

accomplish this, and I would ask for strong support in this body for housing within our American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian communities.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, due to my mother's sudden hospitalization late this afternoon for a serious illness, I need to leave Washington unexpectedly and immediately. As a result, I will miss the vote on final passage of the National Defense Authorization Act, as well as any remaining amendment votes.

I would like the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD to reflect that I support final passage of this legislation. When I return to Washington following the August work period, I will submit another statement to the RECORD detailing how I would have cast my vote on each of the amendment votes I was forced to miss.

#### VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 1078

I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

The result was announced—yeas 86, nays 11, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 209 Leg.]

##### YEAS—86

Baldwin	Graham	Peters
Barrasso	Grassley	Reed
Bennet	Hassan	Ricketts
Blumenthal	Hawley	Risch
Booker	Heinrich	Romney
Boozman	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Braun	Hirono	Rounds
Britt	Hoeven	Sanders
Brown	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Budd	Johnson	Schumer
Cantwell	Kaine	Scott (FL)
Capito	Kelly	Shaheen
Cardin	King	Sinema
Carper	Klobuchar	Smith
Cassidy	Lankford	Stabenow
Collins	Lujan	Sullivan
Coons	Lummis	Tester
Cornyn	Manchin	Thune
Cortez Masto	Markey	Tillis
Cotton	McConnell	Van Hollen
Cramer	Menendez	Warner
Crapo	Merkley	Warnock
Cruz	Moran	Warren
Daines	Mullin	Welch
Duckworth	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murphy	Wicker
Fetterman	Murray	Wyden
Fischer	Ossoff	Young
Gillibrand	Padilla	

##### NAYS—11

Blackburn	Lee	Schmitt
Ernst	Marshall	Tuberville
Hagerty	Paul	Vance
Kennedy	Rubio	

##### NOT VOTING—3

Casey	Durbin	Scott (SC)
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The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAINE). On this vote, the yeas are 86, the nays are 11.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of the amendment, the amendment is agreed to.

The amendment (No. 1078) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, for the information of the Members, we are getting very close to locking down a final agreement, which will allow us to vote on a number of things, including the managers' amendments and final passage this evening. We are still waiting for some final paperwork to be done. So, in the meantime, I am going to introduce and ask unanimous consent for a resolution praising Tony Bennett, making August 3, his birthday, Tony Bennett Day.

#### COMMEMORATING THE LIFE, LEGACY, AND ENTERTAINMENT CAREER OF TONY BENNETT

Mr. SCHUMER. So, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 322, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 322) commemorating the life, legacy, and entertainment career of Tony Bennett.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. 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. 322) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I am really proud today that my resolution declaring Tony Bennett's birthday, August 3, as Tony Bennett Day has just passed the Senate. I would like to thank Senator CORNYN for joining me in this bipartisan resolution, as well as Speaker Emerita Pelosi for working on a companion resolution in the House.

As we all know, we all loved Tony Bennett. Tony is an American icon, a son of Astoria, Queens—a New Yorker through and through—and, without doubt, one of the most beloved singers of our time. You only come across a Tony Bennett once in a lifetime.

I would like to think Frank Sinatra got it right when he called Tony Bennett "the best singer in the business."

Known for his unparalleled talent and his exceptional vocal range, Tony spanned generations and genres. He touched the hearts of millions around the world.

It didn't matter if you were young or old or somewhere in between, it didn't matter if you were a friend or a fan, just about everyone loved Tony, and Tony loved just about everyone.

And you could feel that he was in it for the right reasons, not for the money or the fame, but he just loved making music and having people enjoy it. Just to hear him sing a few bars, you knew he cared about the song and he wanted to share that caring with everybody. And he cared about you, as he sang it to you, just about more than anything.

And let's not forget, as great a musician as Tony was, he was a very good human being. He fought and served our country admirably during World War II. This always amazed me: He was a lifelong champion of civil rights and marched along Martin Luther King, Jr., in Selma in 1965, at a time when the agents of most entertainers discouraged them from marching in these kinds of things because they might lose some fans. But Tony didn't care. He believed in equality.

And he raised money for great causes, including the very disease he was fighting, Alzheimer's.

