

Whereas public schools in the United States educate students about the values and beliefs that hold the individuals of the United States together as a nation;

Whereas public schools prepare young individuals of the United States to contribute to the society, economy, and citizenry of the country;

Whereas 90 percent of children in the United States attend public schools;

Whereas Federal, State, and local lawmakers should—

(1) prioritize support for strengthening the public schools of the United States;

(2) empower superintendents, principals, and other school leaders to implement, manage, and lead school districts and schools in partnership with educators, parents, and other local education stakeholders; and

(3) support services and programs that are critical to helping students engage in learning, including counseling, extracurricular activities, and mental health support;

Whereas public schools should foster inclusive, safe, and high-quality environments in which children can learn to think critically, problem solve, and build relationships;

Whereas public schools should provide environments in which all students have the opportunity to succeed beginning in their earliest years, regardless of who a student is or where a student lives;

Whereas Congress should support—

(1) efforts to advance equal opportunity and excellence in public education;

(2) efforts to implement evidence-based practices in public education; and

(3) continuous improvements to public education;

Whereas every child should—

(1) receive an education that helps the child reach the full potential of the child; and

(2) attend a school that offers a high-quality educational experience;

Whereas Federal funding, in addition to State and local funds, supports the access of students to inviting classrooms, well-prepared educators, and services to support healthy students, including nutrition and afterschool programs;

Whereas teachers, paraprofessionals, and principals should provide students with a well-rounded education and strive to create joy in learning;

Whereas superintendents, principals, other school leaders, teachers, paraprofessionals, and parents make public schools vital components of communities and are working hard to improve educational outcomes for children across the country; and

Whereas the week of February 26 through March 1, 2024, is an appropriate period to designate as “Public Schools Week”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designates the week of February 26 through March 1, 2024, as “Public Schools Week”.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I have 12 requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

The Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry is authorized to

meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on a nomination.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS’ AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans’ Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 3:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL

The Subcommittee on Personnel of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 3:00 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Jacob Walker, an intern in my office, be granted floor privileges until March 1, 2024.

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

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that privileges of the floor be granted to the following interns on Senator KELLY’s staff for today: Maya Rezende-Tsao, Gabe Levine, Gannon Tulumello, and Leila Pearson.

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

PUBLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 568, which is at the desk.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 568) designating the week of February 26 through March 1, 2024, as “Public Schools Week”.

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. 568) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2024

Mr. SCHUMER. Finally, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Thursday, February 29; 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 morning business be closed; further, that following the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Rollinson nomination postcloture; that all time be considered expired at 11:30 a.m.; and that if the nomination is confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action; further, that following disposition of the Rollinson nomination, the Senate resume legislative session and execute the order of January 31, 2024, with respect to the veto message on S.J.

Res. 38 and the Senate immediately vote on passage of the joint resolution, the objections of the President to the contrary notwithstanding; further, that following disposition of the veto message, the Senate resume executive session to proceed to the consideration of Executive Calendar No. 518, Ronald Keohane to be Assistant Secretary of Defense.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam 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 Senator RAPHAEL WARNOCK, the Senator from Georgia.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

PEACE

Mr. WARNOCK. Madam President, I rise tonight in anguish and in sorrow over the heinous and horrific attack by Hamas on the people of Israel on October 7 and also in response to the catastrophic humanitarian nightmare unfolding on the ground in Gaza right now, leaving over 100 Israeli hostages and hundreds of thousands of Palestinians suffering and tens of thousands—including many women and children—already dead, with no end in sight.

While much can be said about the geopolitics, perhaps because I am a pastor, I see first and foremost the people. On all sides of this awful and ugly, deadly conflict, I see the children of God. All of us are children of God. I especially see the children.

The haunting and penetrating witness of that ancient woman of the Jewish Scripture speaks to me in this moment. A voice is heard in Ramah, the sound of mourning and great weeping, Rachel weeping for her children, and she refuses to be comforted, for they are no more.

I hear Jewish mothers and fathers and Palestinian mothers and fathers weeping for their children, and the question is, What would we do if we truly believed that all of the children are truly our children? What would each side do if they could look into the eyes of the children on the other side and see in those children's eyes what they see when they look into the eyes of their own?

When we come to see that the safety of other people's children is inextricably connected to the safety of our own, we will do so much more to ensure that all children are safe. When we come to see that the health of other people's children is inexorably related to the health of our own, we will do so much more to ensure that every child can eat. When we come to see that the

future of all children is tied to our children's future, we will ensure that every child can learn, play, imagine, and grow. We will hasten toward that path that leads to peace.

