Federal land and where there is a lot of Federal land near where people live. For example, in California, there are 5.1 million homes in the wildland-urban interface. The Forest Service and the BLM will never have the capacity to protect these homes. The hands of the States shouldn't be tied while they watch their homes being burned.

So Congress did a good thing by creating these categorical exclusions, but it has been more or less rendered—I think by mistake—a dead letter in many areas because of these regulatory problems.

Rather than throwing the baby out with the bathwater, we need to make this one work. My amendment aims to do precisely that. It aims to create a process for States to assume responsibility for the environmental analysis, approval, and execution of these projects. By allowing States to take on these responsibilities, we can expedite these critical projects for community protection.

The safety and well-being of our citizens and our communities are at stake. By passing my amendment, we can take a significant step toward protecting our homes, communities, and critical infrastructure from the devastating effects of wildfires.

Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 80 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Utah [Mr. LEE] proposes an amendment numbered 80.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To make a categorical exclusion available for use on certain land by States and Indian Tribes through a project delivery program)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. STATE AND TRIBAL USE OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF FUEL BREAKS IN FORESTS AND OTHER WILDLAND VEGETATION.

Section 40806 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592b) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(g) STATE AND TRIBAL PROJECT DELIVERY PROGRAMS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—On request of a State or an Indian Tribe, the Secretary concerned shall enter into an agreement (which may be in the form of a memorandum of understanding) with the State or Indian Tribe, under which the Secretary concerned assigns, and the State or Indian Tribe assumes, the responsibilities of the Secretary concerned with respect to—

''(A) 1 or more projects under this section using the categorical exclusion established by subsection (b), including—

''(i) environmental review, consultation, and any other action required under any Federal environmental law with respect to the review or approval of a project, including the preparation of a supporting decision memorandum in accordance with subsection (b); and

''(ii) carrying out the forest management activities described in subsection (c) on public lands or National Forest System land in the State or under the jurisdiction of the Indian Tribe, as applicable; or

''(B) any other project on public lands or National Forest System land in the State or under the jurisdiction of the Indian Tribe, as applicable, using any other categorical exclusion that the Secretary concerned determines to be appropriate for use by the State or Indian Tribe, as applicable, to protect communities from wildfire.

''(2) COLLABORATION.—A State or an Indian Tribe may enter into an agreement under paragraph (1) in collaboration with a unit of local government, a private entity, or a community organization and associated contractors.

''(3) REQUIREMENTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A State or an Indian Tribe that assumes responsibilities under paragraph (1) shall be subject to the same procedural and substantive requirements as to which the Secretary concerned would be subject.

''(B) RETENTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES.—Any responsibility of the Secretary concerned that is not explicitly assigned to and assumed by a State or an Indian Tribe under an agreement under paragraph (1) shall remain the responsibility of the Secretary concerned.

''(C) PROHIBITION.—The Secretary concerned may not require a State or an Indian Tribe, as a condition on entering into an agreement under paragraph (1), to forgo any other means for carrying out the applicable project that is otherwise permissible under applicable law.

''(D) VERIFICATION OF RESOURCES.—As a condition on entering into an agreement under paragraph (1), the Secretary concerned may require a State or an Indian Tribe to verify that the State or Indian Tribe has the financial and personnel resources necessary to carry out the responsibilities described in that paragraph.

''(4) AGREEMENTS.—An agreement under paragraph (1) shall—

''(A) be executed by the Governor or the top-ranking official of the State or Indian Tribe that is charged with responsibility for the applicable project;

''(B) be in such form as the Secretary concerned may prescribe;

''(C) provide that the State or Indian Tribe—

''(i) agrees to assume all or part of the responsibilities of the Secretary concerned;

''(ii) expressly consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal courts for the compliance, discharge, and enforcement of any responsibility of the Secretary concerned assumed by the State or Indian Tribe;

''(iii) certifies that State or Tribal laws (including regulations) are in effect that—

''(I) authorize the State or Indian Tribe to take the actions necessary to carry out the responsibilities being assumed; and

''(II) provide that any decision regarding the public availability of a document under those State or Tribal laws is reviewable by a court of competent jurisdiction; and

''(iv) agrees to maintain the financial and personnel resources necessary to carry out the responsibilities being assumed;

''(D) require the State or Indian Tribe to provide to the Secretary concerned any information that the Secretary concerned reasonably considers necessary to ensure that the State or Indian Tribe is adequately carrying out the responsibilities assigned to the State or Indian Tribe;

''(E) have a term of not more than 5 years; and

''(F) be renewable.