If that still wasn't enough, he was an accomplished painter, and he drew his inspiration from his little bench in Central Park.

Tony Bennett's legacy will live on in the hearts of fans, friends, and countless artists he inspired along the way. I am proud we could come together to pass this resolution honoring an extraordinary man and his immeasurable contribution to the arts and our society.

#### NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024—Continued

Now, until we get the paperwork done and can lock everything in, 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. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order to call up the following amendments to S. 2226: Rubio, No. 523; Young, No. 230; Daines, No. 1084; further, that with respect to the amendments listed above, the Senate vote on the amendments in the order listed, with no further amendments or motions in order, and with 60 affirmative votes required for adoption and that there be 2 minutes equally divided prior to each vote; further, that upon disposition of the Daines amendment, that it be in order to send to the desk a managers' package of 47 amendments, and after the clerk reports it, I ask that the clerk

also read the numbers and sponsors of each of the individual amendments in this package and that they be the only amendments remaining in order to be offered to S. 2226; that the Senate vote on the amendment with no intervening action or debate; that upon disposition of the managers' amendments, the cloture motions filed during Wednesday's session ripen and the Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the substitute amendment No. 935, as amended; further, that if cloture is invoked, all postcloture time be considered expired, the Schumer amendment No. 936 be withdrawn, and the Senate vote on the substitute amendment, as amended, with no intervening action or debate; further, that if the substitute amendment is agreed to, the cloture motion with respect to the underlying bill, S. 2226, be withdrawn, the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time, and the Senate vote on passage of the bill, as amended, with 60 affirmative votes required for passage; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with up to 10 minutes for debate, equally divided, prior to the vote on passage; finally, that upon disposition of S. 2226, the Senate immediately proceed to the consideration of H.R. 2670, which was received from the House and is at the desk; that all after the enacting clause be stricken, the text of the Senate bill, as passed, be inserted; H.R. 2670, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed, the Senate bill then be indefinitely postponed, and the motion 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.

Mr. SCHUMER. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

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

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, 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. RUBIO. 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. 523

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 523 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Florida [Mr. RUBIO] proposes an amendment numbered 523 to amendment No. 935.

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of July 13, 2023, under "Text of Amendments.")

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, this is my amendment that is going to be voted on here by agreement. It is pretty straightforward. The Federal Thrift Savings Plan is the largest defined con-

tribution plan in the world. It has 22 China-only funds. Every single one of them has money going towards companies that are sanctioned, that are on the Entity List—companies that are responsible for the human rights violations against Uighurs; companies that our own government has said are helping the Chinese build their military—Chinese-sponsored companies. And so this amendment, basically, is geared towards that. It tells the TSP—the Thrift Savings Plan—board that they can no longer invest your money—the money of Members of Congress, members of the military, Federal employ-

ees. Federal employee retirement money is being invested in companies that are undermining American national security according to our own government. We are investing in those.

Think about the irony. You are a member of the military and your retirement money is being invested in companies that are building missiles designed to blow up the ship that you serve on.

So if we are serious about this, we need to cut this off. This is not a ban on Chinese investment. This is a ban on the Thrift Savings Plan and its money—your money, the investment money of Federal employees—being used to invest in companies that our own government has placed on lists for human rights violations and posing a threat to the national security of the country.

#### VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 523

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNET). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 42, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 210 Leg.]

#### YEAS—55

Barrasso	Graham	Mullin
Blackburn	Grassley	Murkowski
Boozman	Hagerty	Peters
Braun	Hassan	Ricketts
Britt	Hawley	Risch
Brown	Hoeben	Romney
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Capito	Johnson	Rubio
Collins	Kennedy	Schmitt
Cornyn	King	Scott (FL)
Cotton	Lankford	Shaheen
Cramer	Lee	Sinema
Crapo	Lummis	Sullivan
Cruz	Manchin	Tester
Daines	Marshall	Thune
Ernst	McConnell	
Fischer	Moran	

Tillis	Vance	Wicker
Tuberville	Warner	Young

#### NAYS—42

Baldwin	Heinrich	Paul
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rosen
Booker	Kaine	Sanders
Cantwell	Kelly	Schatz
Cardin	Klobuchar	Schumer
Carper	Lujan	Smith
Cassidy	Markey	Stabenow
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warnock
Duckworth	Murphy	Warren
Feinstein	Murray	Welch
Fetterman	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Padilla	Wyden