In that spirit, I rise tonight to explain why I think we have reached an inflection point in this conflict, one that demands all involved redouble our efforts to get a cease-fire and ultimately a just and sustainable peace.

I do not mean to suggest that any of this is simple. Indeed, if it were simple, it would have been resolved a long time ago. The issues of the Middle East are complicated. They are age-old and seemingly intractable. We live in a dangerous world, rife with conflict and replete with enemies who do not want to see peace.

October 7 was a tragic reminder. Hamas, a brutal terrorist organization that has the total destruction of Israel etched in its charter documents and ensconced in its mission, perpetrated the most devastating attack we have seen on the Jewish people since the Holocaust. Some 787 civilians were killed, more than 1,100 if you count security personnel. Unbridled brutality and cruelty were visited upon seniors and women and children. Among those taken as hostages were young people simply enjoying a concert. Rape and sexual assaults were used as a weapon of war. Such depraved and immoral acts are rightly condemned by all who believe in human dignity and freedom.

Our ally Israel lives in a dangerous neighborhood, and it has a right to defend itself. That is why I was proud to support the national security supplemental in the Senate. It needs to pass in the House. It provides \$5.2 billion for missile defenses like the Iron Dome, but it also provides \$9 billion in humanitarian aid for the people of Gaza and in other places.

Moreover, it supplies urgently needed aid to Ukraine—a sovereign, democratic state viciously attacked by Putin's Russia. We stand with Ukraine. Their vital national security interests are tied to our own.

Putin, the old KGB agent with fond memories of the old Soviet Union, will not stop his murderous march with Ukraine. He will threaten other NATO allies. Because of NATO's article 5 protection, which states that an attack on one is an attack on all, that could well draw us in.

Last week, I participated in the Munich Security Conference. While we rightly urged our allies to put more skin in the game, as they should, to increase their own commitment to their own security—and to be sure, some of them are stepping up—the truth is, there is no replacement for American leadership in the world.

We, alongside our allies, must stand with Ukraine. In a broken and dangerous world like ours, evil has to be constrained, tyranny rejected sometimes by force. I would rather send military support to Ukrainian soldiers in their valiant defense of their home-

land and of Europe today than send American soldiers to that fight tomorrow. It is not only the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do for our own national security interest.

If we are speaking of Ukraine or Israel, ultimately the aim must always be peace—a sustainable peace, a just peace, the kind of peace that must be rigorously pursued with both a tough mind and a tender heart.

I pray for peace for the people of Ukraine, for the suffering people of Sudan, for Israeli children and Palestinian children. They are all children of God.

I think of the story of 13-year-old Ariel Zohar, an Israeli teenager who lost both of his parents and his two older sisters when Hamas attacked Kibbutz Nahal Oz just 2 months before his bar mitzvah. Ariel just happened to be out for a run, and he sought shelter with a kibbutz security guard. That is the only reason—the only reason—young Ariel survived. May God bless the memory of Ariel's family and the security guard, who also died at the hands of Hamas. He survived, but a 13-year-old child must now live with this trauma. It is a trauma that I know Jewish people in Georgia and around the world are living with every day.

The tragic irony is that in the wake of October 7, anti-Semitism has actually gone up. In this country, anti-Semitism has gone up. All of this is now witnessed through the prism of a people who have never truly felt safe in the world, people who carry the burden of history—centuries of it—in their bones.

I got a sense of it in recent weeks as I sat with the families of hostages being held by Hamas. I sat with those families, who were stunned by the nightmare of their reality, people who have no idea when or how their family members might return.

I recall meeting with one father who was lamenting what had happened on October 7 to his daughter and his son-in-law when they were attacked by Hamas. Beyond his grief, here is what he wanted to know. He wanted to know: Does anybody other than us understand? Do they get it? Can they see what we see, hear what we hear, feel what we feel?

And as he said that with such pain and pathos in his voice, he was speaking about his own family, but he just as well could have been speaking for the family of 13-year-old Donia Abu Mohsen, a Palestinian girl who lost her parents and two brothers in an Israeli missile strike in south Gaza and had to have her leg amputated. And while she was recovering in the hospital, she was tragically killed by another Israeli airstrike while in the hospital.

May God bless the memory of Donia and her family. Donia is one of more than 12,000 children and tens of thousands of defenseless Palestinians who reportedly have been killed since Israel has been prosecuting its war against Hamas.