

Springs Airport be spared from arbitrary, new FAA requirements to pay for the upkeep of runways and taxiways, but Wyoming airports can now move forward with projects costing less than \$6 million in Federal funds without being subject to unnecessary redtape.

These are the sizes of airports that we have in Wyoming, and to have these regulatory burdens and shackles taken off so these airports can improve runways and taxiways, which are essential to having an operational airport, is a true benefit of this bill.

I want to thank the full committee, and I want to thank the chair and the ranking member for understanding the importance of our small airports.

For too long, Congress has delivered FAA reauthorization bills that prioritize big aviation and overlook the needs of our rural airports, but this bill takes many of those rural airports into consideration. States like Wyoming rely on small airports to support entire regions of our State, and previous versions of this bill have reflected that misunderstanding. The bill we have in front of us fixes that misunderstanding. I am very, very pleased with how the treatment of small airports in this bill considers the needs of those small airports.

While we work to meet the needs of the Nation's largest airports, we cannot forget the smallest ones that work hard to serve rural America, and we have a responsibility to make sure this bill creates an environment where they can thrive and not just struggle to survive. My provisions included in this legislation help airports like Casper/Natrona County International address air traffic control staffing shortages and waive unrealistic rules that require EMTs to be on site at every airport when rural areas are already grappling with medical personnel shortages.

Unfortunately, these aren't the only challenges Wyoming airports face. My western colleagues and I know better than anyone how critical these small airports are, not only for serving our rural communities but also in fighting wildfires.

Wildfires continue to devastate our western habitats, and we need every tool readily available to mitigate the damage. Yet current regulatory hurdles dramatically slow response times. Every minute wasted trying to gain access to restricted airspace results in irreparable damage to wildlife, homes, and may even cost lives. My provision to this legislation eliminates costly hurdles to fighting wildfires, and establishes a reimbursement program for airport sponsors to replace firefighting agents and equipment that meet military specifications.

This legislation is a win for the State of Wyoming that will offer much needed support for our small airports and bolster our economy. Together, we have created a bipartisan and workable reauthorization that improves access

to our Nation's Capital for all Americans, eliminates onerous regulations, and creates an environment where smaller airports can do more than just survive.

I want to thank the members of the Commerce Committee, including the Presiding Officer. I want to thank Chair CANTWELL and Ranking Member CRUZ, who worked together to create a bipartisan work product of which the committee can be proud, and they have prepared this FAA reauthorization for bipartisan passage.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. ROSEN).

SECURING GROWTH AND ROBUST LEADERSHIP IN AMERICAN AVIATION ACT—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST

Mr. MARSHALL. Madam President, I rise today to ask this body for unanimous consent to call up and make pending our amendment to add the Credit Card Competition Act to the substitute amendment for the FAA reauthorization bill.

Kansans elected me to fight for them in Washington, to give them a voice at the highest levels of government. I humbly took this job and that responsibility seriously. For that reason, I stand here today to say that I will not fall in line and cower to the standard operating procedures up here that puts U.S. Senators in the backseat and blocks us from bringing our priorities—the priorities of the people—to the floor.

Kansans want their voices to be heard and not sidelined by DC lobbyists and special interest groups who are blocking and tackling our priorities behind the scenes. Every Senator in this Chamber should have the right to hear and vote on their amendments. Many of my colleagues and I welcome this debate. It is healthy. Let's have the debates. Let's take the hard votes. What is the harm? I ask everybody: What is the harm of these discussions of these debates and then letting the cards fall as they may with each vote? Each Senator deserves the opportunity to bring their amendments to the floor and make their case.

Back home, I crisscross Kansas, meeting with small businesses and owners across the State. And at every meeting, they look me in the eyes and they say they need some type of relief. The price of business is simply too high and unfair. Outrageous swipe fees from Wall Street and the Visa-Mastercard

duopoly are pulling the rug out from under them, making it unaffordable to do business. Americans pay seven times more than our friends in the European Union do for the same swipe fee, four times more than our friends in Canada.

So we took these concerns to Washington, and we got to work. But I never could have imagined the uphill battle we would face up here to do the right thing, for doing what is best for hard-working Americans who are living paycheck to paycheck.

As a physician, once we diagnose a problem, we think the treatment should be quick. Our patients demand that quick turnaround. Once we figure out what is wrong: "Here is the solution. Let's do it." I don't want our patients to wait any more longer than they have to.

But in Washington, I have learned and realized that, too often, we see the problem, but we sit on the solutions if they are not popular with the people who cut the biggest checks up here. For too long, the Visa-Mastercard duopolies use money and influence in Washington to turn politicians' eyes away from predatory swipe fees. Right now the Visa-Mastercard duopoly and four mega banks are robbing our American small businesses at the highest rate in the world with credit card swipe fees totaling over 90 billion—that is 90 with a "b," billion—dollars each year.

These swipe fees are inflation multipliers on businesses and the consumers. Often, credit card swipe fees are one of business's highest costs, often topping utilities, rent, or even the employees' healthcare costs.

Mom-and-pop shops across Kansas, hotels across Kansas, franchise owners across Kansas, consumers are all asking for relief to be able to sell their goods at a lower price and hire more employees, which I know this Chamber all agrees with is a good thing. If only they could get Wall Street out of the way of Main Street's success.

The National Federation of Independent Businesses, the voice of small businesses, said 92 percent of their members are asking for this—92 percent. So 92 percent of small businesses are telling Congress how we can help them, yet this body refuses to vote on it. It is not going to cost taxpayers a dime. And 92 percent of businesses want this.

It has been 2 long years since Senator DURBIN and I introduced this bill—2 years of fighting, asking, begging for a vote. For 2 years, we have gotten nothing but excuses and empty promises and assurances. We begged for committee hearings, with no results. Crickets. Why are they so afraid to have a committee hearing up here even on this? It is because they are afraid of the truth. We jumped through every hoop asked of us by leadership to try to advance this legislation for a vote. Enough posturing.

Kansan legend and Statesman Bob Dole once said.

Leaders stand ready to make the hard decisions and to live with the consequences. They don't pass it off to somebody else.

I know this won't be popular for beltway insiders and Wall Street lobbyists, but it is good for small businesses. It is good for hard-working Americans.

I made my decision. I am sticking with Main Street every single time. I am sticking with hard-working Americans who take their lunch pail to work.

Madam President, I will close today with a reminder to this Chamber: I will not stop fighting until we get this vote.

I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment in order to call up amendment No. 1936.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, reserving the right to object—and I will object—I thank my colleague from Kansas for his comments, but we are on the FAA bill.

The FAA and the National Transportation Safety Board need reauthorization by this Friday. So the leadership, both the House and Senate, have decided to best move forward to meet that deadline—the best thing we can do is to keep the subject of this debate to germane amendments. We have all four corners, not one person, not one individual, but all four leadership teams saying we need to get this bill done, and we will consider amendments that are germane to this subject.

I hope my colleagues will turn down my colleague from Kansas' request and move forward with an FAA bill so we can get this done to make sure that we are implementing the most important safety standards possible today—more air traffic controllers, more near-runway-miss technology, 25-hour cockpit recording—and make sure that we are giving consumers the refunds they deserve.

Madam President, therefore, I object to the Senator from Kansas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Kansas.

MOTION TO TABLE

Mr. MARSHALL. Madam President, I move to table the Motion to Commit, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE).

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

The result was announced—yeas 12, nays 85, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 160 Leg.]

YEAS—12

Cassidy
Cornyn
Ernst
Hawley

Johnson
Kennedy
Lee
Marshall

Schmitt
Scott (FL)
Sullivan
Vance

NAYS—85

Baldwin
Barrasso
Bennet
Blackburn
Blumenthal
Booker
Boozman
Burr
Brown
Burr
Burr
Butler
Cantwell
Capito
Cardin
Carper
Casey
Collins
Coons
Cortez Masto
Cotton
Cramer
Crapo
Cruz
Daines
Duckworth
Durbin
Fetterman
Fischer
Gillibrand

Graham
Grassley
Hagerty
Hassan
Heinrich
Hickenlooper
Hirono
Hoeven
Hyde-Smith
Kaine
Kelly
King
Klobuchar
Lankford
Lujan
Lummis
Manchin
Markey
McConnell
Menendez
Merkley
Moran
Mullin
Murkowski
Murphy
Murray
Ossoff
Padilla
Paul

Peters
Reed
Ricketts
Risch
Romney
Rosen
Rounds
Rubio
Sanders
Schatz
Schumer
Scott (SC)
Shaheen
Smith
Stabenow
Tester
Thune
Tillis
Van Hollen
Warner
Warnock
Warren
Welch
Whitehouse
Wicker
Wyden
Young

NOT VOTING—3

Braun

Sinema

Tuberville

The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Virginia.

H.R. 3935

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I rise today, certain that, by now, some of the desk staff have memorized the speech I am about to give because it is the third time that I will have given it in the last few weeks on a topic that is really important to Virginia—the FAA reauthorization bill that is now pending before the body.

I want to thank Chairwoman CANTWELL, Ranking Member CRUZ, and the members of the Commerce Committee because, as a general matter, this is a necessary bill with a lot of good provisions in it—in particular, the work on air traffic control recruitment and training and pilot training hours.

I feel very, very good about that work that has been done. But the gist of this bill is to promote air safety, and there is one provision in the bill that is dramatically contrary to the thrust of this bill. It will not increase air safety. It will reduce air safety, and it will reduce air safety in the Capital of the United States—at Reagan National Airport, otherwise known as DCA.

I am going to summarize quickly the arguments I made in the last couple of weeks, but then I want to respond to at least three questions that folks who take a position opposite to me have raised and use some data to demonstrate that those questions, though honestly raised, have answers, and the answers actually verify and uphold the position that I and my Maryland and Virginia colleagues take: that we should not be jamming more flights onto the busiest runway in the United States.

Reagan National Airport, DCA, was built a long time ago. It is a postage stamp; it is 860 acres. By order of comparison, Dulles Airport is about 12,000 acres; Dallas-Fort Worth is about 19,000 acres; and Denver is 32,000 acres.

When Reagan National was built, it was a little bit the trend to build these smaller airports near downtowns because the airplanes were smaller, they were props with fewer passengers, they were lighter, and they didn't need as much runway space to take off or land.

When Reagan National was built on these 860 acres—and if you have been there, you know that it is 860 that can't be expanded because it is surrounded on three sides by water and on the other side by the George Washington Parkway; there is no way to expand this—it was built with three runways: a primary runway and two commuter runways.

The estimate was, in the 1960s, that Reagan National, with these three runways, could accommodate 15 million passengers a year—15 million passengers a year. Well, where are we today, circa 2024? Reagan National has now 25½ million passengers a year—25½ million passengers—an additional two-thirds over what it was built for on a landlocked footprint, with three runways.

There have been a couple other important changes at Reagan National. The idea was to spread the 15 million passengers over three runways, but that was when the planes were smaller and they were props. Now they are jets, and they can't land on the shorter runways. So today at Reagan National, 90 percent of the traffic into Reagan National has to use the main runway.

Think about this: If it was 15 million equally divided, then each runway would bring about 5 million passengers a year. Now the main runway doesn't have 5 million, it was 22½ million passengers a year, with only about 2½ to 3 million on the other two runways.

There has been another major change since this projection of 15 million a year was made, and that is 9/11. In the aftermath of 9/11, we imposed dramatically more stringent security requirements on the air patterns over Reagan National to make it much harder to get into a landing zone to land or to take off.

