

help clean energy compete on equal footing with fossil fuels and result in lower energy costs and increased reliability.

Nearly 2 years ago, Congressional Democrats, led by the Democrats in the Senate, made history by passing the Inflation Reduction Act, the largest downpayment for clean energy production the United States has ever seen. Our bill, which I was proud to lead in the Senate, provided hundreds of billions to boost U.S. production in solar and wind and other forms of clean energy, and it is hugely successful. All the programs are being oversubscribed. Many more people are in line—companies, et cetera—to build solar and wind production and other forms of clean energy.

But it was only half the battle. It matters little if we build lots of solar panels and windmills if we don't have a way of transmitting all that clean energy to communities that need it most. And, frankly, transmission was tied in knots.

What good is it having a lot of wind offshore or solar energy throughout our more sunny areas if you can't get that energy to the people who need it and want it, to the people whose costs it will lower?

And so it was really important to me that we do something about transmission. Unfortunately, we were not able to get that done when we tried to do it here in the Senate. Our Republican colleagues were not amenable. So we had to find another way. According to one study, without more transmissions, the United States could squander up to half the climate benefits of the IRA—what a colossal tragedy.

We all see what global warming is doing. You look at the weather reports every day. All of these tornadoes and everything else, where the heck are they coming from if the weather is not changing?

So that is why Senate Democrats tried to include transmission reforms in the IRA. And after that, when that didn't work—the Parliamentarian knocked them out—we tried to work them with Republicans, but they blocked our efforts.

So I had to find another way, and I was very eager and almost desperate to find another way because we so needed to bring this clean energy to people's homes and reduce their costs. So, last summer, I wrote a letter to FERC to help provide a remedy, because I knew that FERC could strengthen the rules—and they did. They could strengthen rules so we could more quickly build transmission lines and ensure clean energy could compete with fossil fuels on an even footing.

I spent months working with my team and with one expert after another to quietly but forcefully fine-tune what FERC needed and change our letter on how the Agency could make the most of this opportunity.

Well, hallelujah, this is a major change that people are not paying at-

tention to, but it will have dramatic effect. FERC's rule contained almost all of my requests.

The result of yesterday's announcement: more clean energy going to people who need it, lower costs, increased reliability. We are unlocking the clean energy revolution along the way.

So let me say this—this was a major announcement—yesterday's announcement from FERC was a turning point in the effort to transition the United States to a clean energy economy. I am very pleased with FERC. I salute their leadership for doing what they did, and I thank my staff, who worked so long and hard to make this happen.

It is great news for the environment, great news for the electricity consumer, great news for America and our globe.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now on the border, it has been 97 days since Donald Trump and MAGA Republicans blocked the strongest, most comprehensive border security bill America has seen in a generation, and they still have zero plan to actually fix the problem.

President Biden, meanwhile, is taking action to secure our border. Last week, the President began announcing a series of administrative actions to go after bad actors in Central America and to use whatever powers he can from the executive branch.

Here in the Senate, we have not walked away from the table. We know we need to fix the border. The American people demand we fix the border, and we call on our Republican colleagues, once and for all, to join us in taking real, bipartisan action.

Democrats agree that the status quo on the border cannot continue. We want to pass border security in Congress by working in a bipartisan way, and so, 3 months ago, we brought to the floor a comprehensive border security bill, months in the making—a bill that didn't just talk the talk about border security but walked the walk. It updated asylum, had more money for border agents and judges, and was supported by conservatives like the Wall Street Journal editorial board.

Our border bill was not a messaging bill. It was the result of bipartisan negotiation—Senators MURPHY and SINEMA and LANKFORD, with input from a wide range of stakeholders from both sides. If both Chambers would have had a chance to vote on our border security bill, it would have passed and become law.

Well, 3 months later, we are not walking away from trying to resolve the problems at the border. We hope Republicans will change course and join us. Instead of just making a lot of speeches, pointing a lot of fingers—blame, blame, blame—let's get something done. It is right within our grasp—a bipartisan bill that, when it was shown to many Republicans, they

said, "Wow." It wasn't until Donald Trump said, "I want the border to remain in chaos so I can win election," that Republicans backed off. What shame—that is not what the American people want, and we are going to make sure they know it.

