

(Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2245, a bill to require a review of women and lung cancer, and for other purposes.

S. 2337

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2337, a bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to promulgate certain limitations with respect to pre-production plastic pellet pollution, and for other purposes.

S. 2671

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2671, a bill to prohibit the Administrator of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration from issuing a rule or promulgating a regulation requiring certain vehicles to be equipped with speed limiting devices, and for other purposes.

S. 2781

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) were added as cosponsors of S. 2781, a bill to promote remediation of abandoned hardrock mines, and for other purposes.

S. 2801

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2801, a bill to improve the reproductive assistance provided by the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to certain members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their spouses or partners, and for other purposes.

S. 2861

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2861, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Billie Jean King, an American icon, in recognition of a remarkable life devoted to championing equal rights for all, in sports and in society.

S. 2897

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2897, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to molecularly targeted pediatric cancer investigations, and for other purposes.

S. 3099

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. BUTLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3099, a bill to require the Secretary of Energy to further develop and support the adoption of a voluntary streamlined permitting and inspection process for authorities having jurisdiction over the permitting of qualifying distributed energy systems, and for other purposes.

S. 3381

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from North Da-

kota (Mr. CRAMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3381, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow intangible drilling and development costs to be taken into account when computing adjusted financial statement income.

S. 3401

At the request of Mr. WELCH, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3401, a bill to amend the Federal Crop Insurance Act to authorize the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation to carry out research and development on a single index insurance policy, and for other purposes.

S. 3502

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3502, a bill to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to prevent consumer reporting agencies from furnishing consumer reports under certain circumstances, and for other purposes.

S. 3526

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3526, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to require a lactation space in each medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

S. 3734

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3734, a bill to require submission of the National Security Strategy and the budget of the President before the President may deliver the State of the Union address.

S. 3746

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3746, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain spouses eligible for services under the disabled veterans' outreach program, and for other purposes.

S. 3760

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. BUTLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3760, a bill to amend the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out emergency watershed protection measures on National Forest System land, and for other purposes.

S. 3775

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3775, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act, and for other purposes.

S. 3818

At the request of Mr. RICKETTS, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added

as cosponsors of S. 3818, a bill to amend the Clean Air Act to include fuel for ocean-going vessels as additional renewable fuel for which credits may be generated under the renewable fuel program.

S.J. RES. 62

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. RICKETTS) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 62, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service relating to "Importation of Fresh Beef From Paraguay".

S.J. RES. 63

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 63, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to "Employee or Independent Contractor Classification Under the Fair Labor Standards Act".

S. RES. 545

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 545, a resolution recognizing the importance of trilateral cooperation among the United States, Japan, and South Korea.

AMENDMENT NO. 1624

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) and the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1624 intended to be proposed to H.R. 4366, a bill making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1625

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1625 intended to be proposed to H.R. 4366, a bill making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 580—EX-PRESSING OPPOSITION TO CONGRESSIONAL SPENDING ON EARMARKS

Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BRAUN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. LEE, Mr. HAWLEY, Mr. PAUL, and Mr. DAINES) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

S. RES. 580

Whereas fiscal year 2022 marked the return of “congressionally directed spending” and “community project funding”, also known as “earmarks”, after a 12-year hiatus;

Whereas the return of earmarks marked the return of lawmakers using their powers to circumvent the rules of the Senate in order to direct taxpayer dollars to wasteful projects;

Whereas, while Congress has the power of the purse, it must be prescriptive and effective in funding programs, projects, and activities of the Federal Government, which is now more than \$34,000,000,000,000 in debt, rather than focus on funding earmarks that are wasteful in nature;

Whereas the 118th Congress has re-instituted and embraced the wasteful practice of earmarking, as shown by the more than 5,000 requests for earmarks in the House of Representatives and the more than 19,000 requests for earmarks in the Senate for fiscal year 2024;

Whereas Congress has already dramatically increased earmarking since its return, increasing from \$9,000,000,000 for 4,970 earmarks passed in fiscal year 2022 to \$15,300,000,000 for 7,234 earmarks passed in fiscal year 2023;

Whereas the reckless, 1,653 page, \$1,700,000,000,000 Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (Public Law 117-328) enacted in December 2022, appropriated billions of dollars to earmarks even though the United States is more than \$34,000,000,000,000 in debt and experiencing the highest level of inflation seen in 40 years;

