

VOTE ON MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to discharge.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The result was announced—yeas 17, nays 80, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 294 Leg.]

YEAS—17

Durbin	Markey	Smith
Heinrich	Merkley	Van Hollen
Hirono	Murphy	Warnock
Kaine	Sanders	Warren
King	Schatz	Welch
Lujan	Shaheen	

NAYS—80

Barrasso	Fetterman	Padilla
Bennet	Fischer	Paul
Blackburn	Gillibrand	Peters
Blumenthal	Graham	Reed
Booker	Grassley	Ricketts
Boozman	Hagerty	Risch
Britt	Hassan	Romney
Brown	Hawley	Rosen
Budd	Helmy	Rounds
Butler	Hickenlooper	Rubio
Cantwell	Hoeben	Schmitt
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Schumer
Cardin	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Carper	Kelly	Scott (SC)
Casey	Kennedy	Sinema
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Lankford	Sullivan
Coons	Lee	Tester
Cornyn	Lummis	Thune
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Tillis
Cotton	Marshall	Tuberville
Cramer	McConnell	Warner
Crapo	Moran	Whitehouse
Cruz	Mullin	Wicker
Daines	Murkowski	Wyden
Duckworth	Murray	Young
Ernst	Ossoff	

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Baldwin

NOT VOTING—2

Braun Vance

The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

RELATING TO THE DISAPPROVAL OF THE PRESIDENTIAL REPORT WITH RESPECT TO THE INDEBTEDNESS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF UKRAINE—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 566, S.J. Res. 117.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 566, S.J. Res. 117, relating to the disapproval of the Presidential report with respect to the indebtedness of the Government of Ukraine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 1 hour for debate, equally divided.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, yesterday marked a somber milestone: 1,000 days since Russia invaded Ukraine. Over a million lives have been lost or wounded—a staggering human toll. Yet, instead of seeking a path to peace, the Biden administration is choosing escalation. Billions of taxpayer dollars have been funneled into this conflict with little or no oversight and no end in sight. It is as if writing blank checks has become our primary foreign policy strategy. This has extracted a huge human cost.

Just days ago, President Biden authorized Ukraine to use American-provided long-range weapons to strike inside Russia. Let me repeat that. We are now enabling attacks using U.S. weaponry inside Russian territory. When I first saw the headline, I didn't believe it. I hoped it was maybe a joke or fake news. It was neither. It was real.

Now, this is not a step toward deescalation. Nothing could be further from that. In fact, this is a dangerous provocation, one that brings the United States perilously, unacceptably close to a direct conflict with a nuclear-armed adversary. In response, Russia has updated its nuclear doctrine, lowering the threshold for the use of nuclear weapons.

This is not a game. The rounds are live and flying—and, I would add, deadly. The specter of nuclear war is now looming larger than it has in decades. Yet the administration seems undeterred, even willing, as if eager to risk U.S. security for the sake of scoring one last cheap political point against the incoming Trump administration and the American people.

Now in the twilight of its tenure, the Biden administration is quietly attempting to forgive half of Ukraine's economic aid package from the last supplemental appropriations bill—a whopping \$4.7 billion given away for free if President Biden has his way.

The American people are being deceived by the Biden administration. Americans were told Ukraine would repay that sum when this bill passed. In fact, that is part of how they got it passed. It was, you might say, a "without which not" of that bill's passage. Now they are being stuck with the tab.

Now, let's be clear: Forcing the American people to pick up this tab removes an essential point of leverage for the United States to bring Ukraine to the negotiating table. It prolongs a bloody war. It drains our own scarce precious resources and gives Ukraine a freebie we don't extend even to our closest allies, all without accountability or a strategy that prioritizes America's interest first.

But it is worse than that. It does so in a way that puts us in the firing line—the firing line of a nuclear-armed adversary. Moreover, a significant portion of this sum was allocated to fund the salaries of President Zelenskyy and Ukrainian bureaucrats.

What kind of message does that send?

At a time when American families are pinching pennies—pinching pennies—because we spent money we don't have, causing us to print more money, causing every dollar the American people earn to buy less, it is absolutely unconscionable that their hard-earned tax dollars are being used to underwrite the administrative costs of a foreign government and the salaries of foreign bureaucrats—all in a way that makes us less safe, all in a way that puts us in a precarious position we haven't faced since most of us were children.

