

“(3) The term ‘Veterans Crisis Line’ means the toll-free hotline for veterans established under section 1720F(h) of this title.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 63 of such title is amended by striking the items relating to sections 6307 and 6308 and inserting the following new items:

“6307. Grants to States to improve outreach to veterans.

“6308. Outreach for eligible dependents.

“6309. Biennial report to Congress.”.

The bill (S. 106), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

## GAO INSPECTOR GENERAL PARITY ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration Calendar No. 191, S. 1510.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1510) to amend provisions relating to the Office of the Inspector General of the Government Accountability Office, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which was reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the Braun substitute amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that 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.

The amendment (No. 1369) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “GAO Inspector General Parity Act”.

### SEC. 2. OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE.

Section 705 of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by inserting “(A)” before “The Inspector General”;

(ii) in subparagraph (A), as so designated, by striking the second sentence; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) If the Inspector General is removed from office or is transferred to another position or location within the Government Accountability Office, the Comptroller General shall communicate in writing the substantive rationale, including detailed and case-specific reasons, for any such removal or transfer to both Houses of Congress (including to the appropriate congressional committees), not later than 30 days before the removal or transfer.

“(C) If there is an open or completed inquiry into the Inspector General that relates to the removal or transfer of the Inspector General under subparagraph (A), the written

communication required under subparagraph (B) shall—

“(i) identify each entity that is conducting, or that conducted, the inquiry; and

“(ii) in the case of a completed inquiry, contain the findings made during the inquiry.

“(D) Nothing in this paragraph shall prohibit a personnel action otherwise authorized by law, other than transfer or removal.”;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3)(A) Subject to the other provisions of this paragraph, only the Comptroller General may place the Inspector General on non-duty status.

“(B) If the Comptroller General places the Inspector General on non-duty status, the Comptroller General shall communicate in writing the substantive rationale, including detailed and case-specific reasons, for the change in status to both Houses of Congress (including to the appropriate congressional committees) not later than 15 days before the date on which the change in status takes effect, except that the Comptroller General may submit that communication not later than the date on which the change in status takes effect if—

“(i) the Comptroller General has made a determination that the continued presence of the Inspector General in the workplace poses a specific threat; and

“(ii) in the communication, the Comptroller General includes a report on the determination described in clause (i), which shall include—

“(I) the substantive rationale, including detailed and case-specific reasons, for the determination made under clause (i);

“(II) an identification of each entity that is conducting, or that conducted, any inquiry upon which the determination under clause (i) was made; and

“(III) in the case of an inquiry described in subclause (II) that is completed, the findings made during that inquiry.

“(C) The Comptroller General may not place the Inspector General on non-duty status during the 30-day period preceding the date on which the Inspector General is removed or transferred under paragraph (2)(A) unless the Comptroller General—

“(i) has made a determination that the continued presence of the Inspector General in the workplace poses a specific threat; and

“(ii) not later than the date on which the change in status takes effect, submits to both Houses of Congress (including to the appropriate congressional committees) a written communication that contains the information required under subparagraph (B), including the report required under clause (ii) of that subparagraph.

“(D) Nothing in this paragraph may be construed to limit or otherwise modify any statutory protection that is afforded to the Inspector General or a personnel action that is otherwise authorized by law.”;

(2) in subsection (f)—

(A) by striking “The Comptroller General” and inserting the following:

“(1) PROHIBITION.—The Comptroller General”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) BUDGET INDEPENDENCE.—The Comptroller General shall include the annual budget request of the Inspector General in the budget of the Government Accountability Office without change.”; and

(3) in subsection (g)—

(A) in paragraph (1), in the second sentence, by striking “, except that no personnel of the Office may be paid at an annual

rate greater than \$1,000 less than the annual rate of pay of the Inspector General”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) LEGAL ADVICE.—The Inspector General shall, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations governing selections, appointments, and employment at the Government Accountability Office, obtain legal advice from a counsel reporting directly to the Inspector General or another Inspector General.”.

The bill (S. 1510), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

## RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions: S. Res. 468, S. Res. 469, S. Res. 470, S. Res. 471.

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

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

Mr. SCHUMER. 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 PRESIDING OFFICER. 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.”)

## ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2023, THROUGH MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2023

Mr. SCHUMER. Finally, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn to then convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business being conducted, on the following dates and times, and that following each pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session: Friday, November 17 at 7:30 a.m.; Tuesday, November 21, at 10 a.m.; Friday, November 24, at 11 a.m.; further, that when the Senate adjourns on Friday, November 24, it stand adjourned until 3 p.m. on Monday, November 27; that on Monday, following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that following the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Bryan nomination; further, that the cloture motions filed during today's session ripen at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, November 27.

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

## ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of my many Republican colleagues.

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

The Senator from Alaska.

## UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I am honored to be down here again with Senators GRAHAM, ERNST, and YOUNG. We were down on the floor 2 weeks ago, and at that time, we promised military members and their families that we had their back; that we would keep coming down to the Senate floor to try to move forward their nominations and confirmations that have been stalled.

By the way, after that session, 5 hours, we tried to move forward nominees who have nothing to do with the policy dispute that is at issue here—I think we are all in agreement on the policy dispute—we received hundreds of text messages, e-mails from military families, saying: Thank you for having our back. Somebody has our back. Somebody is speaking out for us.

So we have told them we are going to do that as we are moving into Thanksgiving. My colleagues and I, we are going to keep our word. We keep our word to our military.