So what does that mean? Built for 15½ million on a landlocked spot, now at 25 million—what does it mean? Well, it means that the main runway at Reagan National is now the single busiest runway in the United States. Reagan National, because it is small, is not the busiest airport in the United States. It is only 19th in terms of total passengers in and out. But that main runway, with 90 percent of the traffic, is the busiest runway in the United States.

What does that mean? What does it mean to have one primary runway with 90 percent of the traffic that is the busiest in the United States? Well, it is pretty easy to predict. It means very

significant congestion. Let me give some stats about that.

Reagan, as the 19th busiest airport in the United States, has the 8th most daily delays. You calculate daily delay by the percentages of incoming and outgoing that are delayed and multiply it by the average delay. More than 20 percent of flights into and out of Reagan National are delayed. They are not delayed by a little. There are some airports that have worse on-time records, but the delay is a little bit of a delay. The average delay of flights in and out of Reagan National, once delayed, is 67 minutes already. That accounts to over 11,000 minutes of delay every day.

What does delay mean? Delay means, OK, you are late arrival or you are late taking off. But if you are taking off, you might be trying to make a connecting flight. It also means you take off late, and you are likely to miss your connecting flight. If you are coming in late and the plane is supposed to leave to take some people out and go somewhere else, the delay cascades down, and it affects the entire system.

Delay isn't the only measure of this airport's congestion; the second one is the number of canceled flights. Some airports have cancellations—I mean, maybe in Madison when the weather is not so great or Anchorage or the Windy City or Minneapolis. DCA has the third worst cancellation rate among these airports. And it is not because of weather. The weather here in DC may not be great, but it is not catastrophic either. The delay is a function of congestion.

Here is another measure: Planes that are landing, that upon landing have to get rerouted into a looping pattern—DCA is the third worst in that. Why does that matter? Well, first, it creates delay, but second, if you are looping planes through a constricted airspace as planes are taking off and landing every minute, you are increasing the risk of accident.

By all these measures—delay, average daily delay, cancellations, looping patterns—this airport, built for 15 million and now at 25 million, has serious problems already before you add any more flights to it.

The problems are more than just delay; the problems are also safety. I mean, we are all experienced folks, and we know that on roads, the more congested the road, the more likely an accident. Roads that are lightly traveled are less likely to have accidents. Roads that are more heavily traveled are more likely to have accidents.

I talked about this before I had a chance to play the air traffic control tape for colleagues of mine. I can't do that on the floor of the Senate. But about 2 weeks ago, there was a plane maneuvering on the main runway to take off and another plane trying to maneuver to one of the smaller runways to take off, and they almost collided. The frantic voice of the air traffic controller can be heard shouting

“Stop! Stop!” These planes ended up stopping within 300 feet of each other, inside 100 yards of each other, at this super-busy airport.

Thank God a collision and a catastrophe were averted, but more and more planes on this busiest runway in the United States is just going to increase the chance of a significant incident. Don't take my word for it. Even though as Senators I know we like to think we are experts about everything, there are experts on this—the Federal Aviation Administration and the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority. What does the FAA say about this? They point out—all the statistics I have just given you come from the FAA.

There is a Senate proposal before us that would add 10 flights into Reagan National. That is called five slots. Each slot is a flight in and a flight out—a total of 10 more flights a day.

What does the FAA say about it? They have given the committee and they have given the Senators from the region the same set of data, and what they say is that you can't even add one flight in without increasing delay, which is already significant, but if you add 10—5 slots—the delay will increase by 751 minutes a day.

There are already more than 11,000 minutes of delay a day. If you take the flights that are delayed and you multiply it by the minutes that they are delayed, adding 5 slots—10 flights—will add to that 751 additional minutes of delay; 751 minutes that make people late, that jeopardize their ability to get a connection, that cause cascading delays in the other airports, which are going to maybe be the recipients of planes taking off later from Reagan National.

That is what the FAA, charged with the safe and efficient operation of American airspace, is telling the U.S. Senate.

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority—Congress created it in the late 1980s. Congress appoints its Board and charges it with the operation not only of Reagan National but also Dulles Airport. What does the MWAA say? MWAA says: Stop. Stop. Don't add any more flights because the delay is already unacceptable, and if you jam more flights onto the busiest runway in the United States, you raise the safety risk.

Again, we Senators like to think we know a lot. We don't know as much about efficient and safe air traffic operations as the Federal Aviation Administration. We don't know as much as the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority.

So when the delay statistics already point out that this is unacceptable, when the cancellation and looping into loop statistics are dangerous, when we have had a near collision that is a flashing red warning signal right in our face before this vote, when the FAA has said you can't even put one flight in without increasing what is already

unacceptable delay, and when the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority that we created, and we appoint their Board, says don't do this, why would we do this? Why would we do this?

The Senators from the region who have the most at stake stand uniform—Senators CARDIN, VAN HOLLEN, WARNER, and I—opposed to the slot increase that is in the Senate bill that is pending before us. We have an amendment that would strip those 5 slots—10 flights—out so that we don't make this worse.

Since I last appeared on the floor to talk about this last week, colleagues have come up to me with some questions. They have raised three.

Here is one: DCA is under capacity because DCA was approved for more than 1,000 flights a day in the 1960s, and there are only 890 flights in and out today, so therefore there must be more capacity at DCA.

Those who ask that question are stating a truth. DCA was approved for over 1,000 flights a day in the 1960s when most of the flights had props, not jets; when most of the craft were smaller and had fewer passengers and could take off and land on shorter runways. So, yes, in the aviation world of the 1960s, DCA was approved for over 1,000 flights, but in the aviation world of 2024, where it is jets with more passengers that take more time to land and take off, that isn't that relevant. It is not that relevant.

In fact, another change that has happened that is important, that I alluded to earlier, is we were set up for more than 1,000 in and out in the 1960s—well, 9/11 happened since then. After 9/11, thank God, we have imposed much more stringent criteria on air traffic over the DC region—the Capitol, the Pentagon, the White House, Congress—to make sure there aren't challenges in the airspace that would lead to really serious harm and risk to people on planes and people who live in the area.

So the FAA has said: You are right, we did approve a higher capacity in the 1960s, but the changes in the number and size of planes have constricted them to the one runway, and changes in the airspace have made it harder. That is why even though we are not at the capacity that was established in the 1960s, you can't even put one more flight—one more flight—into DCA without expanding delay.

So that is the first argument. Yes, the 1960s was different, and 2024 is a completely different kettle of fish. You shouldn't be jamming flights onto this runway.

The second thing I have heard said is, well, DCA actually has pretty good on-time percentage—not bad delay, good on-time percentage.

It is true, if you just look at the percentage of planes that land or take off on time, DCA is better than some airports. Now, it is kind of sad to say that 20-plus percent of our flights are delayed in and out, and that is better

than some others. But here is what you have to know: Which airport would you feel more comfortable flying into—one with an 80-percent on-time record but where the average delay in that 20 percent was 67 percent or what if you flew into one with a worse on-time record but where the average delay was 10 minutes? Sixty-seven minutes is a hassle. Sixty-seven minutes means a missed connection. Sixty-seven minutes means cascading delay throughout the system. Three minutes or ten minutes doesn't.

So just looking at the on-time percentage doesn't give you the full picture of this airport, and that is why the FAA measures delay not in on-time percentage but in total daily delay. Based on that measure, DCA is not a high performer. It is already a poor performer, and we shouldn't add to it.

The last thing I will say, and then I will yield to other colleagues who wish to speak, is that some have said: Oh, this is just a fight between some airlines. You know, United likes it one way. Delta likes it another way. Maybe some other airlines aren't expressing their position.

Who cares about them? Who cares about the airlines? We ought to care about safety. We ought to care about passengers. We ought to care about the 25½ million people who are using this DCA airport on an annual basis, and we ought to weigh that 25½ million a lot heavier than a couple of dozen people in the Senate who would like to have more convenience on flights at DCA.

And this is ultimately about the Senate, because, as I have said to my colleagues, the House took up the same issue in the FAA reauthorization bill, and in the committee, they chose not to jam more flights into DCA. Then, when the bill was on the floor, someone tried to make the amendment that is the same amendment that is before us today: Hey, why not add 5 flights, 10 flights?

And the House rejected this. So this is not a battle with the House. The House has accepted the advocacy of the FAA and MWAA and the regional delegation. They paid heed to the potential impacts on delays and cancellations and even potential collisions, and they said: We are not going to run this risk. The last thing we want is for there to be something bad happen out at that airport, and people stick a mic in our face and say: You knew all this, and you were warned. But you voted for it anyway?

So the House rejected this, and what Senator WARNER and I and Senators VAN HOLLEN and CARDIN, the four Senators from the region affected by this bill—affected very dramatically by the bill—are asking is, we hope our Senate colleagues will too.

We want to support this FAA bill. It has a lot of good in it. But when it comes to jamming more flights on the busiest runway in the United States, we are saying exactly what this air traffic controller said, narrowly avoid-

ing a collision: Stop! Stop! For God's sake, stop!

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I return from a weekend at home. And last week, on the floor, I spoke about the same topic, and I rise today to again discuss the legislation that is now pending before the U.S. Senate, a long-term, 5-year reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration.

I appreciated the opportunity to work with you and others on the Commerce Committee as we worked our way through this process. I think we have been at this about 14 months, and the time is for us to bring this to a conclusion.

A long-term reauthorization must be a priority. It should be a priority as it was in our subcommittee, and, certainly, it should be a priority of this Senate.

I am disappointed to learn, just a few moments ago, that it appears that the House of Representatives is set to vote on a 1-week extension. I hope that we do not utilize that development in the Senate to delay our consideration and passage of the legislation. Perhaps, that is the way for the House next week to finish the work, but as we often do here when there is extra time, we take every moment and much more than what is really available. After 14 months of negotiations, the most recent extension expires Friday of this week, May 10. It is time to come together and pass a long-term FAA reauthorization.

I am the ranking member of the Aviation Subcommittee, where I worked closely with Chairs CANTWELL and DUCKWORTH and Ranking Member CRUZ to balance the priorities of the FAA, the aviation community, its academia partners, and the flying public in a bill that demonstrates Congress's commitment to aviation safety and excellence.

This legislation strengthens the standards for air safety, bolsters the aviation workforce, modernizes American airports in urban and rural settings, promotes innovation in American aviation, and enhances consumers' air travel experience.

My home State of Kansas is steeped in aviation history and will continue to contribute to the greater industry as a result of the passage of this legislation.

The FAA reauthorization safeguards the Essential Air Service Program, ensuring that rural communities and small airports are connected to the national airspace system, increasing business and tourism and access to educational opportunities and employment throughout the country—invaluable to States like mine, States like Kansas.

This allows small airports in rural communities to continue to have regional air service. Previous FAA reauthorization bills created the Aviation Workforce Development Grant Pro-

gram, aimed at strengthening the pool of pilots and aviation maintenance workers. The text of agreement expands this highly competitive grant program to grow the aviation workforce and is broadened to open eligibility for aircraft manufacturing workers. Whether you are an airline looking for a pilot or an airplane manufacturer looking for a worker, there is great demand in our country for those who have those technical capabilities, that engineering experience, and those who love the joy of flying.

Bolstering this grant program means increased competitiveness, which only drives innovation and will create more opportunities and economic development for our State and my colleagues' States. Every place you go, people are looking for workers. In America, we are known as the place in which aviation is king. Aerospace is a driving force in our country. A workforce is critical to its future.

