

Whereas 14.4 percent of the population in the United States is Black, yet Black households hold only 4 percent of total household wealth compared to 84 percent held by White households;

Whereas unions significantly reduce racial wage gaps, and racial wealth gaps are generally smaller among union members as a result of the enhanced job protections that workers covered by a union contract enjoy;

Whereas the median non-union White family has more than \$7 in wealth for every \$1 held by the median non-union Black family, but that ratio is roughly half as large among union families where the median union White family has \$3.70 in wealth for every \$1 held by the median union Black family;

Whereas, in 2022, the median income for Black households in the United States was \$52,860 compared to a median income of \$81,060 for White households;

Whereas, according to economic data from the Federal Reserve—

(1) only 46 percent of Black households in the United States owned their home, compared to 75 percent of White households, a disparity on par with the 1960's; and

(2) the unemployment rate for Black workers in the United States is consistently twice as high as it is for White workers;

Whereas addressing economic disparities for Black people in the United States requires reimagining governmental and societal policies and practices, which have been rooted in discriminatory intent since the founding of the United States;

Whereas addressing the racial wealth gap in the United States must be a holistic effort concentrated across several policy principles, including entrepreneurship, financial services, affordable housing, workforce development, protecting and promoting civic participation, and reforming tax policy;

Whereas we must commit to growing the economy of the United States by creating legislative solutions that deconstruct barriers to economic opportunities for Black people and that build Black intergenerational wealth;

Whereas the Congressional Black Caucus believes it is of the utmost importance—

(1) to enact legislation that boosts equitable outcomes; and

(2) to coordinate a legislative agenda that cements positive changes and reinforces a commitment to preserving Black economic prosperity in the United States;

Whereas the Black Wealth Agenda will have an amplified impact on all policy areas where existing oppressive regulation prevents progress; and

Whereas, from removing barriers to quality healthcare for Black people in the United States, to addressing environmental justice issues for Black communities that continue to be on the frontlines of the climate crisis, it is clear that a holistic approach is critical to closing the economic divide: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commits—

(A) to promoting Black entrepreneurship by expanding funding solutions, strengthening outreach to educate communities in the United States; and

(B) to reforming policies that have created obstacles to success for Black businesses;

(2) supports establishing forward-looking entrepreneurial goals and driving communities to the center of innovation in the 21st century by—

(A) creating opportunities in sectors such as—

- (i) green energy;
- (ii) technology; and
- (iii) healthcare; and

(B) building a workforce to be an investment in a better future;

(3) asserts that systemic discrimination in the housing market in the United States has greatly contributed to the widening of the racial wealth gap and must be rectified;

(4) will create solutions to address the affordable housing crisis in the United States by increasing the supply of available housing, reducing housing costs generally, enhancing programs to support and protect renters, and enforcing anti-discrimination laws;

(5) supports initiatives to build the Black workforce and equip the Black community in the United States with the necessary tools to compete for stable jobs in every career and at every career level, including the ability to join a union and collectively bargain;

(6) recognizes that as Black people in the United States are overrepresented in minimum wage jobs, the Federal minimum wage must be updated to reflect inflation;

(7) acknowledges that additional necessary reforms addressing the economic disparity in the United States include improvements to career pathways programs, investing in historically Black colleges and universities, increasing the affordability of post high-school education, expanding access to apprenticeship and job skills training programs, and other solutions that maximize the potential of the Black workforce;

(8) supports the goal of expanding economic opportunity, equity, and wealth creation for Black people in the United States at every socioeconomic level, in every industry, and in every residential setting, with progress toward this goal—

(A) being monitored, evaluated, and enhanced by Federal agencies that have relevant programs and initiatives; and

(B) requiring that Black people in the United States be able to build a financially secure retirement;

(9) must support tax reform initiatives for Black families in the United States that—

(A) help secure retirement, end poverty, and increase homeownership affordability;

(B) sustain students, families, and the economy; and

(C) facilitate the accumulation of generational wealth; and

(10) must commit to creating equitable and balanced tax policy in the United States that levels the economic playing field, addresses wealth concentration, and advances opportunities for economic gain.

