

helping save the lives of children and protecting the health of people in low-income countries with vaccines and immunization through Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance ("Gavi").

S. RES. 740

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 740, a resolution acknowledging and apologizing for the mistreatment of, and discrimination against, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals who served the United States in the uniformed services, the Foreign Services, and the Federal civil service.

S. RES. 802

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN), the Senator from Alabama (Mrs. BRITT), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 802, a resolution designating August 2024 as "National Catfish Month".

AMENDMENT NO. 2903

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2903 intended to be proposed to S. 4638, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 4993. A bill to immediately halt investment by United States persons in the energy sector of Venezuela until the legitimate results of the July 28, 2024, election are respected; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

Their being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 4993

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Halt All United States Investments in Venezuela's Energy Sector Act of 2024".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) On July 28, 2024, more than 10,000,000 citizens of Venezuela voted in a presidential election in which meticulously documented and publicized data from credible election monitors clearly and convincingly showed that opposition candidate Edmundo Gonzalez received more than two-thirds of the votes against the regime of Nicolas Maduro.

(2) The Maduro regime has refused to respect the overwhelming choice of the people of Venezuela and subsequently arrested and abused thousands of innocent citizens of Venezuela, including children, for peaceful political participation.

SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON INVESTMENT BY UNITED STATES PERSONS IN ENERGY SECTOR OF VENEZUELA UNTIL THE LEGITIMATE RESULTS OF THE JULY 28, 2024, ELECTION ARE RESPECTED.

(a) PROHIBITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the following transactions are prohibited:

(A) Any transaction by a United States person, or an entity owned or controlled by a United States person, to invest, trade, or operate within the energy sector of Venezuela, including the provision of goods, services, or finance to—

(i) Petroleos de Venezuela, S.A., or subsidiaries, representatives, or related companies of Petroleos de Venezuela, S.A.; or

(ii) the regime of Nicolas Maduro or any nondemocratic successor government in Venezuela.

(B) Any transaction that evades or avoids, has the purpose of evading or avoiding, causes a violation of, or attempts to violate the prohibition under subparagraph (A).

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The prohibitions under paragraph (1) shall apply—

(A) to the extent provided by law and regulations, orders, directives, or licenses that may be issued pursuant to this section; and

(B) notwithstanding any contract entered into or any license or permit granted before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION; PENALTIES.—

(1) IMPLEMENTATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, may take such actions, including prescribing regulations, as are necessary to implement this section.

(B) IEEPA AUTHORITIES.—The Secretary of the Treasury may exercise the authorities provided to the President under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) to the extent necessary to carry out this section.

(2) PENALTIES.—A person that violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of subsection (a) or any regulation, license, directive, or order issued to carry out that subsection shall be subject to the penalties set forth in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) to the same extent as a person that commits an unlawful act described in subsection (a) of that section.

(c) RESPONSIBILITY OF OTHER AGENCIES.—All agencies of the United States Government shall take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of this section.

(d) TERMINATION OF PROHIBITION.—The prohibitions under subsection (a) shall terminate on the date on which the President submits to Congress a determination that the regime of Nicolas Maduro has recognized the July 28, 2024, electoral victory of Edmundo Gonzalez and relinquished power to the legitimately democratically elected government in Venezuela.

(e) UNITED STATES PERSON DEFINED.—In this section, the term "United States person" means—

(1) a United States citizen or alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States;

(2) any entity organized under the laws of the United States or any jurisdiction within the United States (including a foreign branch of any such entity); and

(3) any person physically located in the United States.

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE ROTUNDA

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H. Con. Res. 126, which was received from the House and is at the desk.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 126) authorizing the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for a ceremony to award posthumously a Congressional Gold Medal in commemoration to the servicemembers who perished in Afghanistan on August 26, 2021, during the evacuation of citizens of the United States and Afghan allies at Hamid Karzai International Airport.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 126) was agreed to.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 4973

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 4973) to reassert the constitutional authority of Congress to determine the general applicability of the criminal laws of the United States, and for other purposes.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it

stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, September 10; that following the prayer and the pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that following the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Abelson nomination postcloture; further, that all time be considered expired at 11:30 a.m. and that following the cloture vote on the Vargas nomination, the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings; that if cloture has been invoked on the Vargas nomination, all time be considered expired at 2:15 p.m.; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Tuesday's session, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order following the remarks of Senator WARNOCK.

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

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

APALACHEE SCHOOL SHOOTING

Mr. WARNOCK. Mr. President, I rise today carrying the grief of all Georgians after a school shooting in the small town of Winder, GA, claimed the lives of two children and two educators just 5 days ago.

I have been in the U.S. Senate a little over 3 years, and I have stood here three times to lament yet another tragic mass shooting in my State alone that has taken innocent lives. That is as unsurprising as it is tragic since we endure, in this country, about two mass shootings a day.