Similarly, this bill encourages research on how best to introduce emerging aviation technologies in the airspace, including electric propulsion and hypersonic aircraft. As the "Air Capital of the World," Kansas is the leader in new aviation research, development, and technologies. These are significant components of our educational system in our community colleges, technical colleges, and our universities. This legislation also provides a unique opportunity, not only to address current demands of the industry, current technical needs, but also to address the future ones.

The FAA oversees the world's busiest and most complex airspace system in the world, managing approximately 50,000 flights and 3 million passengers every day. In order to address shortcomings in air safety and modernization, Congress must do its job and pass a reauthorization bill that is tailored to the needs of the aviation community and the flying public. Recent incidents and near misses have made clear the urgency of this responsibility. No matter what else we do, we need to make certain that flying is as safe as it possibly can be.

This bill also makes considerable investment in modernization of the National Airspace System and FAA's systems for oversight.

As air traffic increases and new manned and unmanned aviation technologies are deployed, this bill provides essential updates to the FAA and to the NTSB's regulatory mandate. This bill addresses the need for additional numbers of air traffic controllers.

With an eye toward the future of aviation, this bill invests extensively in research and development around advanced materials, including at Wichita State University, innovative fuel research, and emergent aviation technologies.

The bill equips the FAA to meet its mission, to provide a safe and efficient operating environment for civil and commercial aviation in the United States.

Beyond innovative safety and workforce solutions, the bill provides the aviation industry, academia, and regulatory Agencies with the resources needed to maintain and extend America's leadership in aviation.

The path to a long-term FAA reauthorization has not been easy; nor has it been a short one. But this critical legislation can no longer take a backseat. Delaying this important legislation any further only exacerbates the challenges that the American civil and commercial aviation industries face and essentially condones bad behavior and lack of incentive by Congress.

Madam President, I hope that we do not use—if the House does pass a short-term extension, I hope we do not use it as an excuse to not proceed further today, tomorrow, and Friday to complete our work.

It is time we come together. It is time we get this bill done. It is past time for us to come together and get this bill done. The flying public and our aviation industry partners want it and our country and our citizens deserve it and need it.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Rhode Island.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I am back with my trusty battered "Time to Wake Up" chart here to talk about the climate warnings that now predict climate-related damage in the trillions of dollars—trillions of dollars.

A full third of our national debt already comes from economic shocks like COVID and the 2008 mortgage meltdown. I have been using the Budget Committee to spotlight warnings that the next big economic shock will be caused by climate change. Climate change is not just about polar bears or green jobs. It is about economic storm warnings to which we had better start paying attention. Today, I will talk about three.

The most recent comes from the Potsdam Institute.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have the report summary printed in the RECORD.

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

[From *Nature*, volume 628, pages 551–557 (2024)]

THE ECONOMIC COMMITMENT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

(By Maximilian Kotz, Anders Levermann & Leonie Wenz)

ABSTRACT

Global projections of macroeconomic climate-change damages typically consider impacts from average annual and national temperatures over long time horizons. Here we use recent empirical findings from more than 1,600 regions worldwide over the past 40 years to project sub-national damages from temperature and precipitation, including daily variability and extremes. Using an empirical approach that provides a robust lower bound on the persistence of impacts on economic growth, we find that the world econ-

omy is committed to an income reduction of 19% within the next 26 years independent of future emission choices (relative to a baseline without climate impacts, likely range of 11–29% accounting for physical climate and empirical uncertainty). These damages already outweigh the mitigation costs required to limit global warming to 2°C by sixfold over this near-term time frame and thereafter diverge strongly dependent on emission choices. Committed damages arise predominantly through changes in average temperature, but accounting for further climatic components raises estimates by approximately 50% and leads to stronger regional heterogeneity. Committed losses are projected for all regions except those at very high latitudes, at which reductions in temperature variability bring benefits. The largest losses are committed at lower latitudes in regions with lower cumulative historical emissions and lower present-day income.

MAIN

Projections of the macroeconomic damage caused by future climate change are crucial to informing public and policy debates about adaptation, mitigation and climate justice. On the one hand, adaptation against climate impacts must be justified and planned on the basis of an understanding of their future magnitude and spatial distribution. This is also of importance in the context of climate justice, as well as to key societal actors, including governments, central banks and private businesses, which increasingly require the inclusion of climate risks in their macroeconomic forecasts to aid adaptive decision-making. On the other hand, climate mitigation policy such as the Paris Climate Agreement is often evaluated by balancing the costs of its implementation against the benefits of avoiding projected physical damages. This evaluation occurs both formally through cost-benefit analyses, as well as informally through public perception of mitigation and damage costs.

Projections of future damages meet challenges when informing these debates, in particular the human biases relating to uncertainty and remoteness that are raised by long-term perspectives. Here we aim to overcome such challenges by assessing the extent of economic damages from climate change to which the world is already committed by historical emissions and socio-economic inertia (the range of future emission scenarios that are considered socioeconomically plausible). Such a focus on the near term limits the large uncertainties about diverging future emission trajectories, the resulting long-term climate response and the validity of applying historically observed climate-economic relations over long timescales during which socio-technical conditions may change considerably. As such, this focus aims to simplify the communication and maximize the credibility of projected economic damages from future climate change.

In projecting the future economic damages from climate change, we make use of recent advances in climate econometrics that provide evidence for impacts on sub-national economic growth from numerous components of the distribution of daily temperature and precipitation. Using fixed-effects panel regression models to control for potential confounders, these studies exploit within-region variation in local temperature and precipitation in a panel of more than 1,600 regions worldwide, comprising climate and income data over the past 40 years, to identify the plausibly causal effects of changes in several climate variables on economic productivity. Specifically, macroeconomic impacts have been identified from changing daily temperature variability, total annual precipitation, the annual number of wet days

and extreme daily rainfall that occur in addition to those already identified from changing average temperature. Moreover, regional heterogeneity in these effects based on the prevailing local climatic conditions has been found using interactions terms. The selection of these climate variables follows micro-level evidence for mechanisms related to the impacts of average temperatures on labour and agricultural productivity, of temperature variability on agricultural productivity and health, as well as of precipitation on agricultural productivity, labour outcomes and flood damages (see Extended Data Table 1 for an overview, including more detailed references). References contain a more detailed motivation for the use of these particular climate variables and provide extensive empirical tests about the robustness and nature of their effects on economic output, which are summarized in Methods. By accounting for these extra climatic variables at the sub-national level, we aim for a more comprehensive description of climate impacts with greater detail across both time and space.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. The institute warns that "global annual damages are estimated to be at 38 trillion dollars, with a likely range of 19–59 trillion dollars in 2050." Thirty-eight trillion dollars is the midpoint in a range that could go as high as \$59 trillion. That is pretty bad.

But it gets worse. This is not a complete accounting of the expected damages. It does not fully account for damage from weather extremes, things like storm and wildfire damage.

To quote the Potsdam report about its damage predictions, "accounting for other weather extremes such as storms or wildfires could further raise" these predictions.

And even that is not the end of it. It gets worse still. The Potsdam economic estimates leave out damages that are hard to monetize but, nonetheless, can be very real to real people. Again, quoting from the report, "that is without even considering non-economic impacts such as loss of life or biodiversity."

If your grandfather taught you to fish in a certain place and you can't pass that on to your granddaughter because the fish aren't there or because the creek isn't there, that is a real and genuine harm, but they can't monetize it. So they don't even count it.

I am sorry to report that it gets even worse. The Potsdam global damage estimates are based on existing levels of fossil fuel pollution.

Back to the report:

These near-term damages are a result of our past emissions. We will need more adaptation efforts if we want to avoid at least some of them. And we have to cut down our emissions drastically and immediately—if not, economic losses will become even bigger in the second half of the century.

Well, with an entire industry and an entire political party, dedicated here in Congress to make sure that we do not cut down our emissions drastically or immediately, this damage estimate is virtually certain to be worse in the out years.

In sum, economic damages could be as high as \$59 trillion annually in 2050,

plus whatever added damages come from storm and wildfire, plus whatever added damages come that are hard to monetize, plus whatever economic damages come from failing to reduce emissions drastically and immediately.

How do these damages hit us? Here is the report:

These damages mainly result from rising temperatures but also from changes in rainfall and temperature variability.

Those factors lead to “income reductions . . . for the majority of regions, including North America . . . caused by the impact of climate change on . . . agricultural yields, labor productivity or infrastructure.”

The result:

Climate change will cause massive economic damages within the next 25 years in almost all countries around the world, [including] the United States.

That is report one: “massive economic damages” to the United States.

Let’s move on to report two, the cover article from a recent issue of the Economist magazine, titled “The Next Housing Disaster.”

From the Economist’s opening paragraph:

About a tenth of the world’s residential property by value is under threat from global warming—including many houses that are nowhere near the coast. From tornados battering Midwestern American suburbs to tennis-ball-size hailstones smashing the roofs of Italian villas, the severe weather brought about by greenhouse-gas emissions is shaking the foundations of the world’s most important asset class.

Going on, the article says:

The potential costs . . . are enormous. By one estimate, climate change and the fight against it could wipe out 9 percent of the value of the world’s housing by 2050—which amounts to \$25 trillion.

We have had testimony in the Budget Committee about how this works. There is the potential direct cost of damage from wildfires or major storms. Hurricane Ian cost Florida more than \$100 billion, and it was just a category 4 storm at landfall, below the maximum category 5 strength.

Some scientists believe we will actually need category 6 in the future for storms that are made even more powerful due to ever-warming seas.

There is the related risk of insurance coverage failing to pay claims after such a major disaster, leaving homeowners stranded economically in ruined homes. Then, there is the broader risk of insurance collapse, even without a single devastating storm.

How does that work? Again, from Budget Committee testimony: First, unprecedented, unpredictable wildfire or flooding risks drive up insurance costs. We are already seeing that happen.

Then, continued unpredictability and worsening risk make properties in certain areas uninsurable. We are beginning to see that. You can’t get a policy for any amount of money.

Without insurance, then, it is near impossible to get a mortgage. And by the way, a 30-year mortgage doesn’t

look just at today’s conditions; it looks out 30 years.

So a mortgage crisis follows the insurance problem. And when properties can’t get a mortgage, the only buyers for the property are cash buyers. Buyer demand crashes, and your property values crash along with that.

This is how the chief economist of Freddie Mac predicted, years ago, a coastal property values crash that he said could hit the American economy as hard as the 2008 mortgage meltdown and subsequent global economic crisis: first, insurance crisis; second, mortgage crisis; third, coastal property value crisis.

And unlike the mortgage meltdown of 2008, when property values could recover and did recover from an economic shock, properties that are predictably going to be underwater physically or repeatedly burn down during the 30-year period of a mortgage, they won’t recover their value. This is not a temporary market panic that crashes and then rebounds to something near normal.

In this kind of crash, the unpredictable conditions and the underlying risk that caused it just get worse—for decades, if we get serious, finally, about fossil fuel emissions, and for centuries or forever if we don’t. We are playing near the edge of an economic precipice.

Back to The Economist:

The \$25 trillion bill will pose problems around the world. But doing nothing today will only make tomorrow more painful.

This is what is called a systemic shock. It does not stay confined to the affected homeowners and industries.

To quote The Economist here:

The impending bill is so huge, in fact, that it will have grim implications not just for personal prosperity, but also for the financial system.

I continue here:

If the size of the risk suddenly sinks in, and borrowers and lenders alike realize the collateral underpinning so many transactions is not worth as much as they thought, a wave of repricing will reverberate through financial markets.