SENATE RESOLUTION 599—PROTECTING THE IRANIAN POLITICAL REFUGEES, INCLUDING FEMALE FORMER POLITICAL PRISONERS, IN ASHRAF-3 IN ALBANIA

Mr. TILLIS (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. COONS, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 599

Whereas, since October 2023, the Iranian regime has increasingly acted as the epicenter of terrorism in the region, from supporting proxies that vehemently oppose peace in the Middle East, to threatening commercial shipping and free trade in the Red Sea and from targeting American forces in the region, to providing missile and drones to rogue actors, all of which pose serious risks to regional peace and security and endanger the vital interests of the United States;

Whereas Iran remains the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism today;

Whereas the Iranian people have rejected the regime ruling Iran through several

rounds of major demonstrations, engulfing all 31 provinces of Iran calling for change;

Whereas the Iranian regime has resorted to killing, torture, sexual violence, and imprisonment of protesters, and several thousand protesters since 2017 have been killed, and many more have been imprisoned;

Whereas the Iranian regime has been intent on eliminating the Iranian political refugees who survived Tehran's repression and were first based in Camp Ashraf, Iraq, in the mid-1980s;

Whereas, starting in 2012, the United States Government and the United Nations initiated the relocation of nearly 3,000 Iranian dissidents from Camp Ashraf, Iraq, where they were repeatedly attacked by the Iranian regime's proxies, and facilitated their gradual relocation in 2013, 2014, and 2015 to Albania;

Whereas the relocation of these Iranian political refugees to Albania from Iraq was completed in September 2016, and the refugees, a third of them women, are now residing in Ashraf-3 near Tirana in Albania;

Whereas, on April 19, 2016, before the relocation of the majority of the residents to Albania, in a letter to a European Parliament Vice-President, the Prime Minister of Albania wrote, "Albania is fully engaged and committed to ensure for the Iranian refugees all rights stipulated in the Geneva Convention 1951, in the European Human Rights Convention and in the whole international legislation.";

Whereas over 900 women and men of Ashraf-3 are former political prisoners who endured torture while in prisons and many of them are witnesses of the 1988 massacre of political prisoners and other political killings in Iran, among them eyewitnesses of crimes committed by Ebrahim Raisi;

Whereas these witnesses must be fully protected for potential testimonies before international courts investigating the 1988 massacre and other grave human rights violations in Iran;

Whereas, in November 2021, the Swedish Judiciary moved the whole court in Stockholm to Albania for two weeks to facilitate hearing testimonies of seven former Iranian political prisoners now residing in Ashraf-3, whose testimony was characterized as critical for a trial related to the 1988 massacre;

Whereas, in December 2023, a Swedish court confirmed the earlier ruling by the lower court of a life sentence for Hamid Noury, implicated in the 1988 massacre where he was an official in Gohardasht Prison;

Whereas the Iranian regime has stepped up terrorist attacks against its opponents and has used blackmail, terror threats, hostage-taking, sham judicial proceedings, and other means of intimidation against western nations to compel them to silence Iranian opponents living abroad;

Whereas, on several occasions, including in the last week of December 2023, the Iranian regime carried out large-scale cyberattacks against Albania to pressure the Government of Albania to undermine or end its hosting of Iranian political refugees;

Whereas experience has shown that any lack of decisiveness or concessions to Tehran only emboldens the Iranian regime for its destructive actions;

Whereas the Iranian regime has, over the past few months, stepped up threats against Ashraf-3, and given what the regime has done since October 7, 2023, far more vigilance on the part of the United States is required to ensure the complete protection and rights of Ashraf-3 residents in Albania;