Our constituents are tightening their belts and making tough decisions about healthcare, education, and basic necessities. Yet we are being asked to finance the operational expenses of another nation's government.

Madam President, we have a duty—a solemn duty, a sacred duty—to our constituents to ensure that their hard-earned money is spent wisely and ethically and, at a minimum, not in a way that makes them less safe, not in a way that paints a target on their back or an adversary with nuclear weapons. We certainly have a constitutional duty to prevent unnecessary escalation that could lead to catastrophic consequences. And we have a duty to uphold the will of the American people who very recently—just over 2 weeks ago—voted for a different President with a different foreign policy, one that works for the American people and not against them.

Instead, as a final parting gift—and, yes, I use that word very, very euphemistically—the Biden administration wants to saddle the American people with a tab that they don't want, that they never agreed to, that they expressly rejected at the ballot box, and that they cannot afford.

That is why I stand in full wholehearted support of Senator RAND PAUL's joint resolution of disapproval to block this misguided, dangerous, reckless, wealth transfer to a corrupt foreign government. I call on all of my colleagues to do the same.

We need to halt this dangerous path and give the incoming administration every tool to pursue a strategy that prioritizes peace and America's interests. The American people have spoken and resoundingly, with good reason, rejected the policies of this administration that escalate conflict and prolong wars.

The American people deserve better. They should expect more. They strive and yearn for peace. RAND PAUL's measure would help advance that. Doing nothing would impair it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). The Senator from Georgia.

U.S. ARMS SALES

Mr. OSSOFF. Mr. President, I rise not in response to the Senator from Utah or to address the matter being raised by Senator PAUL but to address the resolutions that were debated previously with respect to U.S. policy in the Middle East.

In 1982, as Israeli forces pursued the PLO deep into Lebanon, President Reagan was angered by what he viewed as excessive civilian casualties resulting from the Israeli bombardment of Beirut.

Concerned by the suffering of innocent civilians and its impact on American diplomacy, not only did President Reagan personally call Israeli Prime Minister Begin and demand a halt to the bombing—and the bombing reportedly stopped within hours—but the American President then blocked the provision of cluster munitions to Israel out of concern that their use by the IDF was killing too many innocent people.

President Reagan imposed conditions on the provision of U.S. arms, using leverage to influence the conduct of an ally. He took those steps to protect innocent life and to defend what he perceived to be America's interests. And Israel, faced by President Reagan's ultimatum, adjusted its policy to accommodate America's demands.

The United States remained Israel's closest ally, and the world kept turning.

This story is not a perfect mirror image for the agonizing situation we face today and have faced since the despicable Hamas attacks of October 7. Today, Israel faces a multifront assault by Iran and its proxies while the war in Gaza has devastated the territories and civilian population.

But I tell this story to remind my colleagues that in the pursuit of America's national interests, to use the leverage that comes with the provision of arms, as President Reagan did in 1982, is not just sometimes necessary, it is expected and appropriate. The United States is and will remain Israel's closest ally. Our commitment to Israel's security is ironclad.

But no foreign government is simply entitled as a matter of right to American weapons with no strings attached. No foreign government, no matter how close an ally, gets everything it wants whenever it wants, to use however it wants. It is entirely appropriate for the United States to insist that foreign powers use American weapons consistent with our interests, our values, and our laws.

And to insist otherwise weakens American foreign policy and undermines our ability to protect the interests of the American people. And to impose conditions on the provision of certain weapons to an ally when necessary is not a betrayal of that alliance. It is the pursuit of our national interests. Again, President Reagan understood that in 1982.

So let's apply the principle to the present moment. In November of last year, I addressed the Senate on the war in Gaza in the aftermath of the October 7 attack, affirming Israel's right to defend itself, to wage war against and defeat its enemies. And I affirmed, as I do again today, America's enduring support for our ally.

I also urged that Israel respect American requests to reduce unnecessary civilian casualties in Gaza, to provide safe passage for food and essential medical supplies, to clearly define Israeli objectives to present a credible plan for Gaza's future governance, and to prevent atrocities by Israeli extremists in the West Bank.

These requests of the Israeli political leadership have been made not just by me and many others in the Senate but repeatedly by the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the President over the past year.

That Israel take these reasonable and necessary steps has been and remains in America's national interests. No one in this body or the American Government has suggested that Israel lay down its arms and be overrun or that Israel does not have a right and, indeed, an obligation to defeat its enemies and defend its people. Rather, the United States has insisted that Israel's conduct of the war respect our interests and our values—the interests and values of Israel's closest ally.