#### NOT VOTING—3

Casey	Durbin	Scott (SC)
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The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNET). On this vote, the yeas are 55, the nays are 42. Under the previous order requiring 60 affirmative votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 523) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 230

Mr. YOUNG. I call up my amendment No. 230, and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Indiana [Mr. YOUNG] proposes an amendment numbered 230.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To ensure that the Department of Defense has received an unqualified opinion on its financial statements by October 1, 2027)

At the appropriate place in title X, insert the following:

#### SEC. \_\_\_\_ REQUIREMENT FOR UNQUALIFIED OPINION ON FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

The Secretary of Defense shall ensure that the Department of Defense has received an unqualified opinion on its financial statements by October 1, 2027.

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, Congress has passed an annual Defense authorization bill for the past 62 years. This body—both parties—takes seriously the threats our servicemembers face and the sacrifices their families make.

To date, the Department of Defense has executed five audits—five audits. No uniformed service has returned a clean audit, nor have major offices and agencies within the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

By setting this deadline, we communicate Congress's seriousness on this issue. We also communicate to the Secretary of Defense that we believe this should be a priority of his and that we will hold him responsible for failing to meet this deadline. In 4 years—4 years—we must have a clean audit.

As the Department undergoes an extensive vital modernization and seeks to take care of its people, policymakers must be able to debate and consider the Department's budgetary priorities in a transparent manner with

all the facts at our disposal. My co-sponsor, Senator KING, and I believe DOD is doing the right things to be able to complete a full, clean audit in the next 4 years. This amendment serves as a commonsense communication of intense seriousness and urgency to the Department in a practical manner.

I urge a “yes” vote, and I request a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 230

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the 60-vote threshold with respect to this amendment be vitiated and we vote by voice.

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

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 230) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 1084

(Purpose: To provide for the settlement of the water rights claims of the Fort Belknap Indian Community.)

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 1084 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 Montana [Mr. DAINES] proposes an amendment numbered 1084.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under “Text of Amendments.”)

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I would like to thank my colleague from Montana, Senator TESTER, and all of those who have worked so hard to get this home today.

This settles a 100-plus-year battle in Montana. This is the last Indian water rights settlement for the State of Montana—the Fort Belknap water rights settlement. It codifies existing water rights, prevents costly litigation, provides clean drinking water, and invests in irrigation for farmers and ranchers to provide food for our country.

This bill passed out of committee by a voice vote. It is supported by the Governor of Montana, by the entire Montana congressional delegation, the Fort Belknap community, all of the locally affected counties, including the county commissioners, and our farmers and our ranchers.

This is truly a win for our State and the country. I ask my colleagues to support this amendment, and I am going to ask for a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I want to thank Senator DAINES for all the effort he put into this legislation, the Fort Belknap Indian Community Water Rights Settlement Act. It has been a long time coming, and I want to take a moment to acknowledge the current

leader of the Fort Belknap Indian Community, President Stiffarm.

President Stiffarm is a courageous leader, and he deserves a tremendous amount of credit for bringing this bill to the moment we are at today.

This bill was first introduced by me in 2012. The bipartisan version that we are voting on today is the result of years of negotiation between the Tribe, local elected officials, State legislators, Federal Agencies, and other stakeholders that hammered out a fair compromise that honors the trust and treaty responsibilities while guaranteeing water certainty to all water users in North Central Montana through the rehabilitation of the Milk River Project.

Look, I am a farmer, and I know how critical water is for the health of communities, for agriculture, and for economic growth. Water is necessary for our crops, for our businesses, for our homes. We all rely on it.

For the Fort Belknap Indian Community the work started on this over 100 years ago. In the Senate, we have been debating moving this water settlement forward for years, and, today, we can make it happen.

I would urge my colleagues to do right by the Tribe by honoring our trust and treaty responsibilities, and do right by all the folks who rely on clean water in the Treasure State. And I support Senator DAINES' call for a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 1084

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the 60-vote threshold be vitiated and that we vote by voice.