''(5) JUDICIAL REVIEW.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The district courts of the United States shall have exclusive jurisdiction over any civil action against a State or an Indian Tribe for a failure to carry out any responsibility assigned to and assumed by the State or Indian Tribe under an agreement under paragraph (1).

''(B) LEGAL STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS.—A civil action described in subparagraph (A) shall be governed by the legal standards and requirements that would apply if the civil action were against the Secretary concerned had the Secretary concerned taken the relevant actions.

''(C) INTERVENTION.—The Secretary concerned may intervene in any civil action described in subparagraph (A).

''(6) STATE OR TRIBAL RESPONSIBILITY AND LIABILITY.—A State or an Indian Tribe that assumes responsibilities under an agreement under paragraph (1) shall be—

''(A) solely responsible for carrying out the responsibilities; and

''(B) solely liable for any action or failure to take an action in carrying out those responsibilities.

''(7) TERMINATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A State or an Indian Tribe may terminate an agreement entered into by the State or Indian Tribe under paragraph (1), at any time, by submitting to the Secretary concerned a notice not later than the date that is 90 days before the date of termination.

''(B) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—A termination under subparagraph (A) shall be subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary concerned may provide.

''(8) EDUCATION AND OTHER INITIATIVES.—The Secretary concerned, in cooperation with representatives of State and Tribal officials, may carry out education, training, peer-exchange, and other initiatives, as appropriate—

''(A) to assist States and Indian Tribes in developing the capacity to carry out projects under this subsection; and

''(B) to promote information-sharing and collaboration among States and Indian Tribes that are carrying out projects under this subsection.''.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I don't rise every day to oppose amendments offered by Senator LEE. I am afraid I am going to have to oppose this one for a couple of reasons.

One, as the chairman of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and as a recovering Governor who has helped run a State and was actually the chair of the National Governors Association for a while, I believe this amendment undercuts the National Environmental Policy Act and the Federal Government's important role in managing our Federal lands.

While I appreciate the need for Federal Agencies and States to work together to minimize wildfire risks on our public lands, this amendment, I am sorry to say, misses the mark.

Specifically, this amendment would require—and I underline the word ''require''—this amendment would require the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management to allow States to take over Federal responsibilities for environmental reviews of many activities on public lands. This would be a

significant change in the management of our public lands, which belong, as we know, to all Americans.

Although Senator LEE's proposal is modeled on a program at the Department of Transportation that allows States to assume some responsibilities for highway projects, this amendment is far broader in scope and impact and lacks the numerous safeguards that are in place for the highway program.

For instance, this amendment establishes mandatory—I emphasize ''mandatory''—not discretionary assignment of responsibilities to States. It has no requirement, as best I can tell, for public notice and comment and does not require the Federal Agency to verify that the State has the resources and the personnel available to carry out Federal responsibilities. It also includes, as best I can tell, no auditing or monitoring requirements.

I am working with my colleagues, I believe on both sides of the aisle, on opportunities to improve environmental review procedures. But I must say, this is not the right vehicle or way to proceed on this provision, and I am reluctantly going to have to urge our colleagues to vote no on this particular amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I appreciate the insight and the observations of my friend and distinguished colleague, the Senator from Delaware. I appreciate the amount of effort that he puts into this and I am sure a lot of hard work.

He raises some good points, and there are points that I might find persuasive if they were accurate. He seems to be under the impression that these would be broad categorical inclusions, that these procedures we contemplate would apply broadly to all Forest Service operations. It wouldn't. This is talking only about fuel breaks and only about fuel breaks in narrow sets of circumstances.

He suggested incorrectly that there is no requirement in place to make sure that the States have the resources financially, regulatorily, and otherwise to undertake the analysis contemplated under this. It does. He has been misinformed on that point.

Finally, I might feel differently about this if, like my friend from Delaware, if I were from a different State, if I were from the State of Delaware. But when you look at the Western United States, we have Federal land everywhere.

