

and wish him all the best in his return to be Governor of Indiana.

STOP INSTITUTIONAL CHILD ABUSE ACT

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I rise to say a few words about S. 1351 and ask for its passage, as amended. But before I formally ask, I just want to know what this is all about; and that is, across our country, there are institutions that say they will help with your troubled teen. In fact, this has been become known as the troubled teen industry.

Now, some of these institutions are long established, huge amounts of oversight, the best practices and the best results, and we certainly need these types of places to assist families when they are challenged in the family setting by the difficulties experienced by their children. But we also have a whole series of companies that have sprung up, whether for-profit or non-profit, without the expertise, and saw an opportunity to make a lot of money and jump into a space without the proper foundation for actually being beneficial to teens. We had an experience with one of our Oregon children who died at just such a facility.

One of the individuals—really the individual who proceeded to draw attention to this largely unregulated troubled teen industry is Paris Hilton. Paris wrote a memoir, and she shared in it, as summarized by, well, the summary of her book, that her childhood was shattered by 2 years of strip searches, isolation, beatings, restraints, and brainwashing in this troubled teen institution. Her story is not alone. There are multiple stories of broken bones, of sexual assaults, of solitary confinement, even stories, as with our child in Oregon, of them dying in these institutions.

We found that there really is a lack of detailed information about what is going on across America, so 12 Democrats and 12 Republicans have come together to sponsor this bill to say: We need to understand and therefore have recommendations on how to avoid the horrendous outcomes at some of the institutions. So this bill calls for just such a study.

This bill proceeds to say: We want our kids safe. We want our kids respected. We want our children to have the very best care.

I am struck by the tragedy that occurs when parents searching for help for their children strive to send them to a safe place and end up sending them to a very dangerous place. This is unacceptable.

This bill says: Let's get a complete map of these institutions. Let's understand where they are and what they look like and what they cost and how long kids are staying there and how children are treated, how they are treated in ways that are inappropriate, and how, in some institutions, the gold-star institutions, how their best

practices should be shared across the Nation, and how we should inform decision makers and policymakers across the country with the findings.

So that is the simple story of this bill, and I am pleased that I am able to come to the floor now with a lot of support: Senator JOHN CORNYN, a lead on the Republican side, and a lot of help from TOMMY TUBERVILLE. Senator CASSIDY, who is ranking member of HELP, was involved in helping this bill go forward.

I am thankful for the information we received from the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, an institution that is highly respected and that has been in operation since 1957, providing support and help to literally thousands of young boys. Actually, that is the type of information we want collected—institutions that are working well, that have those best practices.

So, Madam President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be discharged from further consideration of S. 1351 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1351) to study and prevent child abuse in youth residential programs, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Merkley-Cornyn substitute amendment at the desk be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The amendment (No. 3316), in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

The bill (S. 1351), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I failed to mention my appreciation for the conversations I have had with Senator RICK SCOTT, who helped facilitate dialogue with the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches and their contributions to how we should go forward.

With that, I am really excited that we are getting this bill done. Thank you. Hopefully, the House will be able to expedite it, and we will start to understand an industry that we need to understand and America needs to understand so children are helped, not hurt.

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. BARRASSO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

ELECTRIC VEHICLE SUBSIDIES

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, the new Senate Republican majority begins on January 3, 2025. So our day one starts in 3 weeks. Republicans are going to enter the next Congress with a long "fix it" list on behalf of the American people. And at the top of the list is an agenda to lower costs and to restore American energy dominance.

Prices today, we know, are 20 percent higher than they were 4 years ago, and, just this morning, we learned, once again, that prices have gone up in November. And we know the culprits, the problem behind the high prices: wasteful Washington spending. And we have seen a lot of it the last 4 years. The other reason, of course, is the Democrats throttling American energy production.

Republicans are going to fix the fiscal insanity of the last 4 years. We will put Americans—not Washington bureaucrats—back into the driver's seat.