The punch line:

Climate change, in short, could prompt the next global property crash.

Now, The Economist article is a prediction just as to property markets.

For report three in this speech, let’s go to Deloitte’s research arm, which looks at broader economic trajectories: A, if we do respond effectively to climate change and, B, if we don’t. The stakes are huge.

Deloitte is a corporate consulting firm; it is not a Green New Dealer. And Deloitte estimates that the global cost of doing nothing on climate will be around \$180 trillion in economic damage by 2070—\$178 trillion to be exact.

To quote the Deloitte report:

If we allow climate change to go unchecked, it will ravage our global economy. Ravage our global economy.

But the Deloitte report goes on to say that if we act responsibly and enact policies that limit warming to 1.7

degrees Celsius, we can save ourselves from that ravaging and actually grow the global economy by over \$40 trillion—\$43 trillion to be exact.

So the swing in our economic future, based on what we do on climate, is over \$220 trillion, the difference between a negative \$178 trillion bad climate outcome if we keep shirking and dawdling, and a positive \$43 trillion good climate outcome if we shape up. And to be clear, that \$220 trillion, that is adjusted to present value.

Dialing down to the United States, the report predicts:

For the United States, the damages to 2070 are projected to reach \$14.5 trillion, a lifetime loss of nearly \$70,000 for each working American.

On the upside, a responsible climate path could add \$885 billion in economic benefit for the United States for a swing of over \$15.3 trillion, again, net present value, depending on which path we choose.

The Deloitte report warns:

[W]e have squandered the chance to decarbonize at our leisure. Given the costs associated with each tenth of a degree of temperature increase, every month of delay brings greater risks and forestalls the eventual economic gains.

They continue:

The global economy needs to execute a rapid, coordinated, and sequenced energy and industrial transition.

This is not the speech to lay out how we do that; that speech will come later, so stand by.

This speech is simply to highlight that there are now multiple damages assessments out there looking at the climate threat and assessing that threat into the tens of trillions of dollars.

There is much that we don’t know, but the common level, moving into the tens of trillions ought to be a wake-up call for all of us.

There are some things that we do know. We do know that getting serious about these warnings will require breaking the filthy political hold of the fossil fuel industry on Congress.

It will require exposing and defeating fossil fuel’s dark money influence and disinformation armada. And it will require learning to deal with the facts as they are, not as a deeply, ill-motivated industry would have us wrongly believe.

Wow, is it ever time to wake up.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BUTLER). The Senator from West Virginia.

EPA

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, well, here we go again. The Environmental Protection Agency is back with a barrage of rules and regulations to accomplish two main goals: kill coal and natural gas once and for all, and in doing so, appease the climate activists who the President feels he needs to keep happy in an election year.

So what just happened? Well, in the last 2 weeks, the Biden EPA finalized a slate of four policies as part of their

latest—and punishing—climate crusade.

The first is the Clean Power Plan 2.0 that will eliminate coal power generation and block new natural gas plants from coming online in the future.

The second is the updated Mercury and Air Toxics Standards rule that is designed to put coal plants out West out of business by saddling them with unrealistic emissions requirements.

The third is the Coal Combustion Residuals Rule.

And the fourth is the Effluent Limitations Guidelines, sounds pretty technical, for coal plants which both impose unattainable requirements for disposing and discharging waste at these plants.

The ELGs will orphan millions in investments made just in the last 4 years. So our plants have readjusted to make sure they are following, and now they come back 4 years later and say, that \$300 million? No good anymore; you have to spend another \$340 million.

Again, this administration isn't being shy about what the desired end game is here.

These rules are meant to put coal and natural gas employees out of work. Now, let me tell you, the energy mix in this country now with coal and natural gas is 60 percent of our energy comes from the two of those combined. And the goal here is to shutter these baseload power plants once and for all.

But as I alluded to earlier, they have tried this before. We all remember when the Obama administration attempted to implement a similar, overreaching set of mandates, and the Supreme Court remembers that as well. They turned it down.

So why try again? Why get rejected by the highest Court in the land and then come back with the same playbook? Well, it, sadly, comes back to two of the overall—the same two overall goals: close down reliable American power plants, and try to prop up disappointing poll numbers.

The administration doesn't seem to care whether these regulations are struck down in the end. They are betting that by threatening the electricity sector with rule after rule, investment will be forced away from reliable, baseload power towards the energy sources of their choices, which, by the way, cannot produce the energy that is needed.

Beyond these four rules recently announced, the EPA has rolled out an electric vehicles mandate, an air rule meant to halt manufacturing projects, and a Federal plan that has already suffered legal blows in court because it dictates to States how to address their own unique environmental concerns.

Much of the regulations in the environment space—and we all want clean air and clean water—are left to the discretion of the States with oversight by the Federal.

But the EPA's broader strategy that costs hundreds of billions of dollars and purposefully violates legal constraints

set by the Supreme Court is creating a massive problem that every member of the Biden administration just can't seem to see, or perhaps it is one that they choose to ignore.

All of President Biden's environmental regulations impacting everything from power plants to the kind of cars that we drive are working against each other and putting us on a path to an energy crisis.

They are driving up demand for electricity, so think electric vehicles, AI, higher manufacturing, more, more, more demand for energy, straining a grid that even the administration projects will see explosive demand in the coming years. We have seen instances where it has been too stressed, and it has had to pull back, while simultaneously cutting off the electricity supply from our baseload power needed to sustain that grid—more demand, less supply. It is kind of like a parent telling their child that they have to practice for hours and hours every day to make the high school baseball team, but in the same breath telling that same child: Well, you know what? I am going to take your bag, your bag of balls, your glove, and your bat, and I am going to put them in the garage. So good luck. So go get them.

The Biden administration and many on the left desperately need a reality check, and here it is: The inconvenient truth is that coal and natural gas are the backbone of America's current electric grid. I mentioned that earlier, 60 percent.

Many, many people know that I am a huge advocate for nuclear energy and hoping to get a bill passed to really spur the development of small modular nuclear and the advanced nuclear production because we want to see it grow to help with this baseload energy demand that we are going to see. I want energy sources of all kinds to continue playing an increased role, including renewables—wind and solar—in our energy mix, and I believe that with innovation and time, this absolutely will happen.

But, as I said, the reality is roughly 60 percent of electric generation in the United States comes from the two sources of power that the Biden administration is trying to close forever. Not only do these attacks on coal- and gas-fired powerplants make no sense, they pose serious threat to our grid reliability. That means: Is our grid going to be able to sustain the great energy appetite that we have?

And experts have sounded the alarm. Public utilities commissioners, nonpartisan grid operators from Blue States and Red States, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission—better known as FERC—and the nonprofit North American Electric Reliability Corporation all shouted from the rooftops about the ways the Biden administration's proposed Clean Power Plan 2.0 and other rules would jeopardize the reliability of our electric grid. It would “undermine reliability”; “materially

and adversely impact electric reliability”; “potentially catastrophic reliability problems.”

These are just a few of the warning signs that we heard about when the EPA brought their plan forward.

The finalized rules announced by the EPA largely brushed aside these concerns. This is what gets me. They ask you for comments and concerns, and then they never listen to the comments or concerns. They brushed aside these concerns and pressed ahead to close down major sources of baseload power with no plan to replace it.

So let's take a step back and look at these rules and regulations from the outside. The results of the EPA's latest action means—what will happen? Americans will lose their jobs, and certainly in my State of West Virginia that will occur. American families and small businesses will pay more for their electricity at a time when Bidenomics is already causing inflation. Just go to the grocery store. Every time we go, we see it.

America's entire grid will be in jeopardy, our electric grid will be in jeopardy. And with an inexplicable ban on new natural gas exports still in place, America's allies will have to go to Russia and Iran and ask for extra help.

It is plain to see that the President's entire energy and environmental strategy actually hurts America and helps our adversaries. So as the Biden administration attempts to put the final nail in the coffin of America's baseload power sources, remember their objectives. To them, it is about accomplishing a decades-long goal of closing down coal and gas plants and hoping it is enough to get over the finish line in an election year. They have shown they have no regard for the opinions of our Supreme Court, no regard for the workers in West Virginia, and no regard for the truth about what happens when you undermine our Nation's electric grid.

The Biden administration has chosen whose side they are on: They are on the side of the climate activists over the well-being of Middle America, and they have chosen to shut the lights off for the rest of us without so much as a “good luck.”

With that, I yield the floor to my friend from Mississippi.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Madam President, the Biden administration continues to fail the American people with its consistent attacks on our Nation's energy supply and production. These attacks are happening as Americans continue to suffer through the burden of record inflation caused by this administration.

Energy is the lifeblood of civilization: lighting our homes; fueling our transportation; powering innovation; and for those of us in rural America, heating our poultry houses—much like the area where you and I come from, Madam President.

Energy of all forms—from oil and gas to nuclear, to wind, to solar—not only powers our world, but it protects our world. To threaten any energy source is to threaten the vitality of our Nation and its communities. But from day one, President Biden did just that. It started with a barrage of excessive Executive orders aimed at American energy production, including the cancellation of the Keystone XL Pipeline, and only got worse from there.

Agencies under this administration have been emboldened to ram through harmful policies and rules that are driving us straight toward a cliff. The Department of the Interior continues to hold domestic energy production back by releasing a 5-year leasing plan for oil and gas production that contains the lowest amount of lease sales in history, with the option for the Secretary to cancel any one of them as she deems necessary.

The Bureau of Land Management has issued rules that weaken our domestic energy production and create additional more redtape. The Environmental Protection Agency has issued rules that weaken our domestic energy production and limit consumer choice for vehicles. The Department of Energy has issued rules that weaken our domestic energy production, limit consumer choice for natural gas appliances in our houses, and place a pause on liquefied natural gas export. It makes no sense.

Even the Securities and Exchange Commission has now decided it wants to get involved with climate policy, releasing a greenhouse gas disclosure rule that would lead to mountains of burdensome paperwork for companies and higher costs for consumers. The SCC is meant to protect investors, facilitate capital formation, and maintain markets. It has absolutely no authority to address political or social issues, much less serve as a climate change taskmaster.

If you threw a dart at a dartboard labeled with all the Biden Agencies that have a hand in targeting energy production, chances are that you will hit an Agency that has committed an overreach of its statutory authority.

The administration continues to slow-walk permitting, most recently attacking LNG facilities for climate considerations, whatever that is.

Well, is the administration aware that by continuing to ignore the law and not holding lease sales in the Gulf of Mexico, it hamstringing future GOMESA funds that would come back to the Gulf States to support critical coastal protection activities, including conservation, coastal restoration, and hurricane protection? That is right. The administration's Interior Department is jeopardizing actual climate and conservation goals for my State, and we aren't the only State sounding the alarm on these terrible policies. These policies are driving up energy costs and emboldening our enemies.

President Biden and his allies continue to paint the fossil fuel industry

as the enemy, but both the Secretaries of Energy and Interior have stated that fossil fuels will be around for a long time because they are needed. Yet they continue to try and diminish its production without the necessary technology and grid capacity replacements.

Not only could we see higher energy costs under these policies, but we could see more blackouts during extreme weather events, something that has Mississippians very concerned.

The American people deserve better than failing energy policies from a tone-deaf administration and Agencies that are doing everything they can to circumvent Congress and force their radical energy agendas on this entire Nation.

Still, the hard-working people in our energy industry are not letting President Biden crush their spirits. My colleagues and I are battling back with everything we can to challenge these rulings on behalf of the American people.

