

[Rollcall Vote No. 42 Leg.]

YEAS—64

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Rounds
Bennet	Hirono	Schatz
Blumenthal	Kaine	Schumer
Booker	Kelly	Shaheen
Brown	King	Sinema
Butler	Klobuchar	Smith
Cantwell	Lujan	Stabenow
Capito	Manchin	Sullivan
Cardin	Markey	Tester
Carper	McConnell	Thune
Casey	Menendez	Tillis
Cassidy	Merkley	Van Hollen
Collins	Mullin	Warner
Coons	Murkowski	Warnock
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Warren
Duckworth	Murray	Welch
Durbin	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Fetterman	Padilla	Wicker
Gillibrand	Peters	Wyden
Grassley	Reed	Young
Hassan	Romney	
Heinrich	Rosen	

NAYS—19

Blackburn	Graham	Sanders
Boozman	Hawley	Schmitt
Britt	Hoeven	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lee	Tuberville
Cramer	Paul	Vance
Crapo	Ricketts	
Fischer	Rubio	

NOT VOTING—17

Barrasso	Ernst	Lummis
Braun	Hagerty	Marshall
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Moran
Cornyn	Johnson	Risch
Cruz	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Daines	Lankford	

The motion was agreed to.

REMOVING EXTRANEANOUS LOOP-HOLES INSURING EVERY VETERAN EMERGENCY ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 815) to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements relating to the eligibility of veterans to receive reimbursement for emergency treatment furnished through the Veterans Community Care program, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

AMENDMENT NO. 1388

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I call up substitute amendment No. 1388. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. SCHUMER], for Mrs. MURRAY, proposes an amendment numbered 1388.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent to dispense with further reading of the amendment.

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

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of February 7, 2024, under "Text of Amendments.")

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays are ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. I have a cloture motion for the substitute amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Murray substitute amendment No. 1388 to Calendar No. 30, H.R. 815, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements relating to the eligibility of veterans to receive reimbursement for emergency treatment furnished through the Veterans Community Care program, and for other purposes.

Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Brian Schatz, Margaret Wood Hassan, Angus S. King, Jr., Sherrod Brown, Mark R. Warner, Jack Reed, Richard J. Durbin, Alex Padilla, Catherine Cortez Masto, Christopher A. Coons, Michael F. Bennet, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mark Kelly, Martin Heinrich, Richard Blumenthal, Benjamin L. Cardin.

AMENDMENT NO. 1577

Mr. SCHUMER. I have an amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. SCHUMER] proposes an amendment numbered 1577 to amendment No. 1388.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask to dispense with further reading of the amendment.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To add an effective date)

At the appropriate place add the following: **SEC. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

This Act shall take effect on the date that is 1 day after the date of enactment of this Act.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays are ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1578 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1577

Mr. SCHUMER. I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. SCHUMER] proposes an amendment numbered 1578 to amendment No. 1577.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask to dispense with further reading of the amendment.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To add an effective date)

On page 1, line 3, strike "1 day" and insert "2 days".

AMENDMENT NO. 1579

Mr. SCHUMER. I have an amendment to the text proposed to be stricken at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows: The Senator from New York [Mr. SCHUMER] proposes an amendment numbered 1579 to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 1388.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask to dispense with further reading of the amendment.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To add an effective date)

At the appropriate place add the following: **SEC. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

This Act shall take effect on the date that is 3 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays are ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1580 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1579

Mr. SCHUMER. I have a second-degree amendment to the text proposed to be stricken at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. SCHUMER] proposes an amendment numbered 1580 to amendment No. 1579.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask to dispense with further reading of the amendment.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To add an effective date)

On page 1, line 3, strike "3 days" and insert "4 days".

MOTION TO COMMIT WITH AMENDMENT NO. 1581

Mr. SCHUMER. I move to commit H.R. 815 to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs with instructions to report back forthwith with an amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. SCHUMER] moves to commit the bill to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs with instructions to report back forthwith with an amendment numbered 1581.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask to dispense with further reading of the amendment.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To add an effective date)

At the appropriate place add the following: **SEC. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

This Act shall take effect on the date that is 5 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays are ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1582

Mr. SCHUMER. I have an amendment to the instructions at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. SCHUMER] proposes an amendment numbered 1582 to the instructions to the motion to commit H.R. 815.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask to dispense with further reading of the amendment.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To add an effective date.)

On page 1, line 3, strike "5 days" and insert "6 days".

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays are ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1583 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1582

Mr. SCHUMER. I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. SCHUMER] proposes an amendment numbered 1583 to amendment No. 1582.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask to dispense with further reading of the amendment.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To add an effective date)

On page 1, line 1, strike "6 days" and insert "7 days".

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. I have a cloture motion for the underlying bill at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Calendar No. 30, H.R. 815, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements relating to the eligibility of veterans to receive reimbursement for emergency treatment furnished through the Veterans Community Care program, and for other purposes.

Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Brian Schatz, Margaret Wood Hassan, Angus S. King, Jr., Sherrod Brown, Mark R. Warner, Jack Reed, Richard J. Durbin, Catherine Cortez Masto, Christopher A. Coons, Michael F. Bennet, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mark Kelly, Martin Heinrich, Richard Blumenthal, Benjamin L. Cardin.

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The 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 (Mr. PADILLA). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I am glad the Senate took the next step tonight toward passing the supplemental.

The Senate will convene tomorrow at noon.

As I said, I hope our Republican colleagues can work with us to reach an agreement on amendments so that we can move this bill more quickly.

If no agreement is reached, under the rule, the next vote will be approximately 1 p.m. on Sunday.

MORNING BUSINESS

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

VERMONT STATE OF THE UNION
ESSAY WINNERS

• Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, since 2010, I have sponsored a State of the Union essay contest for Vermont high school students. This contest gives students in my State the opportunity to articulate what issues they would prioritize if they were President of the United States.

This is the contest's 14th year, and I would like to congratulate the 454 students who participated. It is truly heartening to see so many young people engaged in finding solutions for the problems that face our country. To my mind, this is what democracy is all about.

A volunteer panel of Vermont educators reviewed the essays and chose Leah Frisbie as this year's winner. Leah, a junior at Essex High School, wrote about the impact that banning books has on our society. Abigail Curry, a junior at Mount Mansfield Union High School, was the second place winner. Abigail wrote about Native American access to clean water. Leah Fitzgerald, a senior at Bellows Free Academy Saint Albans, was the third place winner, with an essay on addressing homelessness.

I am very proud to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the essays submitted by Leah, Abigail, and Leah.

The material follows:

WINNER, LEAH FRISBIE, ESSEX HIGH SCHOOL,
JUNIOR

Books are foundational to our society, as self-discovery is enhanced through reading about different characters, cultures, and perspectives and finding similarities within it all. Books have the power to transform lives, tell important stories, and spread information. As each year more and more books are pulled from library shelves, the opportunities provided are reduced. The banning of books in the United States is a pressing problem that deprives people across the country from perspectives, information, and freedom.

In recent years, the removal of books from school libraries has exponentially increased

in the United States. According to The New York Times, "The PEN report, which counted book removals in school and classroom libraries during the 2022-2023 school year, found 3,362 cases of books being removed, a 33 percent increase over the previous school year." The majority of banned books target topics relating to gender identity, racial justice, and sexuality. Through attempts to ban books, marginalized groups' stories and perspectives are silenced. The act of banning books diminishes the quality and purpose of education. With the absence of diverse stories shared, the population becomes less educated, and marginalized groups will continue to be underrepresented. When students aren't exposed to diverse stories, ignorance, hate, and fear rise.

The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas is a book that tells the true story of a young girl facing racism and its correlation to police brutality in the US. Although it is a heavy topic, it accurately addresses the reality and problems of our society. It communicates someone's life experiences, yet is widely banned in school libraries due to its portrayal of racism and anti-police views. The Hate U Give is a single example out of thousands of books, where underrepresented groups' stories, history, and truth is restricted from the public.

In order to stop the escalation of banned books, Congress must pass the Fight Banned Books Act that was introduced in December of 2023. The act provides funding to school districts to fight against the banned book crisis. Currently, many schools do not have the budget to defend banned books, resulting in a surge of books being pulled from shelves. With the act, The Department of Education would dedicate \$15 million over five years to school districts to help assist in the costs, including retaining legal representation, travel to hearings on bans, and maintaining expert research. By passing the Fight Banned Books Act, school districts across the nation would play a fundamental role in decreasing banned books and spreading awareness.

Congress must pass the Fight Banned Books Act in order to protect the nation from the needless deprivation of information. The issues occurring in society, such as gender and race inequalities, deserve to be shared in libraries. While the intention of removing books from shelves is to protect students, it is doing the complete opposite: Students' education, freedom, and exposure to different perspectives is deprived.

SECOND PLACE, ABIGAIL CURRY, MOUNT
MANSFIELD UNION HIGH SCHOOL, JUNIOR

In the Mojave desert, along the Colorado River, there lives a tribe of indigenous Americans who call themselves the Aha Makav. Translated as best as possible into English, this name means "The river runs through the middle of my body." The Aha Makav are one of 30 tribes living in the Colorado River Basin, where the river has all but dried up and the water crisis has reached catastrophic levels. But they're not the only ones struggling to find water. Research by the House Committee on Natural Resources showed that 48% of Native Americans living on reservations in the U.S. don't have a reliable source of clean, drinkable water—a proportion 80x higher than the 0.6% of all Americans who don't have access to drinking water.

Part of the issue's cause is that when Native Americans were assigned reservation land, much of what they received was dry, barren land in the West that were predisposed to drought. They have also been repeatedly left out of infrastructure and utility development projects that would have brought them running water, leaving hundreds of thousands to haul water by the bucket.