We are going to start by repealing the Biden car bribe. This is something that President Trump strongly supports, and he is supporting what we are promoting. He has asked for it. He has campaigned on it. Eliminating this car bribe by the Biden administration—it is one of the most wasteful policies we have seen from this administration over the last 4 years. It is the Democrats' \$7,500 subsidy for people buying electric vehicles. It was included in their reckless tax-and-spend legislation. It received zero—zero—Republican votes, not a one.

It is an attempt by the Democrats to bribe the American people to go along with their unpopular climate fantasy. It is a welfare check for wealthy elites and for green corporations. It is a giveaway to communist China, which controls key parts of the EV supply chain.

We were initially told by the Joint Committee on Taxation that these subsidies would cost about \$14 billion. Well, the pricetag has continued to tick up since then. Today, there have been some revised estimates, and they have ballooned to projected costs of way over \$300 billion. That is right, over \$300 billion. And that is for vehicles that most Americans don't want, can't afford, and don't work for them or their families.

The auto dealers in Wyoming tell me it takes much, much longer to try to sell these things compared to the traditional gas-powered vehicles. They say they can't even sell them at a loss, and they are stockpiling them on the lots.

Less than 10 percent of the new car sales in America last year were EVs. The sale figures have been abysmal. EVs lost market share. It is hard to believe. They actually lost market share in 2024.

So you have these carmakers from around the country who are hemorrhaging cash. They are losing tons of money. And we have autoworkers who have lost their jobs.

The CEO of Ford says his company is projected to lose \$5 billion this year on their EV market. Stellantis, which owns Chrysler, is also in the ditch. In August, it announced plans to lay off thousands of autoworkers at its plants in Michigan. Yet, last week, it won a \$7.54 billion loan—a loan, an additional loan—from the Biden administration, over \$7.5 billion for something that is failing.

Joe Biden is leaving the White House the same way he led it: by doubling down on failure.

America now has fewer manufacturing jobs today than it did last year. And do you want to know the dirtiest secret of Democrats in terms of the Biden car bribe? It sends taxpayer money to communist China. But the original law was clear. It said, if your EV was made with Chinese batteries or used their critical minerals, it would then be ineligible—not eligible—for taxpayer-funded subsidies. Chinese batteries, Chinese components can't get any of the subsidy benefits.

Senator MANCHIN actually wrote that provision into that bill. Republicans still voted against the entire bill. We thought it was a waste of taxpayer dollars. Joe Biden signed it, and then EV sales stalled out.

So what did the Democrats do? They double-dealed. They could have made it easier to mine more critical minerals in America, to use our own supply chain. But, no, President Biden decided to overrule the China ban.

The Department of the Treasury came out with lax rules on sourcing materials, meaning that communist China will benefit from American tax dollars. It also means that American workers will pay a higher price for a policy and for vehicles they don't want.

We need to go back to a consumer-driven, free-enterprise system. This is the United States of America. We should never be dependent on dictators and despots, like those that we have in communist China.

Electric vehicles make sense for some people, but they are not an option for all people. Consumers have legitimate anxiety about the range of these vehicles, about costly repairs, and about extremely expensive insurance, because, often, a minor ding on one of these electric vehicles, with damage done, well, they call it a total and complete loss of the vehicle, not something that can be repaired. That is

why the insurance is much higher on electric vehicle than traditional vehicles.

And, frankly, if EVs were better options, then government wouldn't need to bribe Americans all across the country to buy them or to bribe businesses to build them.

Electric vehicles are a luxury item. They are toys with severe limitations. They are not must-have means of transportation. Taxpayers shouldn't be forced to pay for the cost of luxury vehicles. It is wrong for taxpayers, tax dollars, and for working American families to subsidize the car purchases of the wealthy elites.

The American people have proven that they refuse to be force-fed these electric vehicles. They can't be pushed into buying, can't be bribed into buying them. "No, thank you," said the American consumer.

But that is exactly what the Democrats have been trying to do—to ban traditional vehicles and to bribe people to buy electric vehicles. Democrats want to pick what you can drive. They want to punish everyone who doesn't want to do it—all as a result of their smug, moral superiority.

Well, I have a message for my colleagues. It is the same message that Americans sent in November. When taxpayers and voters went to the polls, they said: Government—big government, Democrat government—does not know better than we the people. Senate Democrats don't know better than we the people. We the people have a right to decide what is best for us, what is best for our families.