Whereas, on December 12, 2023, the Iranian regime started sham trials in absentia for 104 veteran members of the Iranian Resistance, who, since years ago, have been primarily

based in Europe, including in Albania, to create a phony legal precedent against them and secure their extradition to Iran by misusing INTERPOL Red Notices, impose limitations, or set the stage for terror attacks against them;

Whereas the Iranian regime is doing its utmost through any means to prevent Ashraf-3 residents from speaking up against the regime;

Whereas the leadership role of women in Ashraf-3 has doubly heightened the Iranian regime's misogynous hysteria against the political refugees in Ashraf-3;

Whereas over 3,600 parliamentarians around the world and 125 former world leaders have expressed their support for Mrs. Maryam Rajavi's Ten-Point Plan for the Future of Iran, which calls for the universal right to vote, free elections, a market economy, separation of religion and state, and advocates for gender, religious, and ethnic equality, a foreign policy based on peaceful coexistence, peace in the Middle East, and a nonnuclear republic Iran; and

Whereas, in sharp contrast to Iran's institutionalized misogyny, this Ten-Point platform has adequately addressed women's equality, including "complete gender equality in the realms of political, social, cultural and economic rights. An equal participation of women in political leadership, abolishment of any form of discrimination. The right to choose one's own clothing freely, the right to freely marry and divorce, and to obtain education and employment. Prohibition of all forms of exploitation against women under any pretext." Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Iranian political refugees in Ashraf-3, in rejection of the Iranian regime's demands, must be afforded their fundamental rights of freedom of expression and assembly and legal political activities in Albania;

(2) the United States Government condemns the Iranian regime's threats and nefarious actions against the Government of Albania, including cyberattacks and threats against the Iranian dissidents in Ashraf-3 in Albania;

(3) the United States Government should take prompt and appropriate steps in accordance with international law, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights, and the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, to help the Government of Albania ensure and uphold all fundamental rights of Ashraf-3 residents within the framework of the above conventions, including the right to life, liberty, security, protection of property, and freedom of expression and assembly;

(4) the United States Government strongly opposes Iran's misuse of the INTERPOL Red Notices to impose restrictions or limitations or set in motion the extradition of Iranian dissidents to Iran; and

(5) the United States Government must continue close and regular cooperation with the Government of Albania and the residents of Ashraf-3 to ensure the complete protection and fundamental rights of Ashraf-3 residents.

SENATE RESOLUTION 600—RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL DEBT AS A THREAT TO NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. BRAUN (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. BUDD) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 600

Whereas, in January 2024, the total public debt outstanding was more than \$34,000,000,000,000, resulting in a total interest expense of more than \$659,000,000,000 on debt held by the public for fiscal year 2023;

Whereas, in January 2024, the total public debt as a percentage of gross domestic product was more than 123 percent;

Whereas, in January 2024, the debt owed per citizen was \$102,147 and \$265,582 per taxpayer;

Whereas the last Federal budget surplus occurred in 2001;

Whereas, in fiscal year 2023, Federal tax receipts totaled \$4,400,000,000,000, but Federal outlays totaled \$6,100,000,000,000, leaving the Federal Government with a 1-year deficit of \$1,700,000,000,000;

Whereas the Senate failed to pass a balanced budget for fiscal year 2024 and failed to restore regular order to the legislative process by not allowing Senators to offer and debate amendments;

Whereas the Social Security and Medicare Boards of Trustees project that the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund will be depleted in 2031;

Whereas the Social Security and Medicare Boards of Trustees project that the combined Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund will be depleted in 2034;

Whereas improvements in the business climate in populous countries, and aging populations around the world, will likely contribute to higher global interest rates;

Whereas more than \$8,056,100,000,000 of Federal debt is owned by individuals not located in the United States, including more than \$1,050,000,000,000 of which is owned by individuals in China;

Whereas China and the European Union are developing alternative payment systems to weaken the dominant position of the United States dollar as a reserve currency;

Whereas rapidly increasing interest rates would squeeze all policy priorities of the United States, including defense policy and foreign policy priorities;