BUFFALO, NEW YORK, SHOOTING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, 2 years ago today, barbarity descended upon the "City of Good Neighbors." My heart, my soul, and my spirit are with the people of Buffalo, NY, today, as they observe the second tragic anniversary of the shooting at the Tops supermarket. In the span of just a few minutes, 10 precious lives were extinguished in a senseless act of hatred from a White supremacist.

Racism is America's original sin. Our work will never be done until we do everything to rid our society of this vicious evil.

May God watch over the souls of those who died 2 years ago today. May those of us who remember them find strength and courage and the will to prevent tragedies like this in the future.

America has tragically endured many more senseless shootings since the massacre in Buffalo. Gun violence is one of America's gravest societal ills, and it seems to be increasing.

But 2 years ago, we also learned that the situation is not entirely hopeless, because after the advent of what happened in Buffalo, in Uvalde, and in some other places, Democrats and Republicans actually joined together to pass the first gun safety bill in 30 years—the first since the Brady bill, which I offered way back, a long time ago, when I was in the House. This is the first one since then.

Later this month, the administration will bring into effect one of the key elements of our bill by expanding background checks and closing loopholes for online sales and gun shows. Our rule expanding background checks shows change is possible when both sides work together, even if progress is hard and halting. A few years ago, the announcement would have been unimaginable.

We are never going to be able to fully heal the harms unleashed by gun violence, but we can honor those we lost by continuing the work to make mass shootings a thing of the past. We have a long way to go, but, today, as we remember those who tragically died in Buffalo, let us recommit to keep going, no matter what it takes.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 7109

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 7109) to require a citizenship question on the decennial census, to require reporting on certain census statistics, and to modify apportionment of Representatives to be based on United States citizens instead of all individuals.

Mr. SCHUMER. In order to place the bill on the Calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I would object to further proceeding.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the Calendar.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader.

ISRAEL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I would like to begin my remarks today with a quote: The idea that we would cut off military aid to an ally—our only true, true ally in the entire region—is absolutely preposterous. It's just beyond my comprehension why anyone would do that.

Five years ago, then-Candidate Biden was saying the right thing about America's commitment to the Jewish State of Israel. Unfortunately, today he is doing the complete opposite. The President and his administration are withholding critical military assistance from Israel as it fights to restore its security against savage terrorists, and they are refusing to answer basic questions about it.

Last week, the Speaker of the House and I sent a letter to the Biden administration, pressing for specific details on which weapons were being withheld and why they were being withheld. And while we waited for an answer, the Secretary of State spent the weekend dodging requests for any serious rationale driving the President's decision.

Now, it is no secret that the administration is under immense pressure from the anti-Israel left. It is evident in the words of some of our own colleagues. Members of this body have urged the President to "be more aggressive with the Israelis." They have demanded that "not one penny go to support America's ally unless Israel yields to their view of what's acceptable in self-defense." And, of course, they have even engaged in grotesque political interference, calling for regime change in a sovereign democracy.

The Intelligence Committee is holding a hearing tomorrow about foreign interference in our politics and elections, and yet too many of our Democratic colleagues can't seem to resist the temptation to put their fingers on the electoral scales of other democracies.

Far too many Washington Democrats have indulged in what I call the "Bibi derangement syndrome," an absurd trope that is setting a dangerous precedent.

Some of our colleagues talk about an Israeli Government dominated by shadowy, far-right forces. That government

literally does not exist. Israel is led by a coalition, a national unity government. And its war cabinet, which includes members of multiple political parties, is distinguished by the absence—the absence—of the most conservative members of the coalition.

By all accounts, support for military operations in Gaza and against Hezbollah in Lebanon transcends Israeli politics. But here in Washington, Democrats want to pretend that what they are objecting to is merely the will of a Prime Minister they don't like.