The incoming Trump administration and the Republican Senate majority will get rid of the Biden car bribe and the Biden car ban. We are going to embrace free enterprise and fiscal responsibility. We will lower prices for the American families and restore America's energy independence and dominance.

We are going to strengthen our manufacturing. We are going to bring back good-paying jobs. We are going to put Americans back in the driver's seat.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

AGRICULTURE

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Madam President, our farm economy is headed in a dark and scary direction. I hope all of my colleagues here in the Senate and

on the other side of the Capitol recognize that.

It is time for Congress to deliver meaningful assistance to our agricultural producers. They have been devastated by unprecedented market conditions and natural disasters over the last 2 years, and they need help recovering from both, not one or the other.

I rise today to urge my colleagues to take action and to support those who support you.

The economic landscape for farmers is looking more like the farm crisis of the 1980s every day.

That is pretty scary.

There is not a farm crisis looming—it is already underway—but it is not too late to keep it from snowballing out of control if Congress acts.

The farm crisis of the 1980s—I remember so well—was one of the worst economic disasters since the Great Depression that decimated rural America and took years for many communities to recover from. Some never did. What caused the crisis? Inflation, high interest rates and production costs, low farm income, depressed crop prices, declining exports, and inadequate Federal price support policy.

Does that sound familiar?

The U.S. farm income has dropped \$41 billion over the last 2 years—the worst decline we have ever seen. Our trade deficit is expected to reach a record high of \$45.5 billion for fiscal year 2025. Input costs and interest rates are close to an alltime high; commodity prices are low; and the Federal farm safety net is not providing any support because the Price Loss Coverage Program's reference prices haven't been updated since the 2014 farm bill. These are unprecedented market conditions. Believe me, I know.

To break this down in greater detail, market losses suffered by producers for the 2024 crop year alone are estimated at \$31 billion—\$31 billion with a "b."

I have a breakdown of the market losses by State and commodity. I ask unanimous consent that they be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

2024 CROP YEAR ECONOMIC LOSSES BY CROP AND STATE

(Based on December 10, 2024 USDA Economic Research Service World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates)

LOSSES BY CROP

	Income	Acres	Per Acre
Corn	—\$11,587,099,785	90,249,239	—\$128.39
Soybeans	—\$8,466,196,505	86,433,859	—\$97.95
Wheat	—\$5,064,654,335	49,912,825	—\$101.47
Cotton	—\$4,172,067,751	11,160,633	—\$373.82
Sorghum	—\$1,488,653,367	7,924,270	—\$187.86
Oats	—\$498,889,253	1,887,016	—\$264.38
Rice	—\$406,659,904	3,109,021	—\$130.80
Peanuts	—\$355,451,528	1,791,997	—\$198.36
Barley	—\$77,624,589	2,269,061	\$34.21
Total	—\$31,962,047,840	254,737,920	—\$125.47