So here we are again. I stand here not just as a Senator but as a father of two young children. I can tell you that as a dad, that time in the morning when you get your kids ready for school and you put them in the car and you drive them to school—that is precious time. All of us parents, when we drop our kids off—we drive them to school or walk them to school or walk them to the schoolbus—we want to know that we are going to pick them up just a few hours later. It is a ritual played out in small towns and big cities all across America, and it is something we take for granted. But increasingly in the United States of America, we cannot take for granted that when we drop our kids off in the morning, we

will pick them up at 3 o'clock. That is every parents' nightmare regardless of your politics.

Only weeks into the new school year, this nightmare again became a reality in Georgia. With four dead, others injured, and an entire community traumatized, Apalachee High School joins a grim and growing procession of schools where our children are dying from gun violence.

We cannot easily pass this over. We must never forget their names: two dedicated educators, Cristina Irimie and Richard—or Coach Ricky, as he was called—Aspinwall, and then two young students, Mason Schermerhorn and Christian Angulo.

On Friday night, this past Friday night, I went to Winder to join Apalachee students, families, and community members as they came together to mourn these precious souls. It was a Friday night in smalltown Georgia. The truth is, we should have been there for a football game—how I remember those nights as a high school student—but instead of cheering on their classmates, they were mourning their classmates.

One student came up to me with pain in her eyes, and she said, "I don't want to go back to school." Then there were these girls, these 15-year-old girls, who surrounded me, because I spent some time there, and they began to talk to me. One of them talked about hearing the noise of someone banging on the door, of huddling and wondering what would come next.

Coach Ricky, who was beloved, was also a math teacher, and one of the girls said: This was my math teacher. Imagine that. You go to school one day, and the biggest thing you are concerned about is understanding the math problem, and you come to school the next day, the next week, and your math teacher is dead—another victim of a mass shooting in your school.

I remember talking also to the family of Christian, and the father shared with me that they had moved from California to a small town in Georgia looking for a quiet and peaceful life. Sad irony. Tragic irony.

One of my colleagues suggested over the weekend—one of my Senate colleagues—that this kind of violence is a fact of life. That is what he said. He said it is a fact of life.

No. This is a fact of life in America. In no other country that is not at war is this kind of random violence routine. This is a tragic form of American exceptionalism.

As we wrestle with this trauma, I think we are all called as a country to ask ourselves, what trauma do we visit upon our children if we say that the only thing we can do for you in the midst of all of this is to teach you how to hide?

That same colleague, by the way, suggested that what we ought to do is harden the schools because these are soft targets. Well, apply that logic. So are we going to harden every school in

America, harden every grocery store in America? What about shopping malls? What about spas? What about the medical clinics? What about the houses of worship? Is that the answer? Are we going to turn the whole country into a fort just so 14-year-olds can have AR-15s? So I know that we may not all agree on what to do, but surely we can do better than that. We don't have to live this way. We don't have to accept this as a fact of life.

So in the midst of all of this, we hear often the words, you know, "We are sending our thoughts and our prayers." Let me say as a man of faith that to say that you are praying while refusing to act is to make a mockery of faith. We must pray with our lips, and we must pray by taking action.

I do not believe that mass shootings as routine are the cost of freedom; I believe that they are the cost of blind obstinance. They are the cost of greed.

So we must start and see through a serious, bipartisan conversation right here in Washington and in State capitals all over this country about how to better protect our children and communities across the country from the scourge of gun violence.

I was proud that a few years ago, just a couple years ago, we did make progress right here in this Chamber, and we passed commonsense gun safety reforms in the wake of yet another tragic school shooting. While that bill was modest, it was meaningful. We made progress. Right now, that law is saving lives but, as we were reminded just a few days ago, not enough. So there is still work for us to do.

For me, this is not a political issue; it is a moral issue. The glimmer of hope is that most American families feel the same way. According to a FOX News poll, about 87 percent of Americans believe that Congress ought to pass universal background checks. That is Democrats and Republicans—87 percent agreement. Still we can't have a serious conversation about that here in this Chamber. Why? Because politicians have put their own political ambitions—their own fears in some cases—ahead of the people we were sent here to represent. It is just another sign of the growing chasm between what the people want and what they can get out of their government. In that sense, it is a democracy problem.

So we have to save the American people from this carnage, and we have to redeem the democracy. We must do more, and I believe in our ability to do more because I believe in the American people. The American people are calling for change—Democrats and Republicans, folks in rural spaces and in urban spaces. It is the gun lobby that wants to turn this into a culture war because they know that is in their best interest.

This is a public safety issue, and the American people are calling out for action, they are calling for sanity, and I believe it is high time that we do that work.