And yet, for the most part, this insistence has been ignored. The United States has been ignored, in part, because the Israeli Prime Minister is beholden to Cabinet Ministers in Mr. Smotrich and Ben-Gvir, who insist there be no deviation from policies that are gratuitously brutal, even over American objections.

We should be disgusted by the spectacle of Israeli extremists running amuck in the West Bank, sometimes with the protection of Israeli security forces, shooting and maiming goat herders and olive farmers and burning and seizing their land.

And the American people are rightly horrified by the lack of sufficient concern for innocent Palestinian life that has left so many children unnecessarily dead in Gaza, without limbs, or riddled with shrapnel.

As I said on the floor last year, no one should be naive to the inherent risk to civilians that comes with warfare in a place like Gaza against an enemy like Hamas. Tragically, horribly, fighting terrorists in a dense urban environment makes civilian casualties inevitable. Yet the evidence that force has repeatedly been applied with reckless disregard for the innocent is too credible for us to ignore. We are talking about precious, innocent children and other innocent civilians who might otherwise be alive or without grievous wounds today.

These things aren't just horrific, they are inconsistent with America's national security interests. Yet we seem to have forgotten that we have the power to influence our ally's conduct and that we can do so without betraying our ally. It is often said that our efforts to influence close allies are best done in private and, where possible, done gently, and I agree. But in this case, that has not been sufficient nor have heartfelt public statements and harshly worded letters been effective.

So what would President Reagan do? Judging by his actions 40 years ago, I think he would judiciously use the power that comes with our provision of weapons in order to shape Israel's conduct.

Some have taken to the floor tonight to argue that holding up two or three arms sales today would have been an abandonment of our ally, leaving Israel naked and undefended in the face of Iranian aggression. That is nonsense.

The question on the floor today was not whether to shut off military support for Israel. The resolutions we debated accounted for less than 5 percent of American arms that will likely flow to Israel over the next 3 years, and most of the shipments debated will not even arrive until 2026 or 2027. Bipartisan American support for Israel's nonnegotiable right to exist and to defend itself is rock solid.

Had these resolutions passed, however, perhaps Israeli politicians would have received the necessary message that has so far been disregarded, which is, yes, defend yourself; yes, defeat your enemies, but have mercy for the innocent, retrain your own extremists, and respect the interests of the United States.

The realization that every shipment is not simply available on an unlimited basis with no strings attached might have resulted in changes to Israeli policy that would reduce civilian suffering and support America's regional and global interests as he believed it would when President Reagan used American power in 1982.

I remain steadfastly committed to the United States-Israel alliance. And I also believe we must be willing to say no, even to our closest friends, when we believe it is in America's national interest.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

S.J. RES. 117

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to S.J. Res. 117, the motion to proceed. And I rise as the chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to relate to our colleagues why I am against this resolution and how we got to this vote.

This body passed aid to Ukraine by a 79-to-18 bipartisan vote. It approved the necessary funding for Ukraine to be able to defend itself against Mr. Putin's aggression—Russia's aggression—and it allowed us with our coalition partners to be able to have a unified front against Russia's attempt to change borders by force.

That legislation included the authority to the President to forgive and cancel debt. That is what President Biden did under the authority given to him by a 79-to-18 vote in this body. The President executed that authority and, yes, the Senate has the opportunity by a resolution to override that.

But I would urge my colleagues to remember why we voted by a 79-to-18 vote on this floor to help Ukraine.

Ukraine is the frontline in our defense for democracy. No one believes that Russia would stop if Ukraine were to fall with just Ukraine. We know that Russia has its eyes on Moldova and Georgia. We know the Baltic countries are very much in the eye of Russia.

Poland is concerned, and Europe is concerned. It is in our national security interest to make sure that Russia's aggression in Ukraine is stopped and Ukraine's sovereignty is protected.

Now, Russia is not alone in this. There is an alliance developing of autocratic States against our democratic systems of government. Russia is getting help from the People's Republic of China. They are getting direct help from North Korea. They are getting weapons from Iran. They are getting help from these autocratic partners.

We are literally fighting for our democratic way of life. It is not just Europe that is of concern. If Ukraine were to fall, it makes it much more likely that the People's Republic of China would think that they could take over Taiwan and the West would just let them do that, and China could very well try to take that over by force. So there is a lot at stake here.