LOSSES BY STATE

State	Income	Acres	Per Acre
Alabama	-\$265,107,707	1,293,451	-\$204.96
Alaska	-\$128,507	6,939	-\$18.52
Arizona	-\$75,936,100	345,260	-\$219.94
Arkansas	-\$841,638,036	6,001,897	-\$140.23
California	-\$219,322,020	1,421,295	-\$154.31
Colorado	-\$548,024,342	4,548,087	-\$120.50
Connecticut	-\$2,863,060	22,686	-\$126.21
Delaware	-\$38,944,855	362,936	-\$107.30
Florida	-\$78,354,721	366,381	-\$213.86
Georgia	-\$655,552,293	2,580,379	-\$254.05
Idaho	-\$152,349,049	2,096,381	-\$72.67
Illinois	-\$2,488,705,171	22,030,884	-\$112.96
Indiana	-\$1,266,272,910	11,284,636	-\$112.21
Iowa	-\$2,647,228,187	22,875,285	-\$115.72
Kansas	-\$2,760,825,257	22,494,643	-\$122.73
Kentucky	-\$419,290,092	3,836,529	-\$109.29
Louisiana	-\$317,998,366	2,416,125	-\$131.62
Maine	-\$8,663,525	58,142	-\$149.01
Maryland	-\$115,388,280	1,057,847	-\$109.08
Massachusetts	-\$1,803,441	14,125	-\$127.68
Michigan	-\$540,530,356	4,768,756	-\$113.35
Minnesota	-\$1,936,041,618	16,963,514	-\$114.13
Mississippi	-\$525,894,150	3,625,930	-\$145.04
Missouri	-\$1,270,655,699	10,595,754	-\$119.92
Montana	-\$523,794,385	7,490,193	-\$69.93
Nebraska	-\$1,993,881,047	16,757,010	-\$118.99
Nevada	-\$4,134,247	35,350	-\$116.95
New Hampshire	-\$1,460,631	11,506	-\$126.95
New Jersey	-\$20,568,724	188,047	-\$109.38
New Mexico	-\$132,802,196	937,462	-\$141.66
New York	-\$180,960,392	1,488,205	-\$121.60
North Carolina	-\$489,778,764	3,422,175	-\$143.12
North Dakota	-\$1,895,876,988	18,320,934	-\$103.48
Ohio	-\$964,359,752	8,794,146	-\$109.66
Oklahoma	-\$1,011,975,433	8,308,441	-\$121.80
Oregon	-\$87,829,632	870,665	-\$100.88
Pennsylvania	-\$193,378,507	1,666,045	-\$116.07
Rhode Island	-\$143,641	1,114	-\$128.98
South Carolina	-\$190,898,594	1,102,584	-\$173.14
South Dakota	-\$1,607,348,165	13,692,375	-\$117.39
Tennessee	-\$410,768,542	3,135,575	-\$131.00
Texas	-\$3,853,459,576	18,844,789	-\$204.48
Utah	-\$22,223,186	198,356	-\$112.04
Vermont	-\$12,217,118	97,361	-\$125.48
Virginia	-\$162,548,033	1,251,628	-\$129.87
Washington	-\$243,251,731	2,541,423	-\$95.71
West Virginia	-\$9,137,771	78,887	-\$115.83
Wisconsin	-\$745,506,014	6,236,965	-\$119.53
Wyoming	-\$26,227,031	283,318	-\$92.57
Total	-\$31,962,047,840	256,822,415	-\$124.45

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Madam President, every single State in the United States suffered market losses this crop-year. The Office of Management and Budget recently submitted a disaster supplemental request to Congress asking for \$21 billion in ad hoc support for producers impacted by natural disasters in 2023 and in 2024, and I certainly support that because many producers across the country deserve it.

However, OMB's request failed to mention anything pertaining to market losses. How can we ignore \$31 billion in market losses this year alone and expect to keep U.S. agriculture afloat? We shouldn't, and we can't. Farmers need market loss assistance, too. We need an additional \$15 billion for market losses.

The House and Senate Agriculture Committees have been working on a proposal that would cover market losses on top of natural disaster losses. It is estimated to cost about \$15 billion. Congress should support that, whether through supplemental appropriations or a farm bill extension, in addition to what has been proposed for natural disasters. Producers should be eligible for both.

State farm bureaus from all 50 States have sent letters to Congress asking for both market and disaster assistance—both, not one or the other. Further, every major agricultural organization across the country—the American Farm Bureau Federation, American Soybean Association, National As-

sociation of Wheat Growers, National Barley Growers Association, National Cotton Council, National Corn Growers Association, National Sorghum Producers, National Sunflower Association, U.S. Canola Association, U.S. Peanut Federation, USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council, USA Rice, and Western Peanut Growers Association—have endorsed marker legislation, introduced in the House, focused on market losses.

If Congress fails to recognize the importance of providing market loss help and only focuses on natural disaster, my fear is that, one, farmers and farm groups across the country are going to be very angry that Congress decided to address only half the problem while ignoring every farmer across the country impacted by record input costs and depressed prices, and, two, we are going to have a farm crisis in this country worse than the 1980s crisis.

I will leave my colleagues with this question: Are we going to learn from lessons of the past and take appropriate action or take the path of least resistance today and be required to pay hundreds of billions on the back end after it is too late?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

STOP INSTITUTIONAL CHILD ABUSE ACT

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, a little while ago, my colleagues were successful in passing the Stop International Child Abuse Act by unanimous consent.