Some of our most senior Senate colleagues, including the chairman of the State Foreign Operations Subcommittee, just this weekend have even demonstrated an eagerness to assign political blame within Israel for the failure to prevent the October 7 attacks. Well, that will be the job of the people of Israel, and it will come after they finish restoring their security against the terrorists wearing Israeli and American blood.

But let's make one thing absolutely clear: If the Biden administration continues to hector and impede our ally's progress toward this goal, a share of the blame for Hamas's success may well come to rest right here in Washington. Of course, there is already plenty of blame to go around among the Western institutions that have fallen into predictable patterns of dangerous, anti-Israel bias in the months after October 7, from the media that rushed to fit the deadliest attack on Jews since the Holocaust into tidy, artificial narratives of moral equivalence and "cycles of violence" to the prominent international organizations that continue to elevate and legitimize outright terror propaganda.

Just a few days ago, the United Nations finally admitted that the figures on Palestinian casualties it had held up for months as objective truth had been grossly overstated. As a spokesman put it, "In the fog of war, it's difficult to come up with numbers." No kidding. It is especially difficult to get accurate data when you rely exclusively on the word of Hamas.

Unsurprisingly, just days after announcing its revised numbers, the U.N. backtracked yesterday and resumed taking the Hamas-run Ministry of Health in Gaza at its word. But remember, the U.N.'s affiliation to terrorists isn't limited to data gathering, is it? Employees of the U.N.'s relief and work agency, UNRWA, quite literally participated in the October 7 attack.

So why don't we talk about the facts. In the last 9 days, the terrorists controlling southern Gaza have attacked a major entry port for humanitarian aid from Israel six times—six times. This is not an accident. And if terrorists strike the absurdly inefficient and costly floating pier, that won't be an accident either.

The true obstacle to peace and stability for the people of Gaza is loudly identifying itself. Hamas is showing us

precisely why it can play no part in the future of Israelis or Palestinians, and a true ally would give Israel the time, space, and support it needs to eliminate the terrorist threat.

But that is not what we have seen from the Commander in Chief. By limiting Israel's options, the President is giving the terrorists a lifeline. Does the Biden administration really expect Hamas to capitulate at a negotiating table when our conditions on Israel help terrorists survive on the battleground? And does the President think exhausting an arsenal of expensive, low-inventory interceptors is changing Iran's broader calculus?

The lesson from repelling Iran's direct drone and missile attacks on Israel or commercial shipping vessels isn't that we can't intercept them; the lesson is that we still haven't managed to compel Iran to stop doing it and that we ought to be doing much more to rebuild our stocks and capacity to produce air and missile defenses as well as the long-range weapons that can credibly threaten what Iran and other adversaries hold dear.

This isn't new criticism, and it isn't a new problem. An emboldened Iran, an unchecked network of proxies, and brazen violence against Israel, America, and the global economy—the President's choices have magnified these threats. He has invited them with retreat, with hesitation, and with appeasement.

Today, the United States has effectively allowed itself to be deterred by a second-rate terrorist power, and the world is taking note. Our credibility is not divisible. Our failure to meet one challenge compounds the others we face.

But the path forward is not a mystery. As I have said repeatedly: rebuild our military power, stand with our allies, deter our adversaries, and do it today.

ANTI-SEMITISM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, now on another matter, last month, I suggested the administrators at schools like Columbia—where nests of anti-Semitism were festering and growing—ought to follow the lead of Princeton, where trespassers were quickly arrested and removed by law enforcement. Unfortunately, Princeton may not be setting such a shining example after all. The school has apparently decided that perpetrators on campus shouldn't bear actual consequences.

Yesterday, at the urging of "several" academic and department chairs, Princeton announced they would forgo traditional discipline and instead let the student radicals who tried to occupy campus buildings participate in a "restorative justice process."

You might be forgiven for having absolutely no idea what that means—none. But the bottom line is, these students will be allowed to graduate in the coming weeks. After all, what is a little call for intifada between friends?