In every State to the east of Colorado's eastern border, the Federal Government owns less than 15 percent of the land in each State, and in most cases, it is in the single digits. In many States, it is in the low single digits. I don't remember what the percentage of land is in Delaware. I can find that out. But in Utah it is two-thirds of our land. It is 67 percent. In every State to the west of Colorado's Eastern Rim, it is more than 15 percent and usually a lot more than that. That affects people. These are people's homes, their livelihoods, their communities, their economies are all put in jeopardy by the fact that the Federal Government owns too much land. It owns so much land that no one would have the capacity to operate this. No one. It is impossible.

More than 5 million homes in California alone are in these affected areas. No matter how efficient we may be in the Forest Service, no matter how many employees we authorized them to hire, they are still not going to be able to keep up with it.

It is a matter of doing this or losing more property, losing more ecosystems and losing more homes and communities and sources of economic activity. That is what is at stake.

Now, if the points he made were factually correct or legally correct, he might be right, but they are not correct. We need this, and we need to pass this now.

Mr. President, thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. I don't think I have got this wrong. I may be mistaken, but I don't think so.

I would just say, again, Senator LEE's proposal appears to be modeling on a program at the Department of Transportation that allows States—and I underline ''allows States''—to assume some responsibilities, not all but some responsibilities, for highway projects.

Having said that, this amendment is far broader in scope and impact and lacks the numerous safeguards that are in place for the highway program. For example, this amendment establishes mandatory—mandatory, not discretionary—assignment of responsibilities to States. In doing that, it has no requirement for public notice. It does not require the Federal Agency to verify that the State has either the resources or the personnel available to carry out Federal responsibilities. Moreover, as best I can tell, this mandate includes no auditing or monitoring requirements. That should give all of us pause. That should give all of us pause and cause for concern.

Having said that, I am working with our colleagues on opportunities to improve environmental review procedures, but I just don't believe this is the right vehicle for the way to proceed on this particular provision. I look forward to discussing it further with our colleague from Utah in the days ahead, but for now I am going to urge our colleagues to vote no on this amendment.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. I will point to two things. First, on page 4 of the amendment, subdivision (D) Verification of Resources. This requires each State or Indian Tribe to go through a process to verify that they have got the resources to do it.

Turn to page 6. It is subject to full judicial review in the same way that they would be subject to judicial review if these actions were being undertaken by a Federal Agency. So the only difference is, these State and local governments, they have both the personnel, and they have the incentive to do it. Federal land managers can't and don't and won't ever be able to do this the same way State people, State officials, State governments, and local governments will be able to.

We either care about these communities or we don't. If we don't adopt this, we are effectively nullifying what Congress passed back in 2021, and we cannot do that.

Mr. President, I know of no further debate on this matter.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

Mr. CARPER. Yes, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I am looking at the language of the amendment.

On page 4, subparagraph (D), which is entitled ''Verification of Resources,'' reads—I will read part of this. It says:

> As a condition on entering into an agreement under paragraph (1), the Secretary concerned may require a State or [may require] an Indian Tribe to verify that the State or an Indian Tribe has the financial and personnel resources necessary to carry out the responsibilities described in that paragraph.

It doesn't say ''should.'' It doesn't say ''must.'' It says ''may require a State or . . . Indian tribe to verify that the State or Indian Tribe has the financial and personnel resources necessary to carry out the responsibilities described in that paragraph.''

I, again, have significant concerns here. I appreciate the intent of the author of the amendment, but I will just reiterate again the concerns that the more I look at this, the more concerned I am. I would rather be less concerned but more concerned I have become.

With that, I yield back my time.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. The distinction he is dwelling on is the distinction on page 4, the ''may-shall'' distinction. The only way he can be right on this, of course, is if he presupposes that the Secretary is just not going to care; that the Secretary is not going to exercise that authority. It is not going to happen. I am sure he is not impugning a lack of concern on the part of the Secretary of Agriculture to do that. He wouldn't do that.

Secondly, look, if that is what is holding this up, if you want to switch—if you would be willing to support it if I made the ''may'' and turned it to a ''shall,'' I will do that right now. I will offer up a second-degree amendment to my own amendment right now, and we will do that. If the gentleman from Delaware were to agree to that, I would be fine with it, and we could get this passed.