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

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 1084) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 1087

(Purpose: To provide for a managers' package.)

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I believe it is in order now to call up the managers' package.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Rhode Island [Mr. REED], for himself and Mr. WICKER, proposes an amendment numbered 1087.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under “Text of Amendments.”)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will read the names and sponsors of the amendments.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Murray No. 205, Cruz No. 188, Reed No. 270, Menendez No. 292, Lankford No. 1082, Klobuchar No. 416, Murkowski No. 411, Coons No. 475, Grassley No. 484, Schatz No. 555,

Ernst No. 506, Cardin No. 701, Ernst No. 508, Merkley No. 740, Rubio No. 525, Brown No. 761, Sullivan No. 647, Cortez Masto No. 800, Cornyn No. 814, Fetterman No. 825, Kennedy No. 861, Manchin No. 826, Braun No. 871, Ossoff No. 908, Schmitt No. 906, Padilla No. 910, Graham No. 917, Warner No. 913, Ernst No. 988, Shaheen No. 928, Lummis No. 1000, Warnock No. 977, Cotton No. 1015, Kelly No. 985, Risch No. 1017, Wyden No. 1035, Lankford No. 1027, Whitehouse No. 1036, Hoeven No. 1037, Rosen No. 1040, Barrasso No. 1042, Cardin No. 1050, Lee No. 1051, Sinema No. 1070, Hyde-Smith No. 1064, Peters No. 1043, and Warner No. 1053.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays are ordered.

The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Does the distinguished chairman wish to speak on the motion?

Mr. REED. Go ahead.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, this represents another degree of cooperation. This comes to us by unanimous consent. According to the rules, we must have a vote of the yeas and nays, but we are approaching the finish line, and out of consideration for those who have travel plans later tonight, I hope we can stick to the 10-minute rule.

I urge the passage of this important managers' package.

#### VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 1087

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

The result was announced—yeas 94, nays 3, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 211 Leg.]

#### YEAS—94

Baldwin	Daines	Lee
Barrasso	Duckworth	Luján
Bennet	Ernst	Lummis
Blackburn	Feinstein	Manchin
Blumenthal	Fetterman	Marshall
Booker	Fischer	McConnell
Boozman	Gillibrand	Menendez
Braun	Graham	Merkley
Britt	Grassley	Moran
Brown	Hagerty	Mullin
Budd	Hassan	Murkowski
Cantwell	Hawley	Murphy
Capito	Heinrich	Murray
Cardin	Hickenlooper	Ossoff
Carper	Hirono	Padilla
Cassidy	Hoeven	Peters
Collins	Hyde-Smith	Reed
Coons	Johnson	Ricketts
Cornyn	Kaine	Risch
Cortez Masto	Kelly	Romney
Cotton	Kennedy	Rosen
Cramer	King	Rounds
Crapo	Klobuchar	Rubio
Cruz	Lankford	Schatz

Schmitt	Tester	Warren
Schumer	Thune	Welch
Scott (FL)	Tillis	Whitehouse
Shaheen	Tuberville	Wicker
Sinema	Van Hollen	Wyden
Smith	Vance	Young
Stabenow	Warner	
Sullivan	Warnock	

NAYS—3

Markey	Paul	Sanders
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NOT VOTING—3

Casey	Durbin	Scott (SC)
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The amendment (No. 1087) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, let me give the order. We are almost done. We are about to vote.

I first have to do a unanimous consent to vitiate cloture. I am going to speak on the NDAA bill, on the pages, and yield to Leader MCCONNELL to follow me, and then we vote.

## UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

So, first, I ask unanimous consent to modify the previous order so cloture motions with respect to the substitute amendment No. 935, as amended, and the underlying bill, S. 2226, be withdrawn; that the Schumer amendment No. 936 be withdrawn; that the substitute amendment No. 935, as amended, be agreed to; further, that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and the Senate vote on passage of the bill, as amended, with 60 affirmative votes required for passage; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with up to 10 minutes for debate, equally divided, prior to the vote on passage, with all previous provisions remaining in effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I want to thank the Senator from Utah and the Senator from Maryland for putting forward this critical amendment ending China's developing nation status.