With CRA resolutions of disapproval, appropriations, and committee hearings, we have the opportunities to try to hold these Agencies accountable for their continued overreach.

I will keep fighting alongside my colleagues until this ship is back on the correct course of independent energy production for the betterment of the United States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I rise today to discuss the Biden administration's regulatory blizzard that is restricting energy development and making energy more expensive and less reliable for homes and businesses not only across my State but across the country.

According to data from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, or FERC, electricity demand is expected to increase almost 5 percent over the next 5 years. At the same time, FERC Commissioners and grid operators are warning of more blackouts and brownouts because powerplants are retiring before new generation capacity can be brought online.

Simply put, energy prices are high because demand is outpacing supply, and Americans are being forced to pay higher prices at the pump and higher utility bills. Because the cost of energy is built into every good and service across the economy, higher energy prices are fueling persistent inflation.

Instead of bringing more supply online to reduce prices, the Biden administration is imposing a regulatory blizzard that seeks to curtail energy production. It starts with the EPA, which is imposing new, costly, unworkable mandates specifically designed to reduce traditional energy production.

Just 2 weeks ago, the EPA finalized four new regulations targeting the power sector, including an overly stringent, new mercury and air toxic standards, or MATS, rule, despite the EPA's

own regulatory analysis stating that the existing rule is adequately protecting public health; also, the Clean Power Plan 2.0, requiring existing coal-fired and new gas-fired plants to reduce CO₂ emissions by 90 percent—90 percent—when carbon capture and storage is not yet commercially viable; and new burdensome requirements on water discharge at powerplants and costly new coal ash management requirements as well.

On top of all these burdensome regulations on the power sector, the EPA is placing onerous new methane regulations on oil and gas producers, and the EPA is implementing a new tax on natural gas.

Collectively, these EPA rules will require the power sector to spend billions of dollars to comply with these regulations or, worse, force the premature retirement of reliable coal-fired baseload plants.

Ultimately, these costs are passed along to electric ratepayers—families and businesses across the country.

To push back against this regulatory blizzard, I will be introducing a Congressional Review Act resolution of disapproval to overturn the MATS rule. Also, I am joining Senator CAPITO in her efforts to overturn the Clean Power Plan 2.0 rule.

All these things are driving inflation. Essentially, the Biden administration is putting handcuffs on our energy producers, and they are forcing up the price of energy. They are doing it not only with the regulatory burden that creates costs for the plants to continue to operate, but they are also putting baseload energy out of business. That puts us at risk of blackouts and brownouts across the country, and it undermines the stability of the grid. It also forces energy prices higher for every single consumer—every business and every individual. Who does that impact the most? Low-income people. So it goes right at low-income individuals.

If you live in a place like, I don't know, California, maybe Texas, it can get pretty warm, and you want those air-conditioners running. You don't want a brownout right at peak time when you need that power.

On top of the EPA's regulatory onslaught, this blizzard is continuing at the Interior Department, which manages 245 million acres of public land and 700 million acres of subsurface minerals.

Our vast taxpayer-owned energy reserves are a national strategic asset, ensuring that our Nation remains energy dominant. Why, then, is the Biden administration doing everything it can to seemingly lock away access to our taxpayer-owned energy reserves? It makes no sense.

Last month, the Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management, or BLM, issued its public lands rule. This rule allows environmental groups to utilize a new conservation lease that will directly conflict with longstanding multiple-use stewardship of Federal lands, including energy development.

So the law says that on these Federal lands, they have to be for multiple use. That is energy development. That is agriculture. That is tourism. That is all of these different uses. But with these new environmental or conservation leases, that will restrict the use of that land to one use. One use is not multiple use. That absolutely violates the law.

Along with Senator BARRASSO, I will be introducing a CRA resolution of disapproval to block this rule as well.

The BLM has also finalized a new on-shore oil and gas rule and a new venting and flaring rule. These are designed as well to and will drive up the cost of energy production on Federal lands. It affects small businesses. It affects consumers. It affects every single business that uses energy, which is just about all of them. It affects every consumer because we all use energy.

In North Dakota, the BLM is proposing a new—just my State alone—a draft resource management plan that would close off leasing to 45 percent of Federal oil and gas acreage. Texas produces the most oil, and then it is either North Dakota or New Mexico that produces the second most. We produce I think about 1.2 million barrels a day of oil, and we have a lot of Federal land. But this resource management plan that the BLM is putting forward would close off leasing to 45 percent of the Federal oil and gas acreage—45 percent. Half of it.

As far as coal, we provide electricity I think to as many as 12 different States with coal-fired electricity. Ninety-five percent of Federal coal acreage would be closed off under this new rule.

Furthermore, given the scattered nature of Federal minerals across North Dakota, this plan is particularly problematic because it also blocks access to State- and privately-owned energy reserves.

Think about this: The Bureau of Land Management owns the surface acres, but they don't own the minerals. So a private individual may own those minerals underneath, but because the BLM owns the surface acres, that individual can't develop his minerals for oil, gas, or coal because they are blocked by the BLM—patently unfair, absolutely unfair, and I just don't think it is going to pass legal muster.

The BLM's mismanagement of our vast energy reserves reaches to other States as well, including the blocking of new oil and gas production, for example, in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska.

The goal of the Biden administration's regulatory blizzard is clear. It is a "keep it in the ground"—part of the Green New Deal—agenda no matter what the economic or geopolitical costs are.

There is a better approach, and it means taking the handcuffs off our energy producers and unleashing the full potential of our Nation's most valuable strategic asset: our abundant energy resources—oil, gas, coal, all types of energy.

Instead of this regulatory blizzard, the Biden administration needs to work with us to increase the supply of energy to bring down prices for hard-working American families.

So, at the end of the day, it is this simple: The Biden administration is handcuffing our energy producers with one onerous regulation after the next. We just put a few of them up here on these charts. It is just one after the next.

Simple terms: What does it do? It restricts and reduces the supply of domestic energy here at home. That means our cost of energy goes up. That fuels inflation. So every single consumer and every single business now pays more for energy. And who does it hit the hardest? The low-income individual. It goes right at the low-income individual.

So that is the first thing to think about. Second, we compete in a global economy, so if you use energy, that is one of the important costs for your business. If you have low-cost, dependable energy, we can compete more effectively, create higher paying jobs, more jobs, and grow our economy, but all of that is handcuffed as well by the Biden energy plan.

Then let's talk about national security. Energy security is national security. Look at what is going on in the world right now. How is Russia fueling its war machine? With sales of oil and gas. So when we don't produce here at home, that means more people have to buy from places like Russia, from OPEC, from Venezuela—including our allies in Western Europe. It makes them dependent on Russian energy instead of getting natural gas from the United States. That is a national security issue not only for us but for our allies.

It is the same thing with Iran. How does Iran fuel its war machine? With oil. How does it fund Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis? With revenues from oil and gas. When we produce oil and gas, that mitigates, reduces, hurts their ability to continue, particularly if we combine it with the right kinds of sanctions, which we should have, on Iran. It not only mitigates their ability to fuel terror, but it strengthens America, and it strengthens our allies.

The final point I want to make in this regard is, let's talk about good environmental stewardship, good conservation. Who has the best environmental standards in the world? Is it Iran? Is it Russia? Is it Venezuela? Of course not. So how could it possibly make any kind of common sense to produce less energy in America, where we have the best environmental standards, and instead forfeit it to our adversaries, like Russia, Iran, and Venezuela, where they are not only our adversaries—not only our adversaries—but they have the worst environmental standards? That is an energy policy that makes absolutely no sense.

Instead of regulation after regulation after regulation and tax after tax, take

the handcuffs off our energy producers. It is good for consumers, it is good for our economy, it is good for national security, and it is good for the environment to let us produce energy here in America. It is just common sense.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. RICKETTS. Madam President, I rise today to join my colleagues in opposing the Biden administration's anti-energy policies. From the EV mandate to the so-called Clean Power Plan 2.0, the Biden administration's war on American energy threatens the livelihoods of millions of Americans and American families.

Let's start with the EPA's delusional and reckless electric vehicle mandate. It requires up to two-thirds of all cars and light trucks being sold in 2032 to be electric vehicles.

It is delusional because it will block low-income families from owning a car. Owning a car is a pathway out of poverty for many Americans, including many people in my State, and Biden's EV mandate will drive up the cost of those used vehicles.

It is delusional because the Biden administration has no plan for how we are going to generate the power needed to be able to charge these cars or the transmission lines needed to transmit the energy from where it is being produced to where it is going to be needed.

It is also delusional because this EV mandate will make us more dependent on the Chinese Communist Party, which controls about 60 to 80 percent of all the critical minerals that are necessary to be able to make the batteries for EVs, and they are leading us in this EV battery technology.

This is how crazy stupid this administration is: They want to mandate EVs on the one hand, but they also want to attack any project that may allow us to be able to mine the minerals that we need to be able to create the batteries for EVs.

For example, EVs can use up to four times the amount of copper that a regular car uses. At the same time, though, the Biden administration has blocked a road that would go to the Ambler Mining District in Alaska. The Ambler Mining District is one of the places where we have a lot of copper. It is a major copper deposit. We need this copper. Yet the Biden administration is blocking us from being able to get to it. It makes no sense.

Another thing that makes no sense is an EV mandate that requires dramatically increasing our energy production and transmission on the one hand, and then, on the other hand, we have the Clean Power Plan 2.0, which is going to attack our energy production. It is a classic example of "bureaucrats gone wild." It forces coal- or gas-generating electric plants to reduce up to 90 percent of their carbon emissions by the year 2039.

First, the Clean Power Plan 2.0 is illegal, explicitly countering the Supreme Court's decision in *West Virginia v. EPA*.

Second, the rule will stifle our industry not only in Nebraska but nationwide. In Nebraska, 49 percent of our electricity comes from coal-fired plants. It is the baseload generation we have.

Nebraska, actually, ranks pretty high when it comes to renewable energy. We have over 31 percent of our electricity coming from renewable energy, but we still need that baseload.

Nebraska, in 2022, also ranked No. 3 nationwide for the most industrial electricity customers of any State. It just ranked behind Texas and California with regard to those industrial consumers of electricity.

Fossil fuel plants generate about 60 percent of U.S. electricity nationwide, and coal contributes about 16.2 percent of all the electricity in this country. Under this rule, more than 78 percent of coal-powered plants would have to retire between the years 2028 and 2040 while coal remains the primary source of electricity in 18 of our States. Currently, a quarter of the existing 200 plants are scheduled to retire within the next 5 years. We don't have enough new plants coming online to be able to replace the power that is going offline. This plan will close down the reliable and affordable fossil fuel plants, and American consumers will end up paying the price.

Again, for us in Nebraska, when you are driving up these costs, you are hurting our families and, of course, our businesses that create the jobs that allow families to be able to send their kids to school, to go on the family vacation, and so forth.

The EPA does not have the authority—the legal authority—to force a complete shift in energy production through bureaucratic fiat, but the Biden administration doesn't care, and they are going ahead with it anyway.

The Biden administration's anti-energy agenda doesn't just stop there. President Biden's imposed moratorium on new oil and gas leases is also an attack on our energy system. The administration has slow-walked these permits for new construction and has added new layers of bureaucracy that hinder job-creating energy projects.

Instead of supporting high-skilled, high-waged jobs, this administration has prioritized the interests of coastal elites and radical environmentalists. They would rather see fossil fuel plants closed and thousands of workers lose their jobs than stand up to these activists.