Mr. CARPER. I am not prepared to know whether or not there are other safeguards—I appreciate the good intent that the Senator from Utah is showing. But standing here on the fly, I am just reluctant to say that if you change this one place and this one word in this proposal, then I am OK with all of it. I will need a little bit of time to work on it and decide. It is hard to do it on the fly.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, this is how the western lands suffer—people from the Eastern United States, with neither the knowledge nor the concern about how they are managed and don't care. And so while they passed something in 2021 to make these firebreaks easier to put in place, as a practical reality, the regulatory hurdles are proving too much. This would fix that. This is reasonable. There is nothing that the Senator from Delaware has pointed to that makes this amendment to this bill objectionable in any way. I urge my colleagues to support it.

And if you do so—if you come from the west of Colorado, you know exactly what I am talking about. If you come from the Eastern United States, I beg you to imagine, for a moment, that you represent a Western State, where we have experienced, in some cases, decades of drought and where we are sitting ducks, where we are an island of private land amidst a vast overwhelming sea of Federal land that is chronically mismanaged just because it is physically impossible for them to manage it properly to avoid this kind of thing. I urge you to be sympathetic to this and support it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. This is the last thing I would say with respect to this amendment. If this amendment is not adopted, I would say to the Senator from Utah, I welcome the opportunity for my staff and your staff to sit down and talk through it and to better understand our concerns and better understand where you are coming from.

Mr. LEE. I would be happy to.

Mr. CARPER. Yes. We will keep on it.

Mr. LEE. Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. I appreciate the magnanimous offer from my colleague. I will take him up on that. I am still hoping that it will pass. It is still my hope that it should pass today.

Mr. President, I know of no further debate.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 80

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. LEE. I call 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 87 Leg.]

YEAS—49

Barrasso	Grassley	Ricketts
Blackburn	Hagerty	Risch
Boozman	Hawley	Romney
Braun	Hoeven	Rounds
Britt	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Budd	Johnson	Schmitt
Capito	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lee	Sullivan
Cotton	Lummis	Thune
Cramer	Manchin	Tillis
Crapo	Marshall	Tuberville
Cruz	McConnell	Vance
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Mullin	Young
Fischer	Murkowski	
Graham	Paul	

NAYS—50

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

NOT VOTING—1

Feinstein

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). On this vote, the yeas are 49, the nays are 50.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 80) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, few have left their mark on this country like our dear friend Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN. She is a legend in California, the first woman Senator from the State.

She is a legend here in the Senate—the longest serving woman Senator in U.S. history. She built a reputation as an expert legislator on so many issues—gun violence, VAWA, the environment, women's rights, and so much more.

But her impact doesn't end there. DIANNE is a legend throughout the country. She shattered enumerable glass ceilings, moved countless mountains, and molded millions of minds. Few have accomplished as much in office as Senator FEINSTEIN.

Our colleague and friend has made her wish clear, that another Senator temporarily serve on the Committee on the Judiciary until she returns. I thank Senator CARDIN for agreeing to step in.

So today, I am acting not just as leader, but as DIANNE'S friend in honoring her wishes until she returns to the Senate. Mr. President, when someone as dear and as accomplished as Senator FEINSTEIN asks us for something so important to her, we ought to respect it.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of my resolution which is at the desk; I further ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, 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?

Mr. GRAHAM. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. I will be very brief. To my colleague and good friend Senator SCHUMER, I want to let you know that 99 Senators agree with what you said about Senator FEINSTEIN. We all hope—I am the ranking member of the Judiciary. She is a dear friend, and we hope for her speedy recovery and return back to the Senate.

But with all due respect to my colleague Senator SCHUMER, this is about a handful of judges that you can't get the votes for. I have been a pretty consistent vote in the Committee on the Judiciary in a bipartisan fashion. I understand you won the election and we lost. I want to make sure we process judges fairly.

The reason this is being made is to try to change the numbers on the committee in a way that I think would be harmful to the Senate and to pass out a handful of judges that I think should never be on the bench.

With that in mind and with all due respect to Senator FEINSTEIN, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here for now the 21st in my series of speeches about the scheme to capture and control our Supreme Court, a scheme to which rightwing special interests have devoted hundreds of millions of dark money dollars. The ingredients in this noxious cocktail are creepy rightwing billionaires, phony front groups, amenable justices, large sums of money, and secrecy.

This month, we have gotten a whole new look at how these ingredients mix.