The ability of countries to take advantage of "special and differential treatment" as it is called in the World Trade Organization—WTO—to skip out on meaningful obligations and upend the trade playing field has long concerned me and other members of the Finance Committee on both sides of the aisle.

While I support the goal of the amendment, the language needs to be refined to effectively achieve that objective. I want to work with you in conference to ensure this amendment directs the U.S. Trade Representative to meaningfully address China's status at the WTO. The WTO has a unique and, frankly, antiquated form of governance and is long overdue for significant reform, including its treatment of major economies like China.

Mr. ROMNEY. I thank the Senator from Oregon. I agree with him that this amendment is critical.

Congress needs to push the Federal Government on this policy. Our gov-

ernment must acknowledge the reality that China is no longer a developing country. I commit to working with the chairman of the Finance Committee, in good faith, in conference.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, as a strong supporter of U.S. assistance to Ukraine, I am keenly aware of the important role that appropriate and effective oversight plays in ensuring that support can continue. I support independent, effective oversight and believe we should be doing all that we can to make sure those oversight mechanisms are strong and that our inspectors general have the resources they need to carry out their work.

But given that we have an existing framework, given that there are three inspectors general who have been working day in and out, effectively, to conduct such oversight, I do not think we should create new offices and additional layers without evidence that the current framework is not working. So while I appreciate that my colleagues share the same goals of ensuring we have robust oversight of U.S. assistance to Ukraine, I do not agree that these amendments are the best way to achieve that goal.

The Wicker amendment would create a new office that could impede the work that is ongoing, not enhance it. There is an existing statutory framework for designating a lead inspector general. I have not heard a good case for why that framework should not be used here.

The inspectors general from the Department of State, USAID, and Department of Defense have been on the ground in Ukraine, conducting work of virtually all U.S. assistance involving multiple Agencies. They have an established working group that ensures oversight is efficient and not duplicative. Creating a new office, with the need for new staff and potentially conflicting roles, would likely make those efforts less, not more, efficient.

The Paul amendment would add further and unnecessary complexity to ongoing oversight efforts. It would likely impair ongoing oversight by drawing personnel away from the inspectors general already engaged in oversight work. Instead of ramping up current efforts, inspectors general would spend time deconflicting or sorting out personnel issues. It is also unclear how an expanded Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction—SIGAR—would successfully pivot to oversight of Ukraine assistance or how it would an expanded mandate would be funded.

I am committed to ensuring that we have robust, independent, effective oversight of all U.S. assistance to Ukraine. But the answer to ensuring that we have successful mechanisms for such oversight is not to create new structures and additional layers of bureaucracy. It is to make sure those who already have the tools, expertise, and resources to conduct oversight and audit spending, have sufficient resources to do so, and for us to hold

them to account. That is precisely what I intend to do, and I call on my colleagues in this body to do the same.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I concur with many of my colleagues that spending on defense is important to meet our national security needs and support our allies like Ukraine. My State of Maryland plays an important role in bolstering national defense, advancing critical research, and supporting our military, and I strongly support the work of our bases.

However, it is clear to me that we as a country are not spending our money wisely. The defense budget has grown considerably and, despite its size, has not passed an independent audit. Admiral Mike Mullin, the former Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said in reference to defense spending that "with the increasing defense budget, which is almost double, it hasn't forced us to make the hard trades. It hasn't forced us to prioritize."

While I do not believe that across-the-board cuts are ever the best way to reduce spending, I voted in favor of the Sanders amendment to send a message that we need to put our defense dollars to much better use and make the hard choices necessary to right-size our defense spending.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I want to say a few words about my vote in support of the Hawley amendment No. 1058, relating to expansion of the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act. I voted in favor of this amendment, but I would like to highlight that an important group is left out of this expansion: payments to beneficiaries of deceased individuals who were responsible for cleaning up atomic testing sites. While this amendment includes payments to beneficiaries of deceased individuals who qualify under the new Manhattan Project Waste sections, cleanup veterans are notably left out of such payments to their beneficiaries upon their passing.