Now, Ukraine is footing the burden. It is their soldiers that are on the battlefield. They are devoting 100 percent of their ability to the war effort, and they are asking us to help make sure that their economy can perform.

So this debt relief goes to maintain their economy, to maintain their energy and agricultural sectors, and it would unlock IMF—International Monetary Fund—to Ukraine without cost to the American taxpayer.

This debt relief makes sense from so many different points: to protect Ukraine's ability to keep its economy moving so they can pursue their defense of their nation, that we have an ally and friend that stops the aggression of Russia and says no to the alliance that is being formed against democratic states.

It is a very small price for us to pay to maintain our democracy and to prevent the need for American soldiers fighting on foreign soil.

I urge my colleagues to reject the resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, earlier this year, we passed a bipartisan national security supplemental that included crucial economic aid to Ukraine, which was structured as a forgivable loan. The Senate vote was overwhelming and bipartisan—79 to 18. That is because there is wide understanding on both sides of this aisle that support for Ukraine is an investment in our own national security interests, and that includes the economic support in that package, because while weapons are important, the costs of war are not just measured in arms, and the burdens are not only borne by the military.

There are day-to-day government functions that must continue to sup-

port the war effort and for the sake of the very families and communities Ukraine is fighting for, and that includes work to defend and repair critical infrastructure, roads, bridges, energy, water; work to fight off cyber attacks and corruption, which threaten to weaken critical functions of government; work to support the energy and agricultural sectors that are crucial to Ukraine's economic stability, not to mention the global food supply. And there is work to make sure first responders can keep doing their jobs; mental health and support services can reach veterans, internally displaced families, and others in need; and teachers and schools can keep supporting kids, which are the future of every country.

These investments are crucial to Ukraine's future and its resistance of Putin's invasion, and given how important those investments are, it is worth noting that these dollars came with three layers of oversight and audits to make sure they are being used as intended.

But the vote today is a test of whether we truly understand what is at stake here, not just for Ukraine but for America's strength as a global leader. It is a test of how closely we stand by our allies in their times of need.

Our adversaries are watching for us to fail. They are hoping to tell everyone: Watch out before you accept any help from the United States. They are hoping allies start doubting our promises. They are hoping other countries start second-guessing whether to build stronger ties with America. They are hoping we weaken our position in the world and weaken Ukraine in the process.

We cannot let that happen. I urge my colleagues to send a message: American leadership is strong, and our support for our allies is unwavering. And it is in our own national security interest.

I urge all of them to join me in opposing this joint resolution of disapproval.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, here we go again with the "Ukraine First, America Last" policy. Earlier this week, President Biden delivered a report to Congress informing us that he now intends to forgive or cancel \$4.65 billion worth of U.S. loans to Ukraine.

Now, you might ask yourself: When were these loans issued?

Oh, about a month or two ago.

Well, when does Ukraine have to pay back these loans that we are forgiving?

Well, they made an agreement to start paying them back in 40 years. President Biden is forgiving loans that aren't due for 40 years.

This makes a mockery of the entire charade that this is a loan. They should have just said it was a gift.

A forgivable loan? It is not even a loan. It is not due for 40 years, and we are forgiving it now.

These funds were provided by the American taxpayer in the form of loans with the expectation that they would be repaid. We are not going to wait any period of time. They weren't even going to be repaid for 40 years, and we are forgiving them. That is a sick joke, and a sick joke on every American who has got a loan at the bank for their house, who has to pay their mortgage every month, and yet Ukraine is never going to have to pay their loans.

It seems like this is "Ukraine First, America Last." We have got a \$36 trillion debt in our country. We are paying a trillion dollars in interest. We can barely keep up. We are not keeping up with all of the things we promised Americans: Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, food stamps—all of the things that have been promised. We are \$2 trillion short.

So what do we do? We are just shipping billions to Ukraine. About \$200 billion has been sent so far.

Such blatant disregard of American citizens is unacceptable. The joint resolution of disapproval that I put forward, today, provides the Senate an opportunity to prevent the President from doing this—from canceling this debt, from making a mockery of the idea that it was ever a loan.

We will not stand idly by as the President elevates the interests of a foreign country above our own.

And let me remind President Biden that, due to his failed policies over the last 4 years, Americans across this country are struggling with their loans. Today, some 37 million Americans live under the poverty line, including 9 million children. Fifty percent of Americans say they are living paycheck to paycheck, and yet the concern is for the loans of a foreign country that will never be repaid, that were not even going to begin to be repaid for 40 years.