According to extraordinary reporting by ProPublica, for more than 20 years, Justice Clarence Thomas has accepted luxury trips, virtually every year, from billionaire Harlan Crow without disclosing them. Here is how ProPublica described it:

[Thomas] has vacationed on Crow's superyacht around the globe. He flies on Crow's Bombardier Global 5000 jet. He has gone with Crow to the Bohemian Grove, the exclusive California all-male retreat, and to

Crow's sprawling ranch in East Texas. And Thomas typically spends about a week every summer at Crow's private resort in the Adirondacks.

One of those trips has been valued at more than $500,000.

We have heard from civil servants who have to report a gift of $5. This Justice received a gift of a trip that they valued at $500,000. It was a trip to Indonesia on Crow's private jet, followed by, and I quote here, ''nine days of island-hopping . . . on a superyacht staffed by a coterie of attendants, and a private chef.'' And that is just one excursion. No telling how many others there were.

None of this was disclosed. The supposed rationale was that it was all ''personal hospitality.'' So let's set aside for one second the question of whether this actually was personal hospitality. Let's presume that there was personal hospitality here somewhere. What that overlooks is the problem of the personal hospitality exemption, which covers exemption from disclosure of ''food, lodging, or entertainment received as personal hospitality of an individual.'' Food, lodging, or entertainment—not transportation, not travel, not trips on Harlan Crow's private jet.

ProPublica was able to identify multiple trips that Thomas took on Crow's jet, and each one of those trips seems to be a slam dunk violation of this provision—not food, not lodging, not entertainment. Transportation.

It does not stop there. Additional reporting by ProPublica revealed more of Crow's undisclosed generosity. In 2014, Crow purchased from Thomas and his relatives three properties in Georgia, including the home where Thomas's mother lives. There seemed to be more collateral gifts in the form of renovations and an agreement that Thomas's mother would live there rent-free for the rest of her life.

There is much more to learn about this transaction, but back to the disclosure, here is what the law requires for property disclosures. It requires the disclosure of any purchase, sale, or exchange during the preceding calendar year which exceeds $1,000 in real property, other than property used solely as a personal residence of the reporting individual. If it is not your home, if it is any other real property, and if it is worth more than $1,000, the law requires that it be reported. Thomas disclosed none of this on the annual disclosure forms required by law.

This law applies across the government. This isn't something special for the Supreme Court. But transparency is especially important for judges, who must recuse themselves from cases if there is even an appearance of impropriety.

Purchasing Thomas's property and offering him free international vacations weren't the only favors bestowed by the billionaire. In 2011, the New York Times reported on him having ''done many favors for the justice and his wife,'' including using his company to finance what the Times called ''the multimillion-dollar purchase and restoration'' of a property where Justice Thomas's mother used to work; donating $175,000 to a Savannah library project dedicated to Justice Thomas; giving Justice Thomas a $19,000 Bible that belonged to Frederick Douglass; and ''providing $500,000 for Ginni Thomas [his spouse] to start a Tea Party-related group.''

Well, could any of that raise an appearance of impropriety or was it purely ''personal,'' nothing to do with the Court? Well, let's have a look at a picture that shows us a little illumination of that.

This is a painting that Harlan Crow commissioned during one of Thomas's visits to Crow's private, lakeside, Adirondack retreat. On the right here is Crow himself. Next to him is Justice Thomas.

Crow sits on the board of two conservative organizations that file briefs before the Supreme Court. Crow is also a donor to the Federalist Society, from which Trump's infamous Supreme Court list emerged. By the way, dark money surged into the Federalist Society during that period. Crow is also a political donor to Republican politicians.

Investigation would show whether all this amounted to enough business before the Court to create a conflict of interest, but the Supreme Court won't permit any investigation of its members.

Here on the left is the infamous Leonard Leo, the man behind that Trump Supreme Court list, whose three new Justices created the far-right supermajority that Justice Thomas now enjoys. Leo's front group, the Judicial Crisis Network, bought the campaign ads for the three Justices, paid for with dark money.

Here is a graphic I have used before showing Leonard Leo's flotilla of front groups that he uses. He has more. This is just one assortment of his front groups.

Here is the Judicial Crisis Network, which took checks as big as $17 million from anonymous donors and used that money to spend on ads for the confirmation of the three new Justices.