I hope that during the conference process for the underlying bill, we are able to include this provision to ensure just compensation for these veterans and their families. If we are not able to include these veterans during the conference process, I hope to work with my colleagues to provide benefits to our cleanup veterans as standalone legislation or through another appropriate, legislative vehicle.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

## BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, it has been a long day but a very successful day.

The NDAA is a prime example of both sides coming together and crafting a strong, bipartisan defense bill that will strengthen America's national security, take care of our servicemembers, and keep the United States the leader in innovation for years to come.

This was a bipartisan process through and through. I want to thank

Chairman REED and Ranking Member WICKER and all the Members for their good work on this.

A bipartisan process is precisely what the American people are yearning for in a fractured Congress, Democrats and Republicans coming together to provide something as critical as our national defense.

The NDAA and the bipartisan process we went through to get here should be a glimmer of hope for the American people, a sign that bipartisanship is alive and well in the Senate, but it is not the only glimmer. We also came together to avert a first-ever default a few months ago, and we are currently making great progress on the appropriations bill, where, almost miraculously, under the leadership of Senator MURPHY and Senator COLLINS, they have advanced all 12 bills out of committee with bipartisan support.

(Applause.)

I hope what has happened on this bill, the NDAA bill, and these other bills can be a metaphor for future bills down the road.

These are two of our highest responsibilities—appropriations and national defense—and we made great progress in these last few months. It has been a really good Senate that the American people can be proud of.

It was a good process on and off the floor. Listen to this: 98 amendments. We talk about how we don't do amendments—98; 44 Democrat, 44 Republican, and the rest bipartisan. That is what an NDAA bill should look like—a full floor process with input and debate from both sides. As a result, there are many critical provisions in this NDAA bill as well that we should be proud of.

We made critical downpayments on our effort to outcompete the Chinese Government by limiting the flow of investment and advanced technology to China.

We are passing the first piece of legislation related to artificial intelligence, including important provisions to increase data sharing with the DOD and increase reporting on AI's use in financial services.

Maybe most important to everyone here aware of this fentanyl crisis, we are boosting resources in a major way to tackle the fentanyl crisis by including the FEND Off Fentanyl Act. Senators BROWN, SCOTT, and many others led to that legislation. This act gives the President more powers to stop any country—China, Mexico—from sending the precursor materials that are made into fentanyl to kill our children.

Together, all of these provisions provide a strong foundation for the safety and security of our country.

One more point. It is in stark contrast to the partisan race to the bottom we saw in the House. House Republicans should look to the bipartisan Senate to see how to get things done. We are passing important bipartisan legislation; they are throwing partisan legislation on the floor that has no chance of passing. The contrast is glaring.

If the House of Representatives would look at how we are working here in the Senate and emulate us a little more, they could be far more productive.

#### SENATE PAGES

Mr. President, now on a final note and a serious note. Today is the final day for this page class. It has been a busy session. The pages can help make this place run smoothly. They are here when we need them, and they have served this institution with grace. However, I understand that late last night, a Member of the House majority thought it appropriate to curse at some of these young people, these teenagers, in the Rotunda. I was shocked when I heard about it, and I am further shocked at his refusal to apologize to these young people.

I can't speak for the House of Representatives, but I do not think that one Member's disrespect is shared by this body, by Leader MCCONNELL, and myself.

So I would like to take a moment to thank these pages for their assistance these many weeks. We wish them well as they return to their homes and families.

(Applause.)

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the names of the current pages be printed at the appropriate place in the RECORD.

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

Amelia Barnum, Claire Erickson, Ava Heaphy, Benjamin Kagan, Tova Korry, Arav Mehta, Andrew Morgan, Chloe Patricof, Daniel Ross, Colton Sorce, Angela Valle-Rivera, Evangeline Enright, Christopher Freshwater, Mila Jolley, Maya Karafotas, Emily Maikoo, Jack Milroy, Amrutha Nandakumar, Matthew Pollak, Julia Sandoval, Allison Stoudt, Patrick Willocks Duncan.