Whereas the massive, fiscal year 2023 omnibus spending bill included funding for earmarks, including \$3,600,000 for the Michelle Obama Trail in Georgia, \$2,500,000 for a Chinatown arts building in San Francisco, \$7,000,000 to fix staircases in the city of Pittsburgh, \$12,000,000 for a pedestrian walkway in Vermont, and \$3,000,000 for a theater and event space in Pennsylvania, in addition to other earmark projects such as botanical gardens in California, bike parking in Maryland, streetscaping in Connecticut, and a dance festival in Massachusetts;

Whereas the fiscal year 2024 minibus spending bill released on March 3, 2024, includes 605 pages of earmarks with 6,630 individual projects totaling \$12,700,000,000, including \$3,500,000 for Michigan's Thanksgiving Parade Foundation, \$1,000,000 for an environmental justice center in New York City, \$500,000 for gardens in San Francisco, \$4,000,000 for a waterfront walkway in New Jersey, theater and opera house renovations in Georgia and Pennsylvania, and city hall renovations in Washington and Rhode Island;

Whereas former Senator Tom Coburn condemned the use of earmarks as a “gateway drug to overspending” and former Senator John McCain called earmarks “the gateway drug to corruption and overspending in Washington”;

Whereas several former Members of Congress and lobbyists have been convicted of crimes related to earmarking;

Whereas it is crucial that Congress spend taxpayer dollars wisely and with the best return on investment, especially during times of historic inflation and Federal debt levels; and

Whereas Congress must stop this reckless Federal spending and corrupt political dealing, start paying down the debt of the United States, and get the United States back on track: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the use of “congressionally directed spending” and “community project funding”, known as “earmarks”, to direct and appropriate taxpayer dollars in any form;

(2) reaffirms the previous ban on the use of earmarks and affirms to restore the ban permanently and immediately; and

(3) affirms the need for Congress to reign in overspending to help curb the inflation crisis that is crippling the families of the United States.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, since Joe Biden took office, inflation has exploded 17.9 percent. Prices on everything, especially groceries, are sky-high, and hard-working Americans are not able to keep up.

So think about what that means. If you haven't seen your pay rise by more than 17.9 percent since January 2021, you are behind because of Joe Biden's inflation.

We know that is the reality for millions of Americans because real average weekly earnings have fallen 4.3 percent since Joe Biden took office.

So when the press and Biden administration says: Good news, inflation is cooling, nobody in the real world is buying it because they see it is a lie each and every day.

Unless we see significant deflation, which will only happen if we cut spending, then there won't be relief from the massive damage that Biden's inflation has already caused.

One of the best ways to cut reckless spending is to take a serious look at earmarks. Now, I appreciate that Congress rightfully holds the purse strings under the Constitution. And my colleagues in the Senate know their States better than the Biden administration does. This is not about taking away authority from Congress. Neither Congress nor the President's Agencies should waste your money.

Earmarks are pet projects that only benefit a small number of people; they are not voted on separately by Members of Congress. American taxpayers should not be used as a political piggybank.

Earmarks have been so badly abused that we can't let it go on like this any longer. The time for forgiveness has passed.

In just the Senate, Members requested more than 6,000 earmarks to waste your tax dollars on projects like \$3.5 million for Michigan's Thanksgiving Parade Foundation; \$1 million for an environmental justice center in New York—New York City has a budget already of \$106 billion; don't you think they can do this on their own—\$1 million for a social justice organization in San Francisco to make building improvements; \$5 million for a theater, opera house, and other renovations in Georgia and Pennsylvania and city hall renovations in Washington and Rhode Island.

Why does the Federal Government have to pay for this? The States and local governments should take the lead here.

Today, the U.S. national debt is nearly \$35 trillion. That is about \$6.5 trillion more than it was when Biden took office.

Here is an even more disturbing figure: Since January 20, 2023, about 14

months ago, the national debt has grown by more than \$3 trillion. This explosion of America's national debt is a grave threat to the civility and security of our country, and it is not going to stop unless we force change.

As someone who grew up in public housing and watched my mom struggle to put food on the table and pay taxes all of her life, I am furious about just how much failure in Washington is hurting hard-working families like my mom all across—families in Florida and all across the country.