This appeasement of the far-left, radical, environmentalist wing of the Democratic Party is wrong. It must stop. We must reverse course. We must have some common sense. I am here today to join my colleagues in standing up for American energy, for American workers, and for our way of life.

Together, we are going to do all we can to overturn this anti-energy agenda through Congressional Review Act legislation and other means. We are going to support an "all of the above"

energy strategy. We are going to continue to fight to make sure our workers remain employed, our communities remain prosperous, and our Nation remains energy independent.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

DISASTER RELIEF FUNDING

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, disaster survivors are running out of time; disaster survivors are running out of money; and they are running out of patience. These people have been to hell and back, enduring the worst horrors of Mother Nature: wildfires, hurricanes, floods, tornadoes. They have lost loved ones. They have lost their homes. They have lost livelihoods. And after all that, after having their lives totally upended overnight, many have been stuck in limbo for months or even years waiting for help to arrive.

It hasn't always been this way. Over the years, Congress, on a bipartisan basis, has consistently stepped up to help hundreds of communities decimated by disasters, no matter the political color of the State or the size of the town or the pricetag of the clean-up. Why? Because we have recognized—correctly—that disasters do not discriminate and that helping communities recover is one of our most fundamental responsibilities in the Federal Government.

What is the Federal Government for if not to help our fellow Americans in their hour of need? What are we doing here if we can't agree that disaster relief is urgent and important and necessary for the well-being of our country?

It is not acceptable to keep survivors waiting. Congress must act. We need to pass disaster relief funding with the urgency that it demands and get survivors the assistance that they need to fully recover.

Nine months ago today, fires, fueled by 70-mile-an-hour winds, stormed the town of Lahaina on West Maui, incinerating everything in their path and leaving behind little more than ash, rubble, and smoke: 101 people died; 2,200 structures were leveled; and almost 12,000 people were immediately displaced. Just about everyone in that tight-knit community lost someone or something that day.

A few weeks after the fires, when President Biden came to Lahaina, he promised the survivors that his administration and the Federal Government would be there to help as they recovered—not just in those early weeks and months but throughout—for as long as it took; for as long as it took.

Nine months later, cleanup is still ongoing, not a single home has been rebuilt. And the infrastructure that was destroyed—the harbors, the roads, the water and sewer systems—all of it has yet to be restored.

The recovery was never going to be quick. The damage was so vast, the destruction so total and so toxic that bringing Lahaina back to anything

close to normal was always going to be a multiyear endeavor. And that is the case for so many communities across the country that have been devastated by disasters.

When the President declares disaster in a community, it means a very specific thing. It not just like it is the President's whim or whether they like the place that has been hurt. It means that the community's recovery needs are so great that the State and local governments can't handle them alone. It means that the capacity of the local government has been exceeded, and the President is declaring that this place is a Federal disaster, so the Federal Government has to step in and help, which is why almost 7 months ago, the President of the United States submitted a supplemental funding request to Congress which included funding for disaster relief and specifically for the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery, or CDBG-DR, Program.

The CDBG-DR serves a simple but essential purpose. It provides survivors with the funding and flexibility to rebuild their homes, small businesses, and communities over the long term. For more than 30 years and in practically every State in the country, the program has been a lifeline for people trying to get back on their feet and economies trying to get back on their feet.

But it has been a year and a half since Congress last funded CDBG-DR, and in that time, disasters have piled up in every part of the country. Unfortunately, we know more are coming, especially with hurricane season around the corner. So for Lahaina and dozens of communities nationwide, this funding is urgent.

Rebuilding after a disaster—as a community but also as a family or an individual—is among the hardest things that anybody is ever going to go through. One moment you are going about your day—going to work, dropping off your kids at school, making dinner for your family—and the next thing you know, you are living out of a hotel, if you are lucky, not knowing where your next paycheck will come from or when or where you will have a permanent place to call home again.

The ordeal of recovery is hard; it is long; it is confusing; it is painful; and it is expensive. And, understandably, survivors look to their government for help. They have waited a long time. But time is running out, and money has run dry. Congress must act and pass disaster aid as soon as possible.

We have done full-year appropriations. We have done an international supplemental appropriations bill. We are about to finish the FAA. The next big bill that we pass has to be providing disaster relief across the country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. WELCH. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Hawaii. First of all, I want to acknowledge my great appreciation for the work that the Senator and his committee have done on bringing attention to the ongoing challenge that communities that have been hammered, like your community of Lahaina and my State of Vermont, from natural disasters, and I am going to speak in support of the efforts you are making to get supplemental funding for the absolutely essential, flexible funding that goes with the block grant Disaster Relief Fund. Thank you very, very much.

You know, we are all in this together. What Senator SCHATZ said about the formality of a Federal disaster declaration—the formality is it is an acknowledgement that what happened, through no fault of anybody in Hawaii, through no fault of anybody in Vermont, is beyond the capacity of the communities in Vermont and Hawaii—beyond the capacity of Vermont and beyond the capacity of Hawaii—to handle the entire consequence of those events.

What is more important, more essential for the Senate than to acknowledge that all of us as Americans, that there but for the grace of God goes our community when a natural disaster occurs? So we have to respond.

There are two times that there is a response. One is in the immediate trauma of the event. It is all hands on deck. The community does everything it can. And there is one story after another in Lahaina; in Ludlow, VT; in Johnson, VT, of people coming together literally to save fellow citizens and neighbors and oftentimes people they don't even know. And the Federal Government comes in—President Biden was immediately responsive in Vermont, as he was in Lahaina—and our FEMA administration came in and was immediately responsive, and that really helps. It really, really makes a difference.

But do you know what? This is a photograph of the capital of Montpelier right after the flood. It is totally inundated in water. Every business on Main Street was basically destroyed, and the immediate relief efforts were about the water going down, getting the mud out, trying to find some temporary place to live, and see if you can save your business. But on that Main Street in Montpelier, our businesses are coming back, but they are not all back yet.

What I have seen is that the money that comes in right away and the help that comes in right away gives hope to folks. It gives all of the citizens in the State who are sad by what has happened to their neighbors but who, by the grace of God, avoided their own home and their own business from being flooded, it gives them and me hope that those folks are going to get some help from the Federal Government. And they did. Our roads and bridges, we are putting them back together. Some of the water treatment facilities that were destroyed, we are

putting some of those back together. But the reality is, there is a long and lasting trauma and practical challenge of trying to get everybody back on their feet.

I get asked by my colleagues—and I really appreciate their concern—PETER, how is Vermont doing? I don't quite know how to answer that because on one level, Vermont is doing great. We have moved on. That flood in July, we have done the major things that have to be done. The help we got from the Federal Government was really essential in doing that. The good wishes from my colleagues, I am so grateful for.

But the other part of that is when I am asked: How is Vermont doing? The Vermonters, if it was your home, if it was your business, if it was your farm, you are not doing well. You know, it is a lot to try to put that business back together. It is a lot to look at that home and realize you may not be able to get back in.

So let me just give an example. You know, I was in Barre, VT. That is about 5 miles from Montpelier. You are seeing that here. They got flooded, much like Montpelier did. In Montpelier, most of the damage was to businesses; in Barre, most of it was the homes.

FEMA Administrator Criswell joined me and Senator SANDERS and Congresswoman BALINT on the tour of homes. I returned in March, and the folks who came to our meeting and took a tour of Barre with me were a lot of the folks whose homes had been damaged. They are still trying to find out whether they can get bought out. They are still trying to find out whether they can get back in their home.

One couple was at the home when I showed up. They weren't able to get back in. They are living in a mobile home about 50 miles from where their home is. And there is a lot of confusion about what you can do and how you can do it. Those thorny questions about what is available and how are you going to implement what is needed for that home or for that business, those really linger.

At this point, FEMA—I don't want to say they are gone because they have done what their job is. But the pain and recovery, the pain is still very present for those folks: your farm, your business, your home. And the challenges of getting through the bureaucracy are very complicated. That is what I learned with the folks in Barre who basically have a group of volunteers who have managed to stay together to try to address concerns and questions that various members of the community have.

But the thing that is absolutely vital—absolutely vital—is the flexible funding that comes from the Disaster Relief Fund.

You know, no matter how hard and how competent and how professional our FEMA folks are, the reality is they have to move on to the next disaster. That is what is happening in this country.

But the pain in that community is behind, and it is the folks in the community who really have to have the capacity and the tools and the resources to do what only can be done by folks in Barre, in Montpelier, in Johnson, in Ludlow, in Weston. And I am sure that is true in Lahaina. Of course, those are the best people to do the work. They live in that community. The most important thing to them is to restore the vitality of the community that they love.

So the disaster relief funding is the absolutely essential component to allow the full rebuilding and the recovery for the folks who lost their homes, for those farmers whose crops have been wiped out, and for those businesses that are so vital, not just to that individual business owner but to that downtown community that depends on retail downtown so neighbors can come in, shop, see one another, and have a sense of community.

If we are going to have an effective disaster relief program, yes, it starts with the Federal declaration. Our President and previous Presidents, in my experience, have been very responsive to communities that, through no fault of their own, suffered a devastating loss from a weather event or a fire, as was in the case of Lahaina. But what happens after the waters recede, after the FEMA emergency folks are gone? It is the hard work of actually rebuilding that house, repairing that business. That is left in the community, and if they don't have that disaster relief funding and the flexibility that is required to respond to the very particular challenges in that community, then we haven't completed the job. And it creates a sense of frustration and anguish and pain that we can alleviate by having a disaster relief response that starts when the event occurs—that is the disaster declaration—but continues until the job is done.

And that is where the funding for the disaster relief is so absolutely essential for us in order to maintain the commitment that I believe this Senate has to help folks who have been on the receiving end of a catastrophic loss.

I am fully in support of the supplemental appropriations request that the Senator from Hawaii is making because, in my view, he speaks for all of us. In my view, there but for the grace of God goes your community. We in Vermont, just as Senator SCHATZ in Hawaii, have always been there to support the funding for communities around this country that have suffered losses such as what happened in Hawaii and what happened in Vermont. I thank the Senator for organizing this, and I look forward to working with Senator SCHATZ and others in order to make sure we get that disaster relief funding in the supplemental appropriations.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

REMEMBERING SHIREEN ABU AKLEH

Mr. WELCH. Madam President, May 11 will mark the second anniversary of the fatal shooting of a Palestinian American and accomplished Al Jazeera journalist, Shireen Abu Akleh. She was shot in the head while reporting on an Israeli raid in the Jenin refugee camp in the West Bank. At the time of her death, she was wearing a bulletproof vest with "PRESS" written in large letters on the front and on the back.

While there had been some earlier exchanges of gunfire between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian militants, there is no credible evidence that has been produced that the shooter acted in legitimate self-defense. No one in Shireen's immediate vicinity was armed, and no shots were fired from her location. Another journalist near her was also shot, but he survived.

Shortly after Shireen's death, Secretary of State Antony Blinken rightly called for a credible, thorough investigation and that the individuals responsible should be held accountable.

Israeli officials first denied responsibility. But when it became clear where the shots were fired from, they called Shireen's death an unintentional, tragic mistake. The shooter reportedly fired from an armored vehicle that was 190 meters away.

The inescapable conclusion is that she was intentionally targeted. The question is: Why?

My predecessor, Senator Patrick Leahy, asked detailed questions about her case, including why the Leahy law was not applied to stop U.S. assistance to the unit—the particular unit—responsible for Shireen's death. His questions were never answered. Since then, there has been no credible investigation.