Isabella Aversano, Robert Charles Cresanti, Andrew James Kozeny, Reed Daniel Gray, Mia Solomon, Augusten "Gus" James Sugarman, James Christian Pittman, Owen Peter White, Brady Patrick Butler, Dorsa Tajvidi, DeLacy Jane Poletti, Madeline Garcia, Colin Hughes Cole Murkowski, Josee Compton, Evans O'Brien Reynolds, John Andrew Guyer, Nora Shitandi, Brianna Elizabeth Schmitz, Maxwell Noah White, Brett Aaron Poggi, Walker Bryan Coley, Katherine Kaia Wrench.

Mr. SCHUMER. I now turn to Leader MCCONNELL.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I want to associate myself with the remarks of the majority leader. Everybody on this side of the aisle feels exactly the same way.

S. 2226

I also want to offer my congratulations to those deeply involved in passing this important NDAA. We kept our record. This is the 63rd year, I guess, and a good way to wrap up this session. This is really important for our country.

Mr. SCHUMER. Thank you, Leader MCCONNELL.

I ask for the yeas and nays on final passage of the NDAA.

#### CLOTURE MOTIONS WITHDRAWN

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the cloture motions are withdrawn.

#### AMENDMENT WITHDRAWN

The amendment (No. 936) was withdrawn.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 935, AS AMENDED

The amendment (No. 935), as amended, was agreed to.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read a third time.

#### VOTE ON S. 2226

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

The yeas and nays have been requested.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

The result was announced—yeas 86, nays 11, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 212 Leg.]

#### YEAS—86

Baldwin	Graham	Padilla
Barrasso	Grassley	Peters
Bennet	Hagerty	Reed
Blackburn	Hassan	Ricketts
Blumenthal	Hawley	Risch
Boozman	Heinrich	Romney
Britt	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Brown	Hirono	Rounds
Budd	Hoeven	Rubio
Cantwell	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Capito	Johnson	Schmitt
Cardin	Kaine	Schumer
Carper	Kelly	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Shaheen
Collins	King	Sinema
Coons	Klobuchar	Smith
Cornyn	Lankford	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Lujan	Sullivan
Cotton	Lummis	Tester
Cramer	Manchin	Thune
Crapo	Marshall	Tillis
Cruz	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Moran	Warner
Ernst	Mullin	Warnock
Feinstein	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Fetterman	Murphy	Wicker
Fischer	Murray	Young
Gillibrand	Ossoff	

#### NAYS—11

Booker	Merkley	Warren
Braun	Paul	Welch
Lee	Sanders	Wyden
Markey	Vance	

#### NOT VOTING—3

Casey	Durbin	Scott (SC)
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 86, the nays are 11.

The 60-vote threshold having been achieved, the bill, as amended, is passed.

The bill (S. 2226), as amended, was passed.

(The bill will be printed in a future edition of the RECORD.)



# NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to consider H.R. 2670, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2670) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2024 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, a substitute amendment, which is the text of S. 2226, as passed, is agreed to; the bill, as amended, is considered read a third time and passed; and the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

The amendment, in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The bill (H.R. 2670), as amended, was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, S. 2226 is indefinitely postponed.

The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I now would like to congratulate my colleagues in the Senate for passing a very important National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024.

I see that my distinguished chairman has come back to the floor, and I want to thank him for his cooperation. I want to thank every member of the committee and every Member of the Senate for their cooperation. As the public has learned, we do much of this through unanimous consent, and it is a tribute that we have gotten as far as we have and it is July 27, with another full 2 months to go before the end of the fiscal year. I think we are on the right track.

This year's National Defense Authorization Act will help meet the dangerous national security moment we face. It will equip our military with many of the tools necessary to implement the national defense strategy.

Every year, as has been mentioned, we pass the NDAA. This is the 63rd time we have done so, and it is a lasting, continual testament to Congress's commitment to our servicemembers and our security.

To be sure, our threats are much greater than they were back in 1961 when the first NDAA passed. Today, the United States faces undoubtedly the most complex and dangerous security situation since World War II.

This year's NDAA is an important step forward in our quest to build our arsenal. Ideally, we would have an annual 3 to 5 percent boost above inflation to our top line. We were not able to come to an agreement on that, but

even without that budget increase, our committee has advanced a strong, bipartisan product that contains numerous important provisions. Let me summarize just a few.

The bill authorizes a 5.2-percent pay raise for servicemembers and includes a host of other quality-of-life improvements for our troops and their families.