Again, we have seen inflation increase 17.9 percent since Joe Biden took office. In my home State of Florida, that means families have to spend \$11,400 more to buy the same things. That is nearly \$1,000 more a month each and every single month just to get by the same way they did the day before Biden took office.

The status quo is burying America alive. That is why I am hoping all of my colleagues will join me in supporting the resolution against earmarks I will be filing today.

My resolution condemns the use of congressionally directed spending and community project funding, known as earmarks, to direct and appropriate taxpayer dollars in any form; reaffirms the previous ban on the use of earmarks and affirms to restore the ban permanently and immediately; and affirms the need for Congress to rein in overspending to help curb the inflation crisis that is crippling the families of the United States.

Debt matters because it fuels inflation. Just remember that. Debt fuels inflation. It makes it harder for the Federal Government to do the things it promised to do, like build roads and fund Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and national defense.

Americans know that the debt and inflation crisis we find ourselves in today was 100 percent preventable.

I believe we ought to fund the things that matter in government, like national defense, Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, but that is not going to happen if we don't stop spending money on these worthless projects.

If we truly intend to protect and preserve these programs and the core services and responsibilities the Federal Government is charged with providing to American taxpayers, we have to cut the reckless spending. If nothing changes, the interest on our debt, which is already costing us \$870 billion this year—more than we spend on defense—is going to keep going up. Soon, the government will not be able to keep its promise. That is not fair to each of you, and we should not let that happen.

We all need to work together to end earmarks and protect American taxpayer dollars.

SENATE RESOLUTION 581—AFFIRMING THE SUPPORT OF THE UNITED STATES FOR THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA'S ACCESSION TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

Mr. WELCH (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. RICKETTS, and Mr. TILLIS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 581

Whereas the Republic of North Macedonia peacefully asserted and achieved independent statehood in 1991, during the course of the former Yugoslavia's violent disintegration, and has since become a secure, democratic, and prosperous country and a key United States ally and strategic partner in the Western Balkans;

Whereas North Macedonia affirmed its commitment to joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1993, adopted major defense reforms, built a modern, professional defense force, and became the 30th NATO alliance member on March 27, 2020;

Whereas, in 1993, the National Guard State Partnership Program was established between the State of Vermont and the Republic of North Macedonia;

Whereas North Macedonia was the first Western Balkan country to sign a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the European Union (EU) and became an official EU candidate country in 2005;

Whereas, in 2008, the United States signed a Declaration of Strategic Partnership and Cooperation with North Macedonia;

Whereas, on June 17, 2018, the foreign ministers of the Hellenic Republic and the Republic of Macedonia signed the Prespa Agreement, resolving a bilateral dispute that had hindered North Macedonia's EU membership bid;

Whereas, in March 2020, European Union member states endorsed opening accession negotiations with North Macedonia, and pursuant to a July 2022 protocol, North Macedonia committed to adopt certain constitutional changes in order to resolve an additional bilateral disagreement;

Whereas, in June 2022, North Macedonia became the first Western Balkan country to start a strategic dialogue with the United States, marking a significant bilateral milestone and step toward implementation of the Declaration of Strategic Partnership;

Whereas, in November 2023, the European Commission outlined a new growth plan to provide Western Balkans countries certain EU membership benefits ahead of accession, boost economic growth, and accelerate socioeconomic convergence with the EU;

Whereas North Macedonia remains an important European Union and United States security partner and NATO ally, providing Ukraine with humanitarian aid and considerable military equipment, voting in favor of United Nations Security Council and General Assembly resolutions against Russian aggression, and adopting all European Union Russian sanctions;

Whereas, on November 29, 2023, United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with North Macedonia's Foreign Minister Bujar Osmani and commended North Macedonia's strong contributions and leadership as the Chair-in-Office to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and reaffirmed the United States would remain a steadfast partner and ally in support of North Macedonia's Euro-Atlantic path;

Whereas, in November 2023, the European Commission adopted the 2023 Enlargement

Package and assessed that North Macedonia has continued to fully align with the European Union Common Foreign and Security Policy; and

Whereas the Government of North Macedonia has made significant progress in its work to join the European Union: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) appreciates North Macedonia's active role in regional cooperation and long-standing commitment to the European Union accession process;