Now, during that time in the last 2 weeks, we have all worked hard together. Senator TUBERVILLE is here. Senator LEE is on the floor. We are all working hard to try and resolve this. We have ideas. Senator GRAHAM is going to talk a little bit more about litigation, about switching the holds from the innocent members of the military to the civilians who are making the policy, that is the appropriate—to fighting this abortion policy of the Biden administration, DOD, and the NDAA.

So we are still working on that. I want to extend that to my colleagues, but the backlog grows. Right now, when Armed Services reports out the next batch of military officers, it will be 450, one-, two-, three-, and four-star generals—450. This is having a huge readiness challenge and a huge morale challenge while our troops are literally—literally—in combat, literally under fire. Some of these being held in the Middle East, in terms of their promotions, are in combat right now. The world is a very dangerous place.

Very quickly, my Democrat colleagues, the Biden administration, they seem to take a certain delight in what is happening here. I don't take a delight in this at all. I don't relish this at all. I like working with my Republican colleagues. I wish we could resolve this.

I am on the floor here more out of sadness and frustration than anger, and

I really do wish, with my colleague Senator TUBERVILLE, that we can find a way forward on this fast so we can turn to an even bigger readiness problem, and that is the Biden administration's lack of seriousness when it comes to the Department of Defense: cutting the budgets every year; the current budget shrinks the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps; the civilian woke focus of this administration. They are not serious on our national defense and military.

We need to get through that. Senator TUBERVILLE and I actually were the ones who made the majority leader bring forward the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. So on the other side of the aisle, there wasn't a lot of seriousness on moving people either.

So I hope we can resolve this issue and focus on even the bigger readiness issue that plagues this administration right now. But there is no doubt these blanket holds are creating readiness challenges not just for flag officers; we are starting to hear of colonels and lieutenant colonels who are being stuck. So this is impacting the entire military.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the letters from the Military Officers Association of America, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the American Legion—this represents millions of Americans all requesting that these blanket holds be lifted—be printed in the RECORD.

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

MOAA.

*Alexandria, VA, November 7, 2023.*

DEAR MEMBERS OF THE U.S. SENATE: As President and CEO of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), one of the nation's largest military service organizations, I want to extend my appreciation for your chamber's recent work to end the promotion block facing more than 300 senior military officers—an ongoing threat to the future of the all-volunteer force and our national security.

As more positions become vacant, more families face hardships, and the strain on the readiness of our military continues, MOAA believes the time to end the promotion block has long passed. We strongly oppose Senator Tuberville's use of blanket nomination holds to protest Pentagon policies, and we urge the Senate to take advantage of your recent work and act now to end this destructive tactic before further damage is done to our military.

Talented officers on the path for future senior leadership roles are reevaluating their careers, some opting to leave uniform rather than subject their family to hardships and, frankly, insults from Senator Tuberville that demean and disrespect the sacrifices they make in defending our nation. Hearing the senator dismiss impacts to families and readiness that have been raised to him and his staff for many months is very disappointing. Future servicemembers are watching this display of political theater and are reconsidering their decision to serve. It's a potential loss of talent America cannot afford, but one our competitors love to see.

By interfering with an orderly and efficient confirmation process, Senator Tuberville is denying our military the lead-

ership it needs to accomplish its demanding mission. And as recent events highlight, the stakes could not be higher and the need for leadership could not be greater. MOAA respects and supports the Senate's responsibility to debate policy and conduct oversight of the Department of Defense. But his blockade tactic places his own objectives over the collective will of elected colleagues and it corrupts the most fundamental principles of our democratic process. Worst of all, it puts military families in the untenable position of having to question whether the hand they raised and the oaths they take are respected by elected leaders.

With multiple conflicts abroad and significant recruiting challenges at home, our military needs its full complement of qualified, capable men and women at the helm. It's clear some damage has already been done, but we urge the Senate to find a way to act now, end this tactic, and ensure it is never used again before permanent damage is done to our military members and families.

MOAA stands ready to support your work on behalf of all who serve, across all ranks and all uniformed services. We thank you for your continued efforts on behalf of the all-volunteer force and look forward to you taking immediate actions to help restore the important and necessary trust between the military community and our elected leaders.

Very Respectfully,

LT. GEN. BRIAN T. KELLY, USAF (RET).

*MOAA President and CEO.*

VFW.

*Washington, DC, September 18, 2023.*

Hon. TOMMY TUBERVILLE,  
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR SENATOR TUBERVILLE: On behalf of the 1.5 million members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and its Auxiliary, I write to call on you to lift your hold on the routine promotion of U.S. military general and flag officers. One of the VFW's top national security priorities is preserving the all-volunteer force. At a time of military recruiting challenges, the instability caused by this hold will have far-reaching consequences for the brave Americans who volunteer to serve in today's military and those who may consider future military service. The VFW called on the Senate to resolve this matter earlier this summer and now we call on you directly to end this hold before we set the very dangerous precedent of harming American service members as leverage in Washington political battles.

The VFW recently conducted a survey in which our members, including veterans in Alabama, overwhelmingly voiced their opinions on this matter. VFW members were clear that political debates in Washington should be handled among civilian political leaders. Moreover, VFW members strongly conveyed that politicians should not be able to harm the troops over political disputes and that political decisions that harm the troops would affect the way they would vote in upcoming elections.

The VFW has already heard from current service members and military families on the far-reaching effects your hold has had on both the mission and the lives of those who choose military service as a career. Preservation of the all-volunteer force demands a non-partisan and apolitical uniformed military capable of closing with and destroying our nation's enemies at the direction of its duly elected and appointed civilian leaders. When policy disputes emerge among these civilian leaders, the VFW cannot allow politicians to set the precedent of harming uniformed service members to make a point.

The world is still a dangerous place and brave Americans remain stationed around