

States. Yet they are willing to allow President Xi's diplomats to get placed in countries all around the world, and they are not willing to let our own diplomats get placed.

So I hope they will reconsider because what they are doing at its core is putting at risk America's national security.

With that, I yield the floor.

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. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2229

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor to make a unanimous consent request, but out of courtesy to somebody who may object—since there is nobody here to object—I won't make the motion, but I would like to give my remarks at this point.

Today, I am going to discuss a decades-long priority of mine, and that is reforming the Foreign Agents Registration Act. Around here, it is known by the acronym FARA. This legislation is necessary to give it the teeth that it needs to be effective.

Just a little bit of history about FARA: Until maybe 6, 7 years ago—now it is being enforced a little more often by the Department of Justice, but prior to that, a law that had been on the books for decades was not really being enforced. So that means people could be hired to lobby for a foreign country before the Congress of the United States and we didn't even know who they were.

Well, the FARA act, passed decades ago, was supposed to make that public because we ought to know who is working for foreign countries as they try to influence policy in this country. And now more attention is being paid to it. It is being enforced.

But I come to the floor today, as I am going to explain to you, because we had recent court decisions that have made it even weaker than it should be—is intended to be.

Since 2015—to give you a little history of my involvement with this issue—over four Congresses, I have investigated potential FARA violations to ensure the Justice Department equally enforces FARA without regard to power, party, and privilege. In 2017, as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I held a FARA oversight hearing, which contributed to the Disclosing Foreign Influence Act that year. I also introduced the bipartisan Foreign Agents Disclosure and Registration Enhancement Act in 2019, which was supported on both sides by the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Senate Intelligence Committee. The chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee also signed off on that legislation. So then Senator COR-

NYN and I requested unanimous consent to pass that bill at that time; however, the then-ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator MENENDEZ, objected.

The Foreign Agents Disclosure and Registration Enhancement Act is one of several FARA bills that I have sought to advance.

Today, I am here to talk about the bipartisan bill entitled "Retroactive Foreign Agents Registration Act." The purpose of that legislation is to overcome the court decisions that I have already spoken about. Chairman PETERS, my Democratic co-lead, and Senators WARREN, RUBIO, and YOUNG are cosponsors of the bill that goes by the number S. 2229. The bill overturns a recent court ruling that held a person doesn't have to register as a foreign agent if their relationship with a foreign principal has stopped.

It is understood that FARA imposes a continuing obligation for persons to register as foreign agents; otherwise, once a lobbyist for a foreign country is caught not reporting, it is pretty simple for them if they don't want to be prosecuted or registered; they just have to sever their representation with that country, and they are off the hook. And, of course, that is not what Congress intended.

My bill, the Retroactive Foreign Agents Registration Act, fixes that problem, overrides the court decisions.

Remember, FARA doesn't prohibit any activity. You are free to do anything you want to. It is a disclosure statute. It simply requires lobbyists and public relations groups on K Street representing foreign interests, which might be friendly to the United States or unfriendly to the United States, in the Halls of Congress—all they have to do is disclose, just disclose. They can do anything they want to, but they have to disclose whom they are working for.

If a lobbyist doesn't want everyone to know that they are working for the communist Chinese Government, then I guess that person shouldn't be working for the communist Chinese Government.

Now, it is pretty simple what the spirit of this FARA legislation is all about. It is all about transparency. And with transparency, you are more apt to get accountability. And who shouldn't want transparency because the public's business ought to be public, and you ought to be accountable for what you are doing.

My retroactive FARA fix is supported by almost a decade of oversight, hearings, legislative vetting, and discussions with the Department of Justice. Congress must send a crystal-clear message to foreign actors that they can't hide in the shadows.

So now that we have other people on the floor who might want to speak on this, at this point I want to make this request.

Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the

Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration of S. 2229 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, the Foreign Agents Registration Act was enacted in 1938 and requires individuals working on behalf of foreign governments to disclose their relationships and activities. Violations of the law are subject to criminal and civil penalties. Generally, a person who willfully violates these regulations may face up to 5 years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

Now, many thought leaders have written about the overcriminalization of regulations, the fact that we add criminal penalties to people with paper violations. Ed Meese has written about this extensively. Justice Neil Gorsuch has written a new book, "Over Ruled," talking about so many regulation crimes, paperwork crimes, having criminal penalties.

A 2016 inspector general audit reported that, historically, the Department of Justice's practice has been to pursue voluntary compliance rather than the prosecution of agents who failed to register under the act. More recently, though, the Department of Justice has signaled that it is shifting from treating these violations as an administrative obligation to one that is increasingly an enforcement priority.

In 2022, DOJ reported that it had charged a record number of criminal cases for this regulatory breach. In other words, what was once considered a mistake that could be rectified simply by encouraging voluntary compliance is now a weapon that can be used to silence dissent by threatening individuals with prison time.

Just 2 weeks ago, four members of the African People's Socialist Party, two of whom are 82 and 78 years old, were convicted of conspiracy to violate a law similar to FARA by acting as agents of Russia. The Department of Justice press release states that the defendants "face a maximum penalty of five years in prison."

And what had they done to potentially lose their liberty? The specific acts they were accused of included attending an international conference in Russia, publishing a Petition to the United Nations on the Crime of Genocide Against the African People in the United States of America, accepting financial support for a speaking tour to discuss reparations, and speaking in support of the Russian Government.

The African People's Socialist Party was founded in 1972. For decades, the party has criticized the United States and maintained the government owes trillions of dollars in reparations for the crime of genocide against Black Americans.

While I don't agree with any of their policy statements or any of the things they are for, I really don't wish to put them in prison.