I am disappointed that Israeli authorities have failed to fully cooperate with U.S. efforts to determine what happened, and nobody has been held accountable.

Shireen Abu Akleh's case has become one of many unresolved shootings in the West Bank and Gaza. Since the Hamas attack—the terrible attack on October 7—more than 140 journalists have reportedly been killed in Gaza. None of those cases have been investigated, and no one has been held accountable.

We have not and we will not forget Shireen Abu Akleh. She was an American citizen. More importantly, she was an innocent civilian doing her job, which she paid for with her life. She, her family, and her colleagues in the press deserve justice.

On May 3, World Press Freedom Day, Secretary Blinken said:

In their pursuit of truth, journalists often face unprecedented danger worldwide. On World Press Freedom Day, we recognize their bravery, resilience, and vital role in ensuring the free flow of accurate information. Our support for journalists and an independent media is unwavering.

My hope is that Secretary Blinken uses his influence and insists on the

credible, thorough investigation of the killing of Shireen Abu Akleh that he called for 2 years ago and that those responsible be brought to justice.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). The Senator from Oklahoma.

ANTI-SEMITISM

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, October 7, 2023, was almost 5 years to the day after the attack on the Tree of Life synagogue—almost 5 years to the day. Anti-Semitism has been on the rise around the world and unfortunately here in America. We are seeing it on college campuses. We are seeing it in conversations online. It is not new, it is old, but it is on the rise in a way that we have not seen in a long time in the United States.

In 2019, Senator ROSEN and I launched the Senate Bipartisan Task Force for Combatting Anti-Semitism. We started that on the 1-year anniversary of the shooting at the Tree of Life synagogue. Our mission was pretty simple: We wanted to create a task force to be able to collaborate with law enforcement, Federal Agencies, State and local governments, educators, advocates, clergy—any stakeholders who wanted to be able to combat anti-Semitism with education, empowerment, and bringing communities together in conversation.

Our goal was to speak out with one voice about hate, to support legislative efforts to combat anti-Semitism, to promote Holocaust education, and to bring the issue of combatting anti-Semitism to the forefront of our national conversation and, quite frankly, international.

She and I have worked together to be able to contact other nations and their Parliaments on what we have seen as anti-Semitism in other countries, to be able to reach out to Ambassadors, but to also speak out on what we see here in the United States. That has not changed.

The State Department has offered this warning:

History has shown that wherever anti-Semitism has gone unchecked, the persecution of others has been present or not far behind. Defeating anti-Semitism must be a cause of great importance not only for Jews, but for all people who value humanity and justice.

That is our own State Department.

So now what are we going to do about what we are seeing on college campuses? Interestingly enough, people see this as a new thing just in the last 7 months. This has been on the rise on college campuses for quite a while. Many of us have been ringing that bell to say that there is something happening in the national conversation on our college campuses.

So let's find ways to be able to engage on this. Senator ROSEN and I have a piece of legislation that is a compilation of multiple pieces that we have worked on for a very long time to be able to talk about anti-Semitism and to say there are specific ways that our Nation can get involved with this.

I have affirmed President Biden in areas where we agree, and there are some areas that he has brought up in the task force that he has created on the executive level to take on anti-Semitism nationally. Some of those things have been actually executed and carried out, and some of them have not.

So we have continued to be able to nudge in ways that we thought were appropriate to be able to nudge and to be able to poke to say things can be done. It has been leadership at our State Department that has risen up on that, and some, we have been actively involved in trying to be able to get into those positions, to be able to lead.

My friend TIM SCOTT came to the floor to be able to ask for unanimous consent to be able to pass his resolution to condemn anti-Semitism on college campuses. I want to thank my friend TIM SCOTT for his leadership on this issue and what he has also done to be able to raise awareness. But unfortunately his request to be able to pass that resolution was denied.

We should be able to find common ground on issues that condemn hate. His resolution was a simple statement: What are we going to do as a body to be able to condemn hatred in this area? We should not ignore this.

The House of Representatives last week brought up the Anti-Semitism Awareness Act. It was a bipartisan piece of legislation that they passed overwhelmingly in the House of Representatives that they have now sent to this body to be able to take up and to debate and to discuss.

What has been interesting to me is, when they picked up the Anti-Semitism Awareness Act as a nonpartisan piece of legislation, this is a continuance of actually what happened under the Trump administration. President Trump used the same definitions and the same process of putting it in the Department of Education, using what is called the IHRA definition for "anti-Semitism" and the examples attached to it in Executive order 13899.

But what has been fascinating to me is, when the House of Representatives passed it, there was a whole group of folks and some folks from my own party who stepped up and said: No, we can't actually do this, because this would inhibit free speech.

I have smiled at those same folks and said: Did you say that when President Trump was actually using it as an Executive order under his administration? Because now they are talking about making a statutory, long-term change.

The IHRA definition is not new, by the way. The United States has been a party to this definition since the 1990s. The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition—that is IHRA—has been recognized all over the world as a basic definition with examples of what anti-Semitism is.

It is not new to the United States. There are many athletic teams that

have recognized the IHRA definition for their teams in their conversations to be able to recognize what anti-Semitism is. There are 34 States, including my own State of Oklahoma, that have recognized the IHRA definition within our own States to say: This is how we are going to define “anti-Semitism” in our States.

This is a very basic principle. It is difficult to discourage what you cannot even define, and when someone makes just a blanket statement for anti-Semitism, it is helpful to put some definition to what it actually means and what it does not mean. For instance, if someone were to say they disagree with the Netanyahu government, is that anti-Semitic? The IHRA definition would say, clearly, it is not. We can disagree on governmental action. That is a normal part of dialogue.

It also is not something that inhibits free speech. Even hateful speech in the United States—even foolish, even stupid speech—can be said in the United States. It is a protected right to be able to say whatever crazy thing you want to be able to say in the United States, but when it shifts from free speech to inciting violence and threats, that has shifted. That has moved from just speech to now criminal action.

The IHRA definition in what the House of Representatives passed last week in the Antisemitism Awareness Act doesn’t limit speech in any way. In fact, it very specifically states it is not trying to take away any free speech rights of anyone. It specifically notes a protection for the First Amendment rights of Americans to be able to say what they choose to say.

What it does say is, if you are on a college campus and you are choosing to discriminate against Jewish students, that should fall into the same as any other title VI discrimination falls into. It is no different. So if they are doing discrimination on a college campus, you can’t just say: Well, they are discriminating against Jewish students, so that doesn’t fall under title VI.

That clearly does fall under title VI areas and makes what has been implied clear. What has been done by Executive action in the past under the Trump administration makes it clear for every administration. What has been done under the Department of State for three decades in the United States is clear policy not just for the State Department but also for the Department of Education. I think that is a pretty reasonable way to take on this issue and to be able to clarify what anti-Semitism is on a college campus or any campus that is out there.

Some of the responses that I have already mentioned have been fascinating to me on this, things like I have already said: This is going to limit free speech.

No. You still have the right to say something, even to say something dumb. That is still a protected right in the United States.

We can say things that we both disagree with—that is a protected right—

but you can’t move into criminal activity. That is not protected, and a university cannot protect discrimination on their own campus. That would not be allowed.

My favorite thing is that it does not outlaw the Bible. I have had folks who have said: If you put in the IHRA definition, it outlaws the Bible.

I have just smiled and said: That is absolutely ridiculous.

And it is not just me saying this. Christian leaders who I know all over the country say that is just a ridiculous statement.

There is a letter that just came out this week from Pastor John Hagee, who leads what is called CUFI, the national Christians United for Israel, and Ralph Reed, who is the leader of the Faith and Freedom Coalition. They have made this simple statement:

To the Biblically literate, claims that the Antisemitism Awareness Act is anti-Christian are as insulting as they are injurious.

I have made it very clear on this as well when people have asked me about this, to say that somehow the Antisemitism Awareness Act outlaws the Bible or limits speech around the Bible.

There is a statement in the IHRA definition that talks about using symbols and images associated with classic anti-Semitism, and the examples are claims that “Jews killing Jesus are blood libel” to characterize Israel or Israelis. So they take that one statement and pull that out and say: See? You couldn’t use the Bible.

I have laughed, and I have said: Well, I would just say not only have Pastor Hagee and others said this—and other faith leaders around—but let me add a voice to this as well. The Scripture is very clear from John 10 that Jesus laid his life down for others. He had the power to lay it down and the power to be able to take it up. That is Orthodox Christianity. Orthodox Christianity says: My sin is what put Jesus on the cross. That is what Scripture says.

What the IHRA definition says is, if someone is biased to say “I hate all Jews because Jews killed Jesus,” they are saying that that is an anti-Semitic statement to say that. I would also say it is not only inconsistent with the clear teachings of Scripture, but it is inconsistent with the faith practices of individuals.

Not only is the New Testament exceptionally clear about respect for Judaism, but the guy on the cross was Jewish. His mom at the foot of the cross was Jewish. The disciples were all Jewish. The people who wrote the New Testament were Jewish. So to somehow believe that Christianity would discount all Jews is to ignore the basic teachings of the New Testament, besides the basic fact that the Romans put Jesus on the cross.

So somehow to say that this discounts Scripture—that I have heard over and over again on social media over the past week—I think is absurd. No. 1, and as John Hagee and Ralph

Reed have said, it actually is insulting and injurious.

There are folks who have said that there will be an international organization that is now going to police speech in the United States. I would encourage them to please read the legislation, not what is on social media, to be able to understand what this actually does. It does not give authority to an international organization to be able to step into the United States and be able to police speech. It is very clear.

It just says this is what discrimination looks like under title VI, just like we have discrimination laws in other areas wherein the Department of Education could not say: Well, it doesn’t specifically outline religion in this area, and so if there is discrimination against Jewish students, we can look the other way. That would stop under this piece of legislation.

First things first: Let’s actually have real dialogue as a country. Are we as a nation going to look the other way when students are discriminated against on a campus, or are we going to step in and say: “No, we are not going to just look the other way when there is discrimination”? Because, as I go back to the statement from our State Department, history has shown that wherever anti-Semitism has gone unchecked, the persecution of others has been present or not far behind. So let’s speak out and stop it.

For individuals who want to have anti-Semitic beliefs, that is still legal in America to have an anti-Semitic belief. It is still protected as a right. I would say it is hateful, and I would say it is bigoted, but it is still your protected right to be able to have that belief. But, when that speech moves to threats of violence and intimidation, when it moves from a voice to an action, that is criminal activity, and we should treat it as such. We should not let it fester as criminal activity and think it will not spread. It will.

My final statement: For the folks who track through social media, where you see voices of anti-Semitism on social media, why don’t you be bold enough to speak out for the people who are being bullied online and say every person has the right to their faith and to be able to live that faith and have that protected? We as Americans have the right to have any faith of our choosing, to change our faith, or to have no faith at all, and that would be protected. That should not be any less for Jewish students anywhere online or on their own campuses.

So let’s speak out on their behalf. And instead of allowing them to be bullied on their campuses or online, why don’t we speak out for their right to be able to live their faith and practice their faith as every other American? That is what I think we should do on college campuses, and that is a simple way we can honor the dignity of every student.

We are going to disagree. There are people who have strong disagreements

with the war that is happening right now in Israel and in Gaza. So let's talk about it, but let's not discriminate while we do it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

REMEMBERING KURT ENGLEHART

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I am here today to honor the life of Kurt Englehart, my senior adviser, a beloved Nevadan, friend, and family member who touched so many lives.