Leo is the one who helped the rightwing billionaires knock out Harriet Miers. Do you remember when she was a nominee for the Supreme Court by a Republican President? Knocked her out to make room for none other than Sam Alito to get onto the Court.

The campaign Leo oversaw by the billionaires to capture the Court has been tallied at more than $580 million—$580 million—much of it dark money. And he recently received from another creepy rightwing billionaire a $1.6 billion slush fund into yet another 501(c)(4) front group.

So it is deeply misleading to claim that Justice Thomas never vacationed with people who had business before the Court. Leonard Leo's business is the Court. The creepy billionaire's campaign was to capture the Court. Leo was the billionaire's contractor for construction of the Court that dark money built.

Personal hospitality. After Thomas gets on the Court, a major Republican donor befriends him, with half a million dollars for his spouse's activist group, a renovated home for his mother, and lavish undisclosed vacations, at which Thomas was sometimes accompanied by rightwing activists at the center of the scheme to capture the Court. And we are supposed to believe this is all legit? I don't think so.

Guess who else doesn't think so. Justice Thomas, who knew this smelled enough that he broke the disclosure law repeatedly to keep it secret.

Guess who else doesn't think so. Ask other Federal judges. They can't get away with this personal hospitality nonsense. They know that this is wrong and that it is embarrassing to the judiciary. That is why the Judicial Conference just cracked down on the personal hospitality shenanigans of their supreme court colleagues.

Thomas is feeling enough heat that he even released a public statement. ''Early in my tenure at the Court,'' he said, ''I sought guidance from my colleagues and others in the judiciary, and was advised that this sort of personal hospitality . . . was not reportable'' and that he has ''always sought to comply with disclosure guidelines.''

Wow, where to begin. First, who ''advised'' Thomas that this ''personal hospitality . . . was not reportable''? Whoever it was, they were wrong. I have spoken before about this personal hospitality issue. The reporting exemption for personal hospitality covers ordinary gifts of ''food, lodging, and entertainment'' from friends and family. There is not an exemption for transportation, for all that flying around the world in private jets. It just isn't there.

We don't know who advised him, but I can pretty surely tell you who didn't advise him; that is, the formal committees of the Judicial Conference that advise on ethics and financial disclosure issues. They have committees for this. That would be the obvious place to go for real advice. Yet all indications are that he did not. I suspect that Thomas knew they would not like the facts that he would have to disclose if he were to ask them in candor to offer an opinion on his situation. He also, I suspect, knew that he would not like the answer he would get. So he just didn't file.

The recent definition of ''personal hospitality'' that the Judicial Conference announced in response to 2 years of urging from me was intended to clarify what was already prohibited—a clarification that every other branch had already issued. And the reporting law never exempted private jet travel.

Thomas actually knew this because he had reported flying on Crow's private jet before, back in 1997. What changed?

Federal law is crystal clear on the need to report real estate transactions worth over $1,000. The law is so clear that CNN reported yesterday that Thomas will amend his disclosure report to include that sale.

According to what CNN called ''a source close to Thomas,'' Thomas ''has always filled out his forms with the help of his aides,'' and he didn't think he needed to report the sale because he didn't make any money off it. Well, that excuse might be believable if the statutory language weren't so clear—crystal clear—and if Thomas weren't what one commentator has called a ''repeat offender'' at disclosure.

In 2011, Thomas had to amend 13 years' worth of financial disclosure reports to add his wife's income from the Heritage Foundation, a dark money, conservative outfit which also files amicus briefs at the Supreme Court. He said it was a ''misunderstanding.''

Here is what he misunderstood: Financial Disclosure Report form; B, spouse's noninvestment income. ''If you were married during any portion of the reporting year, complete this section.'' Income: None or date and source. That is not complicated. Those instructions are simple. And, like his private jet travel, Justice Thomas had reported his wife's income before, back in 1996. What changed?

Congressman HANK JOHNSON and I sent a bicameral letter to Chief Justice Roberts urging him to get his courthouse in order and set up a means to investigate these and other serious allegations of misconduct. We also sent a letter to the Judicial Conference calling for the Conference to refer Justice Thomas to the Attorney General for failure to report his real estate transaction with Crow.