Highlighting the disturbing nature of DOJ's prosecution of this minuscule fringe group, Patrick Eddington, of the Cato Institute, writes that the party "and its related political movement can only be described as fringe, bit players on the American political scene whose previous statements and stances already mirrored the Kremlin's line" for decades.

Eddington continues: "It makes one wonder why the FBI targeted such marginal groups with little to no impact on the broader political process, and whether an unstated goal of" these DOJ raids and imprisoning people "was to put the entire domestic political advocacy community on notice that a domestic group with foreign connections is considered fair game for FBI scrutiny even if legitimate First Amendment activity is involved."

According to an article in *The Nation* magazine, "Since its initial enactment into law, the DOJ has invoked FARA," the statute at hand, "to stigmatize and criminalize political advocacy that is contrary to the interests of the US government. Early illustrative examples include the 1951 indictment of W.E.B. Du Bois, who was prosecuted as an agent of the Soviet Union for having promoted and circulated the Stockholm Appeal, calling for a ban on nuclear weapons."

You can see how this gathers up political speech. You don't have to agree with the speech. But if the speech happens to represent the viewpoint of another country, the speech may be stifled and you may be arrested for it.

I understand the Senate will be asked to pass unanimously two bills today that would allow the DOJ to retroactively require this registration or this paperwork and another that would, effectively, write an enemies list into law.

Both give the DOJ prosecutors greater ability to selectively threaten disfavored groups by prosecuting activities that are otherwise protected by the First Amendment. Yet these bills have not been marked up by the committee of jurisdiction, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. At the very least, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, of which I am a member, should consider these bills before being rushed into passage.

Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I would like to speak to this.

This legislation was passed in 1938. You heard me say in my opening remarks that for a long period of time—until about, I think, less than 8 years ago, when we started bringing attention to this legislation not being enforced by the Department of Justice—probably only about a dozen people or

less were convicted under this legislation.

I heard what my colleague from Kentucky said about this legislation. I think you could read his remarks to indicate that a violation of freedom of speech is—we might as well repeal the lobbying act or lobbying registration act—whatever the law is—of 1946 that lobbyists have to register if they are going to lobby the Congress of the United States.

It doesn't have anything to do with freedom of speech. What it has to do with is transparency, so we know who is spending money to influence the laws in this country. That has nothing to do with freedom of speech. You can say anything you want to. It is just about transparency and accountability that comes with transparency. I think it is very important.

I don't find a lot of fault with what Senator RAND has said about regulatory criminalization and too much federalization, but this is a law that has been on the books since 1938 and, really, hasn't been enforced until very recently here. I think when you enforce the law, you get respect for the law. And there ought to be respect for a simple little law that says nothing more than: We just want to know who you are; who you are working for; and, particularly, if it is a foreign country, we ought to have a record of who is being hired to influence public policy in the United States as a result of your work. It could be a national security concern. It could be a business concern. It doesn't matter what that concern is. You can do anything you want to lobby Congress, but we ought to know who you are.

I have great respect for Senator PAUL. Of course, as you just found out, I happen to disagree with him on his decision not to let this bill move forward.

I know a thing or two about government abuse and weaponization. My investigative staff has been surveilled by the Justice Department, as an example. You find out that from whistleblowers. You don't find out that because there is transparency of what they are doing.

I and my investigative staff have been subject to briefings from the Justice Department that were targeted to interfere in my investigative work. I have seen government weaponization firsthand.

That data point shouldn't be a basis to object to this bill. The due diligence has been done—the oversight, the hearing, the negotiations. This bill is bipartisan. This bill is bipartisan. There is no legitimate basis for this bill to not be law.

I thank my colleagues, including the objector, for their giving attention to it even if we couldn't agree on it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 828

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the floor to offer a simple resolu-

tion, one that reaffirms the basic principle that when you go to the ER, the emergency room, they should be allowed to treat you. When your life is in danger, doctors should be able to do their job. When you need emergency care, including an abortion, no politician should stop you from getting it.

This seems incredibly simple to me. It should not be controversial, especially if everyone who talks about protecting the life of the mother seriously means it. After all, that is what emergency care is for: saving the life of the mother. And yet, when the Biden-Harris administration tried to make clear that these women should get care, many Republicans actually opposed them.

I really want to emphasize, we are talking about women whose water breaks dangerously early or who are experiencing uncontrollable hemorrhaging or sepsis or pre-eclampsia. And still, Republicans actually filed a brief in court saying, essentially, no, we don't think doctors should be required to provide abortion care when a patient's life is at stake.

Their brief rejected that idea—that basic medical reality—of abortion as a stabilizing care. That is really shocking to me, and it should be shocking to everyone.

After a brief like that, I am not going to let any of my Republican colleagues off the hook just for saying they care about the life of the mother—not if they don't lift a finger to actually protect women and to actually make clear that emergency care can include abortion.

We need to send a very clear message on this. The Senate needs to speak with one voice and tell the American people: Yes, we want to make sure your doctor can save your life. Your doctor can save your life.

Before my Republican colleagues get up to object, let me be clear. You will not get by pretending a resolution like this isn't necessary, not when we are hearing now firsthand from doctors racked with guilt for decisions that Republican politicians made for them; not when they are hearing firsthand from women who have bled, suffered, and nearly died because their care was delayed; and, certainly, not when Texas saw maternal deaths now skyrocket because of its strict abortion ban. The data in Texas paints a clear, brutal picture of the reality. These abortion bans are killing women.

Republicans are also not going to get by trying to shift the blame and argue emergency care is already protected because the whole point of this resolution is to say emergency care is protected. If you oppose the Senate actually saying that, don't you see how this could be part of the problem? Don't you see how that could be very dangerous for women?

I can't emphasize this enough. If you don't see and you don't understand—listen. Women are speaking out. Doctors are speaking out. They are terrified; they are heartbroken; and they