The bill also contains provisions that will help the military solve its recruiting crisis.

We include a massive expansion of the Junior ROTC Program, a citizenship builder in our high schools. We also included support for our submarine programs. We need to do more in that regard.

The legislation addresses the ongoing maintenance delays by sending funds to our shipyards. It expands our deterrent capabilities with a sea-launched nuclear cruise missile and allows us to make good on our commitments to the United Kingdom and Australia, commonly referred to as the AUKUS agreement.

The bill makes six more munitions eligible for the all-important multiyear procurement contracts. These multiyear commitments send a clear signal to our industrial base. And we will produce these arms at home, here in the United States, equipping American troops with American-made weapons and ammunition.

Notably, we have fully authorized the construction of the next amphibious ship, the LPD-33.

Our committee realizes military competition in the 21st century will be decided by our willingness to harness emerging technology. This NDAA accelerates the development of artificial intelligence, offensive cyber, hypersonics, and unmanned platforms. Because we intend to lap Beijing in the 100-year innovation marathon, we are authorizing a new Pentagon authority with the Office of Strategic Capital.

As always, partnerships with our allies act as a force multiplier on all the tools we are providing American soldiers. I am glad this bill enhances security cooperation with allies in every part of the free world, from the Baltics to the Pacific.

Starting in January, the Armed Services Committee held countless hearings, briefings, and oversight hearings of the Department. This is one of the most encompassing bills as a result of our work, which began in January. The committee mark included 1,217 provisions. Of that, 504 were the result of member inputs. During the committee markups, an additional 240 amendments were considered.

Throughout the process, my colleague and teammate, Senator JACK REED of Rhode Island, has been a gentleman in every way and a patriot, as demonstrated by his service in the military and his service in the House and Senate. I thank him for helping to make this process exceedingly smooth.

To take a moment, let me thank the following staff members who were so

essential in getting this done smoothly and efficiently: Rick Berger, Brendan Gavin, James Mazol, Greg Lilly, Brad Patout, Olivia Trusty, Eric Trager, Adam Trull, Kevin Kim, Adam Barker, Sean O'Keefe, Katie Magnus, Isaac Jalkanen, Eric Lofgren, Kristina Belcourt, Pat Thompson, Katie Romaine, Travis Brundrett, Jack Beyrer, and Philip Waller. And all of these people on my side of the dais were led effectively by a veteran staff member from the House and Senate, my staff director, John Keast. Thank you to all of these people.

Thank you once again to my colleague Senator REED.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, first, let me commend Senator WICKER, the ranking member, for his extraordinary cooperation, thoughtfulness, and insight throughout this entire process. As a result, this evening, we passed in an overwhelming vote a bipartisan piece of legislation that confronts the challenges we face today in a very, very difficult world.

The first thing we did was we took care of the troops. We have a 5.2-percent increase in pay—one of the largest in decades. We also took care of the troops by investing in the best possible platforms in technology in many dimensions—underwater submarines, in the air. We are recapitalizing our triad for nuclear deterrence. We are looking closely at space, what we can do there both to defend ourselves and prevent space from undermining our national security. All of these things were done on a collaborative basis. Hundreds of amendments were considered in both the committee and here on the floor. As a result, we have legislation that I think we are all very, very proud of.

I would also like to thank and commend Leader SCHUMER and Leader MCCONNELL because they allowed us to conduct a very open process on the floor, to entertain amendments, to work closely so that we could have the conclusion we did this evening—a strong, strong bipartisan vote.

I am confident that what we have done will provide the Department of Defense and our military men and women with the resources they need to meet and overcome the challenges of a dangerous world.

Like my colleague, I recognize that the work of others made our work much easier. Indeed, the work of our staffs made this bill possible. So let me thank first my staff director, Elizabeth King, and I also thank John Keast, the staff director to Senator WICKER, who has done an extraordinary job. Together, they are a formidable team and also consummate professionals.

As my colleague has done, let me recognize the staff members on my side of the aisle: Jody Bennett, who made a very strong contribution to this effort, Carolyn Chuhta, Jon Clark, Jenny Davis, Jonathan Epstein, Jorie Feldman, Kevin Gates, Creighton Greene,