This is an insult to every American who has a mortgage that they have to pay. Eight out of 10 Americans who earn less than \$50,000 a year are unable to cover their future bills until their next paycheck arrives. Americans are living paycheck to paycheck, and we are shipping this money to a foreign country that will never be asked to repay it.

In 40 years, if they were somehow gloriously successful again—40 years from now—they are still not going to be asked to pay this. Americans are working two, sometimes three jobs just to make ends meet, and while millions of Americans work day in and day out to pay off their own personal loans, President Biden wants to forgive Ukraine's economic loans without any debate.

This was rushed forward. I was fortunate enough to get 16 colleagues to allow this vote to happen. But they didn't want this vote to happen. They gave us a short window, and, boom, it is going to be gone. They don't want a discussion about how obviously insulting this is to every American to do this.

The American people have been more than generous when it comes to supporting Ukraine. In the nearly 3 years of this war, Congress has appropriated nearly \$200 billion in aid. For 3 years, the American people have been sold the lie that if we only send tens of billions more of their dollars to Ukraine, Ukraine will be able to push Russians out, secure the 2014 borders, and achieve victory in the battlefield.

It won't happen. The President of Ukraine, the generals of Ukraine, the people who have followed this situation all agree: The war is at a stalemate.

Trillions of dollars more will only lead to more carnage in the battlefield, and it won't achieve victory. These assertions were always farcical, as they failed to contend with basic battlefield realities.

Despite massive assistance provided by the United States and others, Ukraine is no better off now than they were 3 years ago. It is arguable that their ability to negotiate, as they have lost more land to Russia, is actually that their leverage for negotiation with Russia is less than it was when the war began.

In fact, Ukraine is now in a worse negotiating position because they have likely incurred hundreds of thousands of casualties and now face a critical manpower shortage. That shortage is becoming impossible to ignore, as Russia consolidates its gains and continues to make progress across eastern Ukraine.

Americans may be surprised to discover that their aid has not, in fact, shifted the war in Ukraine's favor. They may also be surprised to learn that much of the money Congress sends to Ukraine isn't actually being used to support Ukraine's military.

While American families struggle to put food on the table and keep the lights on, U.S. taxpayers are paying for the salaries of thousands of Ukrainian bureaucrats, their pensions. We are paying for their teachers.

Do our teachers make enough money? Probably not. But I am guessing, if you ask an American teacher, should we be paying the salaries of Ukrainian teachers, you might get a debate.

We are paying their healthcare workers' salaries, their first responders. We are buying seeds and fertilizer for their farmers. And we are bankrolling Ukrainian small businesses.

A report conducted earlier this year found that 43 percent of small businesses in America were unable to pay their rent in full and on time in the month of April. Yet we are sending billions of dollars to Ukraine to subsidize their small businesses.

A report by CBS News discovered that U.S. taxpayers are helping a Ukrainian knitwear company find new international customers overseas. Oh boy, we are helping Ukrainian businesses expand overseas.

We don't even need independent journalists to highlight such absurdities.

USAID bragged on their own website about how they provided funding for six Ukrainian fashion brands to participate in Paris Fashion Week. I am sure they will be glad that they won't be paying back any loans.

This is what we are asking the American people to pay for—to send Ukrainian fashion brands to a Paris fashion show? I have never had one constituent in Kentucky come up to me and say: Please, send more money. We are fine in Appalachia. We are fine in rural Kentucky.

I don't think there is anybody in Asheville, NC, today that is pleading for more good money to be sent to Ukraine.

It is bad enough, but it is also impossible to ensure that this amount of money actually gets to the misguided priorities that have been set. The Government Accountability Office admits that there are a number of ways in which Federal Agencies could improve oversight and aid to Ukraine.

It has been 3 years. Why hasn't the government approved the oversight? Well, because it is impossible to send so much aid to a country as quickly as we have and expect that there won't be waste, fraud, and abuse.

I forced the Senate to vote on a special inspector general for Ukraine, and the "Ukraine First uniparty"—both sides of the aisle—voted it down. Even with a special inspector general, it is nearly impossible to ensure oversight on this vast amount of money in such a short period of time.

Adding insult to injury, Ukraine is consistently ranked as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. Transparency International ranked Ukraine 104th out of 180 countries in 2023, with respect to honesty and integrity, and also found that 23 percent of the public service users paid a bribe in the previous 12 months in Ukraine.