(2) recognizes that there is strong support for EU membership across North Macedonia's multiethnic communities and that North Macedonia's diverse cultural heritage would be strengthened through EU membership;

(3) encourages the Government of North Macedonia to continue its important work toward membership in the European Union, as well as efforts to further peace, stability, and prosperity in Eastern Europe;

(4) recognizes the cooperation between the State of Vermont and North Macedonia and the joint military partnership between the Vermont National Guard and the Army of the Republic of North Macedonia;

(5) recognizes the significant evidence of the benefits of North Macedonia's membership to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in closer economic and political ties and in its commitment to foster regional stability and the principle of mutual defense;

(6) recognizes the importance of European Union membership for North Macedonia for its economic growth, strengthening of its democratic institutions and norms, and bolstering [the] rule of law in Southeast Europe;

(7) encourages the Government of North Macedonia to undertake the reforms necessary to advance their European Union membership;

(8) calls on the President, the Secretary of State, and European allies to advocate for the opening of the first European Union negotiation cluster with North Macedonia without further bilateral conditions;

(9) urges the President and the Secretary of State to continue to—

(A) work closely with the Government of North Macedonia; and

(B) support European Union enlargement for the Western Balkans, including North Macedonia on its European Union path; and

(10) affirms the desire of the United States Government and American people to strengthen the transatlantic partnership with the European Union and all member countries.

SENATE RESOLUTION 582—SUPPORTING THE GOALS OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 582

Whereas, as of March 2024, there are approximately 4,045,000,000 women and girls in the world, making up ½ of the world's population;

Whereas women and girls around the world—

(1) have fundamental human rights;

(2) play a critical role in providing and caring for their families and driving positive change in their communities;

(3) contribute substantially to food security, economic growth, the prevention and resolution of conflict, and the sustainability of peace and stability;

(4) are affected in different and often disproportionate ways by global, country, and community circumstances, including economic downturns, global health concerns, conflict, and migration; and

(5) must have meaningful protections and opportunities to more fully participate in and lead the political, social, and economic lives of their communities and countries;

Whereas the advancement and empowerment of women and girls around the world is a foreign policy priority for the United States and is critical to the achievement of global peace, prosperity, and sustainability;

Whereas, on October 6, 2017, the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-68; 131 Stat. 1202) was enacted into law, which includes requirements for a government-wide "Women, Peace, and Security Strategy" to promote and strengthen the participation of women in peace negotiations and conflict prevention overseas, enhanced training for relevant United States Government personnel, and follow-up evaluations of the effectiveness of the strategy;

Whereas the United States Strategy and National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, dated October 2023, recognizes that—

(1) the "implementation of the [Women, Peace, and Security] agenda is both a moral and a strategic imperative for U.S. foreign policy and national security", reiterating that "the status of women and the stability of nations are inextricably linked";

(2) the challenges posed to the United States and the global community cannot be solved without addressing the inequities faced by ½ of the world's population; and

(3) the United States must "eliminate barriers to women's meaningful participation . . . in peace and security decision-making processes" in order to "achieve and safeguard our national security priorities" and achieve "sustainable peace, international security, and economic stability";

Whereas, according to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (commonly referred to as "UN Women"), peace negotiations are more likely to end in a peace agreement when women and women's groups play a meaningful role in the negotiation process;

Whereas, according to a study by the International Peace Institute, a peace agreement is 35 percent more likely to last at least 15 years if women participate in the development of the peace agreement;

Whereas, according to the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the Department of State, the full and meaningful participation of women in criminal justice professions and security forces vastly enhances the effectiveness of the resulting workforces;

Whereas, despite the contributions of women to society, hundreds of millions of women and girls around the world continue to be denied the right to participate freely in civic and economic life, lack fundamental legal protections, and remain vulnerable to exploitation and abuse;

Whereas, every year, approximately 12,000,000 girls are married before they reach the age of 18, which means that—

(1) nearly 33,000 girls are married every day; or

(2) nearly 23 girls are married every minute;

Whereas, despite global progress, it is predicted that by 2030 more than 150,000,000 more girls will marry before reaching the age of 18, and approximately 2,400,000 girls who are married before reaching the age of 18 are under the age of 15;

Whereas girls living in countries affected by conflict or other humanitarian crises are often the most vulnerable to child marriage,