

spent here in the United States. In particular, our friends in the United Kingdom, Poland, Romania, and the Baltic states are making all the right choices to help Ukraine win and prepare their own militaries to deter Russia for decades to come. Backing away from Ukraine at this crucial moment would undermine our credibility as we ask the Europeans to shoulder more of the collective defense burden.

Fourth, although this war is happening in Europe, we should not forget who else is watching. Some skeptics of our mission in Ukraine believe it distracts from our principal security threat: the Chinese Communist Party. But the reality is the exact opposite. Xi Jinping is watching us closely. He wants to see if we will stick by our commitments as he weighs his opportunities of invading his own neighbor—and our friend—Taiwan.

Our Indo-Pacific allies are also watching closely and even helping in Ukraine. As Japanese Prime Minister Kishida recently noted, “Ukraine today could be Asia tomorrow.”

Far from distracting us from China, stopping Putin in Ukraine is indispensable in deterring China. We dare not show weakness at this moment in Ukraine. Doing so would simply invite other dictators to act just like Vladimir Putin.

The bottom line is that America’s interest in this war is clear: We need Ukraine to win, and that means giving them the tools to prevail. Cutting our support would cost us far more in the long run.

Unfortunately, as we know, Vladimir Putin understands only brute force. He will not capitulate or negotiate until he is forced to do so.

This is something President Biden failed to appreciate when he downplayed Putin’s threats a year ago by talking about “minor incursions.” Remember that—“minor incursions”? At every step of this crisis, it has been Congress, not the administration, that has taken the lead, and it is something that the President still fails to grasp as he and his administration continue to slow-roll military aid for fear of “escalation.”

The Biden administration has come along grudgingly as Congress has pushed and pulled and taken the lead. For example, in May of last year, Congress provided the administration with roughly \$8.5 billion of drawdown authority to transfer weapons and munitions from U.S. inventories to Ukraine through the end of September. But the administration let almost \$3 billion of that authority expire.

Ukraine can win this war. Ukraine must win this war. But we and our allies have to do our part to help them. When Russia first launched its invasion, the prospect of Ukrainian victory indeed seemed unlikely. The Russian blitzkrieg forced Ukraine to fight for its very survival. It took repeated acts of heroism to push the Russians back, from President Zelenskyy’s fearless ex-

ample of leadership down to the foot soldiers, like Vitaly Volodymyrovych, who blew up the bridge beneath his feet, sacrificing his own life, to stop the Russian advance.

After Russian troops faltered in those initial days, they pivoted to a barbaric tactic of heavy bombardment of civilians—shelling homes, schools, and hospitals. These were war crimes. And as the Russians were finally expelled from Kyiv, we learned of the horrific atrocities committed against civilians, particularly in the city’s outer lying areas, such as Bucha.

And then began the counteroffensive. The Ukrainians retook Snake Island, liberated Kharkiv, and eventually expelled the Russians from Kherson in November. Their battlefield success demonstrated the impact of high-end U.S. military aid—such as HIMARS, long-range rockets—as well as the Ukrainians’ own capabilities to plan and execute complex operations in defense of their own homeland.

Today, the situation has stabilized, with Russia occupying only about 15 percent of Ukraine.

The courage of Ukrainians presents us with an opportunity. As the war approaches its second year, Congress must once again lead the administration to ramp up military aid to Ukraine to drive toward victory. We should all want Ukraine to win the war. A continuation of the status quo, which would drag out the war, favors Russia. The United States has made a huge difference in this war, and we can now tip the balance in favor of Ukraine if we take the right steps. I would sum up this policy of the right steps in three words: more, better, and faster—more ground vehicles and munitions, better equipment, faster deliveries. We need faster deliveries right now.

While I appreciate the White House’s recent announcement that we will send a batch of Abrams tanks to Ukraine, it is now our duty to follow through on this commitment and make certain the Ukrainians promptly receive the battlefield capabilities we plan to provide them, including the necessary training.

In addition, we need to give Ukraine ATACMS, long-range missiles, and advanced drones, like the Gray Eagle and Reaper. We should deliver these assets quickly to make an immediate difference on the battlefield. In concert with our allies, this approach of “more, better, and faster” would give the Ukrainians a real shot at victory.

At the same time, we must continue our work to expand our own defense industrial capacity here at home. The American people have already invested billions of dollars to replenish the weapons we transferred to Ukraine, particularly munitions. We are using that money here in America to expand production, doubling and even tripling production capacities for weapons like 155-millimeter shells, Javelins, and HIMARS, and our work on that has just begun.

Lastly, we will continue to maintain and expand the rigorous oversight

structure we have placed over military aid. As of today, Congress has imposed more than two dozen detailed oversight requirements on the Biden administration, and we continue to monitor their responses closely. Of course, some of the oversight work we do is classified to protect the people and sources conducting it. But Americans should know the scope of our oversight work, and so we will hold oversight hearings in this Congress, and we will do so on a bipartisan basis.