And yet we give billions of dollars, and we have no special inspector general.

And now in spite of all of this, President Biden wants to forgive over \$4.6 billion in loans that the U.S. taxpayer provided under the auspices that they would be repaid.

This lunacy is just another example of how the Washington establishment is completely out of touch with Americans. You ask Americans about this, they have got to pay their loans; they don't understand forgiving Ukrainian loans.

The election earlier this month made it eminently clear that the American people are sick and tired of the status quo. They are sick and tired of business as usual in Washington, and they want their elected officials to deliver change.

It is fitting that in the final months of this disastrous Presidency, Joe Biden caps off his foreign policy for the middle class by asking to cancel over 4.6 billion in aid, in loans, to Ukraine—once again prioritizing the interest of a foreign country at the expense of our own.

I urge my colleagues to vote in support of this resolution to disapprove of the President forgiving this billions of dollars' worth of loans to Ukraine and put the American people first.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I am not going to get into the debate before the floor, but I heard the city of Asheville referenced at the last debate from the gentleman from Kentucky, and I have to tell you, I am not happy with that. I sat here last week and tried to do a unanimous consent request to fund the Small Business Administration loan, and my colleague from Kentucky objected.

But don't pretend like this debate tonight has anything to do with Asheville, NC, a town that just got drinking water 2 days ago. You want to argue this, don't argue it on the merits of something that you objected to me trying to accomplish last week for the city of Asheville.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Sometimes in Washington, memories get clouded and foggy, even after a week. The Senator from North Carolina will remember that he objected to aid in North Carolina. He objected to small business loans. He objected to them simply because they were paid for.

I offered unanimous consent, and it was blocked by the Senator from North Carolina. I offered unanimous consent to immediately infuse more loans through the Small Business Administration for North Carolina that was hit hard by the flooding. The Senator from North Carolina blocked his own bill because I proposed that it be paid for by taking green energy boondoggle loans.

So don't be tricked by any flimflammy or any sort of making up of history. The Senator from North Carolina last week blocked his own aid passage that I agreed to let go unanimously as long as it was paid for by taking some extra money from another part of the budget. Don't be fooled.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I understand we have about 7 or 8 minutes left. I may need to use all of them.

Let's talk about tomfoolery. Let's talk about being disingenuous. The gentleman from Kentucky knows damn well that he proposed an amendment that would have actually caused the bill to fail.

The gentleman from Kentucky also knows very well that the House has a posture that the disaster recovery bill has to be funded. The gentleman from Kentucky knows that this aid that I have tried to get to the House would have been fully funded. The gentleman from Kentucky also knows that I also support the amendment he offered, but he played the game that we play around here and tried to think that I wouldn't have the courage to stand up

against that garbage amendment because it was the right amendment at the wrong time.

I yield, Mr. President, unless there is additional time and someone else wants to speak.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. It is very important that the truth be told about what went on with aid to North Carolina. I agreed to pass it unanimously as long as it was paid for.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President. Mr. President.

Mr. PAUL. I won't be interrupted, Mr. President. I have the floor.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I rise for an—

Mr. PAUL. I have the floor.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I rise—

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Kentucky has the floor.

Mr. PAUL. I will not yield the floor.

Mr. President—

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry—

Mr. PAUL.—what has been said here is untrue.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will be in order. The Senator from Kentucky has the floor.

Mr. TILLIS. Is it the ruling of this Chair that it is out of order to make the parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Chair?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Kentucky has not yielded for an inquiry. The Senator from Kentucky still owns the floor.

Mr. TILLIS. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, it is important that the truth be told and that people aren't allowed to stand and lie without challenge.

The bill last week to give immediate aid to North Carolina was objected to by the Senator from North Carolina. I agreed to let it go immediately by unanimous consent as long as it was paid for. The Senator from North Carolina objected.

These are the facts. This is the Senate record. The people of North Carolina can read this in the Senate record. He objected to his own bill because he was annoyed that I had the audacity to say we have a \$2 trillion debt, and we should pay for things.

We had \$4 trillion worth of Green Energy New Deal boondoggle spending subsidies to big green energy company, big corporations. He objected to taking money from green energy boondoggle budgets and spending it in his own State. He objected to his own bill.