Here is how that works under the ethics law:

> The head of each Agency, or the Judicial Conference, shall refer to the Attorney General the name of any individual which such official or committee has reasonable cause to believe has willfully failed to file a report or has willfully falsified or willfully failed to file information required to be reported.
>
> The Attorney General [in turn] may bring a Civil Action against any individual . . . who knowingly or willfully fails to file or report any information that such individual is required to report.

That is not complicated.

And the Supreme Court is completely alone here in this peculiar approach to these issues. Wherever else you go in government, you will find an ethics code, and you will find a process for investigating and enforcing the ethics rules.

Congress has Ethics Committees. The executive branch has an ethics office and inspectors general. Federal courts have their own ethics process. Only the Supreme Court has none of that. No designated place to submit complaints. No investigative mechanism to review complaints. No impartial panel to decide complaints. No transparency.

All of that needs to change if we are to rebuild confidence in our highest Court.

Without investigation, it is impossible to determine if Justice Thomas violated still another Federal law by participating in cases implicating his wife's political activities. We need investigation to find out whether he broke that law.

Without investigation, there is no way to evaluate the ethics of the 20-year, $30 million private judicial lobbying campaign run by rightwing political activists who wined and dined Justices Thomas, Alito, and Scalia—the three Justices who, as the New York Times described it, ''proved amenable.'' Amenable.

Without any prospect of investigation, there is little reason for a Justice to comply with the ethics standards. When there is no ref, there is ultimately no rules. The rule that clearly pertains is that it is not OK to judge one's own case. That rule is so obvious, I hardly need to state it, and that rule is so old it is in Latin: ''Nemo judex in sua causa.'' No one should be judged in their own case. We know that Justice Thomas is familiar with this rule because he cited it in an opinion he wrote just a few years ago when he noted that ''At common law, a fair tribunal meant that 'no man shall be a judge in his own case.' ''

This good old rule, grounded in history and tradition, the present Supreme Court constantly and flagrantly flouts. That must stop. The Justices have lost the benefit of the doubt—240 years the Court went without needing this, but this Roberts Court has squandered the public's confidence with its behavior, and now there must be rules and process.

The Senate Judiciary Committee, along with my subcommittee, will hold a hearing to consider these issues. I hope our colleagues will take it seriously. Congressman HANK JOHNSON and I have introduced the Supreme Court Ethics, Recusal, and Transparency Act, which would solve a lot of this mess—this big, tragic, unnecessary, self-inflicted mess.

Let me conclude where I began, with that noxious cocktail of creepy rightwing billionaires, phony front groups, amenable Justices, large sums of money, and secrecy. It is a toxic brew. The ethics failures at the Court are just one part of that stinking cocktail. We have Justices picked in some backroom at the Federalist Society by creepy billionaires to put on a list for Donald Trump. We have Justices who came through a confirmation process so tainted with influence that the FBI was breaking its own procedures in background investigations and Senators were pulling screeching 180s on confirming Supreme Court Justices in an election year. Flotillas of front group amici—amici curiae—who won't tell who orchestrates and funds them appear in Court to tell those Justices what to do. And the Justices, with astonishing statistical reliability, do as they are told.

To get the results they want, the Justices smash through precedent, violate so-called conservative judicial principles, make up false facts, and change the applicable legal standards. All of this mess—all of it—is the product of that toxic brew of creepy rightwing billionaires, phony front groups, amenable Justices, large sums of money, and secrecy.

For now, let's at least fix the ethics mess and bring the Supreme Court into alignment with the rest of the Federal courts. The highest Court should not have the lowest standards.

To be continued.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. If I may interrupt the distinguished Senator from Alaska for 1 minute to do some closing business and then leave her the floor.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. On behalf of the majority leader, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions introduced earlier today: S. Res. 160, 161, and 162.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

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

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

MORNING BUSINESS

NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF REGULATIONS FROM THE OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL WORKPLACE RIGHTS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the notice of adoption of regulations from the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights be printed in the RECORD.

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

AMENDED NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF SUBSTANTIVE REGULATIONS AND TRANSMITTAL FOR CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL

U.S. CONGRESS, OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL WORKPLACE RIGHTS,
Washington, DC, April 18, 2023.

Hon. PATTY MURRAY,
President Pro Tempore of the U.S. Senate,
The United States Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM PRESIDENT: Section 304(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act