We should also press the Pentagon to make more oversight information public. We should continue tracking the work of the inspectors general in the State Department and the Department of Defense and in the U.S. Agency for International Development and 14 other government organizations that are already tasked with ensuring accountability for all spending related to Ukraine. These organizations are hard at work. Thus far, 20 reviews of Ukraine assistance have been completed, with another 64 reviews ongoing or planned. That is oversight.

We have work ahead of us this year, and it is critical work. If we make the right choices, we can ensure a Ukrainian victory over Russia, send a message of strength to China and others who wish us ill, and restore the United States as the world’s arsenal of democracy.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA BULLDOGS FOOTBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2023 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION COLLEGE FOOTBALL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res 16, 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. 16) congratulating the University of Georgia Bulldogs football team for winning the 2023 National Collegiate Athletic Association College Football National Championship.

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

Mr. SCHATZ. I ask unanimous consent that 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. 16) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

#### SUPPORTING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 17, 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. 17) supporting the contributions of Catholic schools in the United States.

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

Mr. SCHATZ. I ask unanimous consent that 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. 17) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

#### MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 123

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 123) to protect American small businesses, gig workers, and freelancers by repealing the burdensome American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 transactions reporting threshold, and to rescind certain funding provided to the Internal Revenue Service under section 10301 of Public Law 117-169.

Mr. SCHATZ. I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's objection is heard. The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

#### ORDERS FOR MONDAY, JANUARY 30, 2023

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it

stand adjourned until 3 p.m. on Monday, January 30; that following the prayer and 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 the Senate be in a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

Mr. SCHATZ. For the information of the Senate, Senators should expect a rollcall vote at approximately 5:30 p.m. on Monday.

If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Would the Senator yield?

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, yes. I will yield. I withdraw my request.

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

#### TRIBUTE TO SENATE PAGES

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I really appreciate you recognizing me for a moment. We are about to adjourn the Senate. Many Senators will travel back to their home States to do work, to meet with constituents, to go forward, but something is happening tomorrow that I wanted to recognize, which is the graduation of this class of Senate pages.

Many people watch the functioning of the Senate, and what draws attention is not many of the people that do the work of this place. We have an incredible parliamentary staff. We have incredible people that serve the different caucuses. We have incredible people who provide security for this place who often don't get the attention they deserve.

Senators come and go, but one thing that stays consistent is the incredible human beings, the patriots who make this place work.

I am humbled every day to meet people who so love the institution of the Senate that they have chosen to serve it, and I am sure you can agree with me: They are not doing it for the pay, and they are not doing it for the glory. They do it for the love of country, and, especially, in particular, the love of this institution.

There is another group, though, that does come and go that I think play a very special role here, and that is about twice a year—then there are some summer pages—we see the pages come in from all over the country to serve this institution in a way that has been done for generations.

And what is remarkable about them, in their suits, is that they are not young adults, they are teenagers who have made an irrational choice, in my opinion. They have decided to leave their high schools, their comfort, their technological devices, their extra-curricular activities, their sports

teams, their homes, and come and live in Washington, DC, where the rigors of their lives are extraordinary.

Literally, our Senate pages, during the two sessions that are during the year, they are doing a full class of academics. They actually are studying difficult topics that—I am not sure how Senators would do on calculus or chemistry, but they are taking a full load of classes, and then they are working the equivalent of a full-time job.

And at times, they are up at 5 in the morning, and then they service this institution. And the jobs they do, I would say, are essential. In fact, if they were not here—the people that would have to do those jobs—the Senate would have to hire people to fill those roles.

During my 10 years in the Senate, I have to say, I have met some remarkable young people. They call them Democratic and Republican pages, but there is no partisanship here. These are patriots first who probably ascribe to many different ideals and parties and dependents and what have you, but when they are here, they are participating in the Senate.

I often say to Senate pages, it is an honor to have served in the U.S. Senate with you, and I mean that very meaningfully when I talk to them.

Now, on a personal note, I have to say the Senate pages adore me. I tell horrible jokes. I make it a goal to try to embarrass them on the floor of the Senate as often as I can. I try to get them to encroach the rules—never break them, just encroach them. But during the course of my time here, I have watched some of these young people blow me away with their intellect and their acumen, with their dedication and their knowledge, but, most importantly, with their hearts.

I look at this class of pages right now as they are about to graduate and go on to do incredible things in life. How do I know this? With 10 years in this body, I bump into pages every once in a while. They try their best to pretend like they don't know me, but I call them out, and I see them doing great things.

I now know Senate pages who have gone off to college, who have graduated from college, who have now gone into the work world and continue to distinguish themselves, not by having a common experience of serving in the Senate but having taken the inspiration of working in this body into their work as American citizens and living a life of committed patriotism.

And so to this class, I just want to say to you as well: It has been an honor to serve this institution with you. You all are some of the best of our Nation. You have shown a grit and guts while you were here, handling your coursework and the demands. You have dealt with sometimes the indignities of being treated like you are wallpaper. But the truth of the matter is, you guys have risen in service through your course and your experience here.

For that, on behalf of this entire body, I want to give you my thanks.