Whereas Federal spending on interest to service the national debt is now projected to exceed Federal spending on national defense in 2024 according to the Congressional Budget Office's Budget and Economic Outlook: 2024 to 2034 report;

Whereas, on April 12, 2018, former Secretary of Defense James Mattis warned that "any Nation that can't keep its fiscal house in order eventually cannot maintain its military power";

Whereas, on March 6, 2018, Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats warned: "Our continued plunge into debt is unsustainable and represents a dire future threat to our economy and to our national security";

Whereas, on November 15, 2017, former Secretaries of Defense Leon Panetta, Ash Carter, and Chuck Hagel warned: "Increase in the debt will, in the absence of a comprehensive budget that addresses both entitlements and revenues, force even deeper reductions in our national security capabilities"; and

Whereas, on September 22, 2011, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Michael Mullen warned: "I believe the single, biggest threat to our national security is debt"; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes that the national debt is a threat to the national security of the United States;

(2) realizes that deficits are unsustainable, irresponsible, and dangerous;

(3) commits to restoring regular order in the appropriations process; and

(4) commits to preventing the looming fiscal crisis faced by the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 601—HONORING THE LIFE, BRAVERY, AND MEMORY OF SERGEANT ROSE IDA LUBIN

Mr. OSSOFF (for himself and Mr. WARNOCK) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 601

Whereas Rose Ida Lubin (referred to in this preamble as "Rose") was born on December 1, 2002, in Atlanta, Georgia;

Whereas Rose grew up in Dunwoody, Georgia, attending Vanderlyn Elementary School, Peachtree Middle School, and Dunwoody High School;

Whereas Rose was a talented and dedicated performer, artist, writer, athlete, and the only student of her graduating class of 2021 with varsity letters in both wrestling and cheerleading;

Whereas, at 12 years of age in her bat mitzvah speech, Rose spoke of the obligation to "do something great for the world" and not simply "wait for the world to do something great";

Whereas Rose's peers said they saw her as a steadfast leader—someone they trusted and relied on as they became adults;

Whereas, according to Rose's family, Rose consistently extended a welcoming hand to those who felt isolated or alone;

Whereas Rose's brother Alec described Rose as "the most free-spirited person I know";

Whereas Rose's family and friends described that her sense of community, her drive to excel, and her want to do more for others carried her to Israel to make aliyah in 2021;

Whereas Rose demonstrated her bravery by becoming a soldier in Israel after making aliyah;

Whereas Rose joined the Israeli border police, Magav, and graduated at the top of her class;

Whereas Rose served in the Old City of Jerusalem;

Whereas Rose found an adopted family at Kibbutz Sa'ad;

Whereas, in the midst of the terrorist attacks on kibbutzim across Israel on October 7, 2023, Rose fought heroically to protect her neighbors;

Whereas it is reported that in part because of Rose's efforts, no life was lost at Kibbutz Sa'ad on October 7;

Whereas, after surviving and protecting others during the terrorist attack of October 7, Rose was killed in a knife attack while she stood guard in Jerusalem, and Rose passed away on November 6, 2023, from wounds sustained in the line of duty;

Whereas thousands gathered on November 9, 2023, at Mount Herzl National Cemetery to honor the life and legacy of Rose Ida Lubin of Atlanta, Georgia, who from her earliest years as an athlete, scholar, soldier, friend, sister, and beloved daughter, was dedicated to selfless service and self-improvement; and

Whereas Rose is survived by her parents, Robin and David, her stepmother, Stephanie, her brothers, Alec, Joseph, and Isaac, her sister, Lily, and her grandparents and step-grandparents: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors the life and legacy of Sergeant Rose Ida Lubin for her contributions to her community, the State of Georgia, and the United States, and for her service to our ally the State of Israel;

(2) extends its heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Sergeant Lubin; and

(3) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to the family of Sergeant Lubin as a