We lost Kurt very suddenly in April, and his loss is felt deeply by everyone in our office, some of whom are in the Galleries today, in the communities he impacted, and individuals he met throughout the State of Nevada, including—and I so appreciate my colleague Senator ROSEN being here and her staff as well. You could tell how beloved he was by the sheer volume of people who came to his funeral in Reno. Last month, there were Tribal leaders, law enforcement, farmers, ranchers, labor leaders, former coworkers, and Senate staffers, childhood friends and Nevadans from across the State who showed up to pay their respects.

Kurt touched so many lives, and he was able to make even strangers feel as though he was a close friend. Here is a picture of him, a photo of him, right here. There was always a smile on his face.

For the past 8 years, Kurt was an essential part of my team. He liked to call it Team CCM, not only because of his intimate knowledge of every community in northern Nevada, but because he had this contagious warmth that drew everyone in. You couldn't dislike Kurt if you tried. He had this way of attacking life that brought so much positivity and joy to both my campaign and my Senate offices.

I got to personally experience Kurt's zest for life on our many tours around rural Nevada. Every August, I travel through the rural counties in my State, and every August, Kurt was with me. That was when I got to know him the best. On the road, in the middle of the desert, I learned so much about Kurt's passions—about what inspired him to be so active in the community to the things that he enjoyed doing when he wasn't at the office.

One of the favorite things to talk about for Kurt was his deep enthusiasm for video games. Kurt loved his gaming community, and they all loved him. One of his friends who played World of Warcraft with him reminisced about how Kurt, in the game, played a healer, which meant he took care of the other players.

His friend said:

I would later learn that this was how he was in the real world.

And that is exactly true. That is exactly how Kurt was in the real world, always making people feel at ease and extending a helping hand to those who needed it.

In my Senate office, Kurt was a case-work champion, addressing constitu-

ents' needs head on and working closely with Nevadans whose issues required special care and attention. Throughout his time in my office, Kurt worked on 638 cases. He was known by the Nevadans he worked with as a fierce advocate who knew how to get the job done for them.

One casework story Kurt was particularly proud of—and I was as well—happened in 2019. Kurt reached out to a veteran named John, who was considering ending his own life because he couldn't afford his medical bills. John had been kicked off his insurance the day he experienced a massive health issue, leaving him with hundreds of thousands of dollars to pay out-of-pocket. Kurt found out about this when he talked with John. He worked with John's insurance company to make sure that they retroactively paid every penny of John's bill. Kurt actually saved John's life, and he was lucky to have Kurt as an advocate for him.

That is just one example of Kurt's dedication to helping Nevadans in need. Whether he was working with the IRS to get people their tax refunds, advocating for the protection of sacred Tribal monuments, or resolving health benefit issues, Kurt gave each individual case his all. The Nevadans Kurt helped described him as going above and beyond to find solutions.

Kurt made people feel heard, taking on the issues of complete strangers as if they were his own. And after the fact, he followed up with them to make sure they had everything they needed because that is who Kurt was. Public service came so naturally to him. He believed in the power of good government; that our democracy is truly for the people; that our work here in the Senate can change people's lives for the better, even if it is one person at a time.

Kurt's determination to do the most good for the people of Nevada made him a giant all across the State and especially in our rural communities. Everyone from Reno to Elko, to our Tribal communities either knew Kurt personally or they knew of him. He drove from county to county talking with families, businessowners, farmers, ranchers, miners, Tribal leaders, and law enforcement about how our office could work with them and deliver for them. Democrats, Republicans, Independents—it did not matter—they all trusted Kurt to do the right thing by them, and he always did.

Kurt was originally from Ohio, but he advocated for Nevadans so well that he truly became a Nevadan. He was the type of down-to-earth guy who could win over even those who staunchly disagreed with him. He showed up to every meeting fully prepared and well-informed, no matter the topic, and he was ready to have a productive conversation with anyone.

And once Kurt made those connections, he maintained them. He got to know people on a deeper level and kept them in mind for future events he

knew would interest them because he cared.

He was so loved by his colleagues in all of our offices. My staff have described him as someone who "charted his own path" and "always found a way." He was known for being a straight shooter whom everyone could depend upon to tell them exactly what he was thinking, even if it meant—and sometimes it did from Kurt—hearing the hard truth.

When the work got intense—as it often does in Senate offices—Kurt would help his coworkers find the levity, even if he was just as frustrated as everyone else.

If you knew anything about Kurt, you knew he loved his family above all else. His pride and joy was his son Ender. They shared a special bond in so many ways, particularly one, because like his father, Ender is a master video gamer as well as being an outstanding young man.

Kurt cherished his family, and he talked about them endlessly: his mother Luann; his brother Matt; his girlfriend Siya; and Ender's mother Shaila. And he talked about Ender.

I got a chance to know Ender growing from a young boy to a young teen. And I will tell you, Kurt's proudest moments were with his son, always wanting him to have every opportunity to take chances but not to be afraid to lean in and take those risks. The good, the bad, all of the above, his main goal was to ensure that his son Ender had every opportunity in life.

Our office mourns this devastating loss, but we know Kurt will always be with us.

This is actually Kurt on one of our coal trains in Ely, NV. It is one of the many examples of how Kurt spent his time getting around Nevada and talking to everyone who lived there. He lives on in the stories of the countless Nevadans he helped, and he lives on in the actions of those he inspired with his unwavering passion. And he lives on in the hearts of those of us who knew him the best. He will be dearly missed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

REPORT ACT

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, this week, we are taking a big step forward in the fight to end online child exploitation. The bipartisan REPORT Act, which you and I led, has been signed into law, and now law enforcement and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children—or NCMEC, as we call it—will have the resources that they need to better protect vulnerable children and track down these predators and pedophiles. This legislation has been urgently needed. And, Mr. President, I thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Here is a frightening statistic: In America, a child is bought or sold for sexual exploitation once every 2 minutes. In this country, in 2024, a child is

bought or sold for sex once every 2 minutes. This abuse increasingly happens in the virtual space, where predators distribute child sexual abuse material; they recruit minors into sex trafficking rings; and they extort children into sharing explicit images of themselves.

Just last year, NCMEC received 36.2 million reports of online child sexual exploitation, a 23-percent increase over 2021.

NCMEC, whose CyberTipline serves as our country's centralized reporting system for online child abuse, does incredible work to track down these crimes and report them to law enforcement. But, tragically, so many more acts of online sexual abuse against children are going unreported.

Although criminal law requires electronic service providers to report any child sex abuse material on their sites, online platforms—including Big Tech sites, such as Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram—have no obligation to report content involving the sex trafficking or grooming of children or enticement crimes.

Most online platforms choose not to report this abhorrent material to law enforcement. And even when they do report the content, electronic service providers often omit necessary information to identify victims and track down their abusers.

We have also heard from victims, their families, and law enforcement about the need to modernize laws around reporting online sexual abuse. For example, children and their parents risk legal liability for transferring evidence of online sexual abuse that they have experienced when submitting reports to the NCMEC CyberTipline.

The REPORT Act addresses these issues and more to ensure that they are defending children against some of the most heinous crimes imaginable. Now, electronic service providers will be legally required to report child trafficking and enticement.

To ensure compliance with the law, the REPORT Act raises the fine for first violations from \$150,000 up to as much as \$850,000, and subsequent violations, that fee is raised from \$300,000 up to \$1 million.

At the same time, the legislation enables victims to report evidence of online exploitation to the authorities and allows for the secure cloud storage and safe transfer of reports from NCMEC to law enforcement.

It also increases the retention period for CyberTipline reports from 90 days to 1 full year; meaning, law enforcement will have more time to track down and prosecute these criminals.

All together, these measures will do so much to protect the most vulnerable among us from online exploitation and help to put an end to this horrific abuse.

PROTESTS

Mr. President, across the country, we are witnessing one of the worst waves of anti-Semitism that we have ever

seen in our Nation's history. I appreciate that my colleague from Oklahoma spoke previously to this.

One of the things that we have learned is a little bit about the leading perpetrators of these protests that are taking place. What we have found is that far-left activists, including college students at some of the most prestigious universities, are involved in these activities.

We have all seen the pro-Hamas demonstrators who are harassing and intimidating Jewish students. They are blocking them from attending class or even from accessing public spaces. They are doing this with these protests and with these illegal encampments.

Here are some examples of what we have had reported to us and what we have seen from individuals who are walking through these encampments with their cell phones. At Columbia University, activists chanted: "We are Hamas" and "Long live Hamas." At George Washington University, one pro-Hamas demonstrator walked around campus with a sign calling for a "Final Solution" against the Jewish people.

We have seen activists hand out fliers calling for "Death to America" and "Death to Israeli real estate." And at schools like Princeton, students have waved the flag of terror groups, including the flag of Hezbollah.

One thing should be obvious, the anti-Israel protests on campuses across this country are hotbeds for terrorist sympathizers and for anti-Jewish hatred. Never did I think I would see this in the United States of America.

In fact, some of these college groups who are out protesting, including at Columbia, have allegedly held events with the terrorist organization Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. These demonstrations have absolutely no place in America, and Tennesseans are telling me these demonstrations have no place in our great State of Tennessee.

But instead of cracking down on these activists and the students who are out there peddling anti-Semitism and are glorifying terrorism, many schools are beginning to bow to their demands. I find this abhorrent and disgusting.

In negotiations with pro-Hamas demonstrators, Northwestern University agreed to offer coveted faculty positions to Palestinian academics and set aside full-ride scholarships for Palestinian students.

To appease its pro-Hamas students, Brown University, last week, agreed to hold a vote on divesting from Israel.

After negotiating with pro-Hamas activists for weeks, Columbia University has canceled its commencement ceremony.

We can only bring an end to this disturbing illegal behavior when there are actual consequences.

College students who promote terrorism on behalf of Hamas should be added to the TSA No Fly List, and we

should deport foreign students on visas who support Hamas—a U.S.-designated terror organization. And universities that allow anti-Semitism on their campuses should be defunded. The Stop Anti-Semitism on College Campuses Act, which I introduced alongside Senator TIM SCOTT, would ensure that happens.

Instead of standing up for Jewish students, President Biden has drawn, unfortunately, a moral equivalence between pro-Hamas activists and pro-Israel Americans. When asked about the anti-Semitic demonstrations last month, the President said he "condemn[s] those who don't understand what is going on with the Palestinians."

At the same time, the President has focused on pushing billions in new illegal student loan forgiveness—forgiveness that could very well benefit the students who are out leading these demonstrations. So that is why I have joined my Senate Republican colleagues in introducing the No Bailouts for Campus Criminals Act, which would make any person who is convicted of a State or Federal offense in connection with a campus protest ineligible for any Federal student loan forgiveness.

The President is also reportedly looking to welcome Gazans to America as refugees. According to a recent poll, 71 percent of Gazans said they supported Hamas's horrific October 7 attack on Israeli civilians. Seventy-one percent of Gazans said they supported Hamas's horrific attack on October 7. More than 300 individuals on the Terror Watchlist have entered our country under President Biden, but, for some reason, this administration thinks that they can vet Gazans, who elected Hamas as their government, who support the terrorist attack. They think they can properly vet them and bring them into this country? Have they not asked Egypt, Jordan, other countries in the region why they will not take these Palestinian refugees? I think it would be instructive.

Our country cannot afford more failed leadership and not knowing who is coming into this country who may wish us harm. We would like to see the President rescind this and review his priorities and make it his priority to protect the American people.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant 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.

MORNING BUSINESS

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATIONS

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act