So what I would say is: The truth is important. The facts are important. We have had a very important debate here, and there is a general philosophical debate about whether or not we should spend money in Ukraine or in our country.

We have had flooding problems in Kentucky. I haven't met one person who suffered from this who didn't say it was more important to spend the

money in Kentucky than Ukraine. It is a debate that is worth having. The decisions we make over here should be about prioritizing spending. Where do we spend it? Do we borrow it? Where do we spend the money? This is what it is about.

And the fact that the Senator from North Carolina wants to rewrite history and say he didn't object to his own bill when he did is a lie; just simply untrue. Just simply untrue.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator will suspend.

The Senate is reminded that there are rules of decorum in the Senate. Let me read to you rule XIX:

No Senator in debate shall, directly or indirectly, by any form of words, impute to another Senator or other Senators any conduct or motive unworthy or unbecoming of a Senator.

Mr. PAUL. Thank you. I would regain the rest of my time. How much time do I have left?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There is 6½ half minutes remaining.

Mr. PAUL. You said 6½ minutes?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Total remaining.

Mr. PAUL. This side of the debate which has—

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Kentucky is recognized.

Mr. PAUL.—30 minutes will relinquish the remaining time on our side.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. First, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is to state his inquiry.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I want to understand the effect of the gentleman from Kentucky relinquishing time.

Does that mean that I would need to continue debate until the time is over; or at the time that I finish speaking, will we go to a vote?

Mr. PAUL. There is no more time left on our side.

Mr. TILLIS. There is about 4 minutes left?

Mr. PAUL. There is none.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There is 5½ minutes remaining.

Mr. TILLIS. There is 5½ minutes remaining?

Mr. PAUL. But that is not what happened. I relinquished the time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will come to order.

Mr. TILLIS. Parliamentary inquiry.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. State the nature of your inquiry.

Mr. TILLIS. Does the Senator from North Carolina have the floor?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Carolina has the floor.

Mr. TILLIS. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I have been accused of lying. I don't mind that. I mean, I am a politician. People do that every single day.

But I believe that someone may be guilty of misleading this body about

my position. So I am going to take a few minutes to explain my position. It may or may not coincide with the end of time set aside for debate.

But our State motto is "Esse Quam Videri."

Mr. Chair, may I have order?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will come to order. The Senators will take conversations outside the chamber.

Mr. TILLIS. My state motto is "Esse Quam Videri." That is Latin. It means "to be rather than to seem."

Well, ladies and gentlemen, the gentleman from Kentucky suggests that I am against clawing back the Green New Deal and certain things that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle passed through reconciliation. Why would anybody with any experience in this body think that it wouldn't be one of the first things I would vote for when we have reconciliation? Right? How can anybody possibly suggest that I am against clawing back policies that were passed through reconciliation because I am going to need it to pay for tax reform when we pass reconciliation in the next Congress. So how can it—and I have said that we are going to claw back things, and we are going to pay for it.

If you listen to the gentleman from Kentucky, he said I am against repealing that. Well, both can't be true, ladies and gentlemen. They just simply can't be true.

I am for the very things—and I hope that the Senator from Kentucky knows I would be happy to cosponsor that bill. If I have it, I will tomorrow.

But I don't play games in this Chamber. I actually fight, in this case, for the people of western North Carolina who are suffering. I will defeat any amendment to aid to North Carolina if it stands in the way. But I know a little bit about legislative procedure, ladies and gentlemen. And anybody in here who pays attention to how a bill becomes law should watch this.

We could pass the SBA funding bill out of here because 99 out of 100 Senators said it was OK. One didn't. Now we would like to think that the House would receive it and pass it out because we have a tradition of not funding disaster recovery bills, but we know the current majority won't do it.

So anybody with a modicum of experience in legislative procedure and actually passing bills that get to the President's desk would know that it will have to be funded, and my colleague from the western North Carolina 11th District is working on a paid-for now.

So if you really care about the people in North Carolina, if you really understand the legislative process, and you really understand the posture of the House, then you know—you absolutely know—that this bill will be paid for before it goes to the President's desk.

Now, I have some people asking me why I am talking. Because I am going to get the final say here, and I am not

going to let anyone else talk before we have to go to a vote. So if you are wondering why I am going on, I am not going to play the game of somebody coming up—I am only equating what they said about me—that I lied.

So, ladies and gentlemen, instead of relinquishing the time, unless I can be assured the minute I put this mic down we are going to go to a vote, then I have got to start quoting poetry or something because I am not yielding until time is out.

So, Mr. President, may I make a parliamentary inquiry?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The gentleman may state the nature of his inquiry.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, how much time is left?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There is 7 minutes and 35 seconds remaining.

Mr. TILLIS. You said 7 minutes and 35 seconds?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Yes, 7 minutes and 35 seconds.

Mr. TILLIS. OK. Mr. President, may I make an inquiry of the lady from the State of Washington?

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I yield back all the Democratic time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Washington yields back all time.

VOTE ON MOTION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

Ms. LUMMIS. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

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

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

The result was announced—yeas 37, nays 61, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 295 Leg.]

YEAS—37

Barrasso	Fischer	Mullin
Blackburn	Graham	Paul
Boozman	Hagerty	Risch
Britt	Hawley	Rounds
Budd	Hoeben	Rubio
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cotton	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cramer	Lankford	Sullivan
Crapo	Lee	Thune
Cruz	Lummis	Tuberville
Daines	Marshall	
Ernst	Moran	

NAYS—61

Baldwin	Casey	Grassley
Bennet	Collins	Hassan
Blumenthal	Coons	Heinrich
Booker	Cornyn	Helmy
Brown	Cortez Masto	Hickenlooper
Butler	Duckworth	Hirono
Cantwell	Durbin	Kaine
Cardin	Fetterman	Kelly
Carper	Gillibrand	King

Klobuchar	Reed	Tillis
Lujan	Ricketts	Van Hollen
Manchin	Romney	Warner
Markley	Rosen	Warnock
McConnell	Sanders	Warren
Merkley	Schatz	Welch
Murkowski	Schumer	Whitehouse
Murphy	Shaheen	Wicker
Murray	Sinema	Wyden
Ossoff	Smith	Young
Padilla	Stabenow	
Peters	Tester	

NOT VOTING—2

Braun	Vance
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The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Sooknanan cloture motion be waived.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant 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 the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 601, Sparkle L. Sooknanan, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Alex Padilla, Amy Klobuchar, Jack Reed, Tina Smith, Tammy Duckworth, Richard Blumenthal, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Catherine Cortez Masto, Margaret Wood Hassan, Peter Welch, Sheldon Whitehouse, Raphael G. Warnock, Laphonza R. Butler, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Sparkle L. Sooknanan, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 296 Leg.]

YEAS—51

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murray
Bennet	Hassan	Ossoff
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Padilla
Booker	Helmy	Peters
Brown	Hickenlooper	Reed
Butler	Hirono	Rosen
Cantwell	Kaine	Sanders
Cardin	Kelly	Schatz
Carper	King	Schumer
Casey	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Coons	Lujan	Sinema
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Smith
Duckworth	Markley	Stabenow
Durbin	Merkley	Tester
Fetterman	Murphy	Van Hollen

Warner	Warren	Whitehouse
Warnock	Welch	Wyden

NAYS—49

Barrasso	Graham	Ricketts
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Hagerty	Romney
Braun	Hawley	Rounds
Britt	Hoeben	Rubio
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Collins	Lankford	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lee	Thune
Cotton	Lummis	Tillis
Cramer	Marshall	Tuberville
Crapo	McConnell	Vance
Cruz	Moran	Wicker
Daines	Mullin	Young
Ernst	Murkowski	
Fischer	Paul	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BUTLER). On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 49.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Cloture having been invoked, the Senate will resume executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Sparkle L. Sooknanan, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, if cloture is invoked on the Sooknanan nomination, the Senate immediately vote on the Murphy, Hwang, Dixon, and Henry cloture motions in the order in which cloture was filed; further, that during Thursday's session of the Senate, at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Republican leader, the Senate vote on the Wise and Weilheimer cloture motions in the order in which the cloture was filed; further, that if cloture is invoked on any of the above nominations, all postcloture time be considered expired and the Senate vote on confirmation of the nominations at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Republican leader, no earlier than Monday, December 2, 2024; further, that the mandatory quorum calls for the above cloture motions be waived; finally, that the cloture motion with respect to the Desai nomination be withdrawn and the Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Republican leader, during Thursday's session of the Senate.

For the information of Members in plain English, this means we are going to have four votes tonight. We are going to—and we are not going to have those 2-hour intervening times so we can get them done quickly if we stay in our seats.

We then will vote tomorrow. We have two votes tomorrow morning and one vote before 1:45.