I want to thank Paris Hilton for her great work on this legislation. You know, I applaud her for using her position of influence as a force for good. She has worked hard to make sure no child has to go through what she went through in her earlier life.

America's kids and young adults will decide the future of this country. I dedicated my life to mentoring young people because they are the most precious commodity that we have. If we get everything else right but neglect our young people, our country has no future.

You know, I have seen some of these residential treatment facilities with my own eyes, and I know they need reform. Right now, there is not enough oversight in some of these schools. Some States are trying to regulate them, but we need to do more on a national level. We don't know where the Federal money is going or who is making money off looking after our kids. We don't understand the regulations and whether they benefit our children or not. This bill authorizes a study of these facilities and looks at them nationwide. It can cost about what it takes to go to Harvard for a kid to be in one of these institutions. It is very expensive, but a lot of them look like something out of a Charles Dickens movie.

There is an old saying that sunlight is the best disinfectant. We need some more sunlight on these facilities so we can put a stop to the waste and the

fraud and the abuse in this system. I am proud to support this bill, and I stand with our kids.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Madam President, now I would like to remind you of a vote that President Joe Biden took in 1983, as a Senator, to tax your Social Security. That is right. Joe Biden is responsible for your Social Security money today being taxed. It is a scam.

One of the big reasons the American people elected President Trump to be the next President of the United States is because they are tired of being scammed by the Federal Government. They are tired of seeing their hard-earned money evaporate into thin air because of inflation, which is caused by Joe Biden and Democrats spending money that we don't have.

They are tired of having their tax dollars sent to fund foreign wars where America's interests are really not at stake. They are tired of the Federal Government using taxpayer dollars to put illegal immigrants up in fancy hotels instead of building a wall to secure our Nation's sovereignty. But what the American people have been tired of for years—decades even—is how they have been getting scammed out of their retirement money, the money that they pay into this government.

Here is the sad truth: The American people don't have any confidence that they will see all the money they paid into Social Security over the years.

Since being signed into law in the 1930s by President Roosevelt, Americans' money has been going in the front door of the Federal Government and then out the back door. It is a big Ponzi scheme, and everyone is forced to participate in it. You have no choice. It doesn't matter if you are 16 or 76, a little over 6 percent of your paycheck is taken out to pay for this retirement.

Americans have been paying into Social Security for years, only to see a fraction of what they were promised to be returned to them. And that is not all. After decades of having Social Security taken out of their paychecks, millions of Americans have to pay taxes on what they do get at the end of the day. That is right. The money that is owed to them—the taxpayers' own money that has been held for years by the Federal Government—is taxed again as if it is new income.

Withdrawing money from your paycheck every week or month for Social Security is already a tax to begin with. The money taken out of your pocket and your paychecks isn't put into an account that gains interest like a mutual fund. It doesn't even gain interest like a savings account. It actually has a lower rate of interest than the rate of inflation. And that is not the worst of it.

The pot your Social Security money sits in isn't left alone by the Federal Government. No, your money that you pay into Social Security is being used like a debit card by the Federal Gov-

ernment. So the money you are paying into, it is effectively a tax. Then what little money you do get back is taxed again.

We have got people who are getting ready to retire in this country who are going to try to live off \$2,000 a month after paying Social Security all their life.

In this day and age, \$2,000 is impossible to live off of, totally impossible. We better start figuring this problem out because one of these days, millions of people are going to come to DC and say: Where is my money? And I don't blame them. I don't blame them one bit.

We are \$36 trillion in debt, and there is no sign of that slowing down. Let me repeat that: \$36 trillion in debt.

We seem to be spending all we can on everything but retired American workers. We have sent over \$200 billion to Ukraine. Just yesterday, the Biden administration announced they are giving \$20 billion more to Ukraine in the form of a loan. Well, that is interesting. We are never getting that money back. It is another scam.

Over \$400 billion in COVID relief money was wasted, misspent, or stolen. And I just saw on TV before I just came down here on a news report that President Biden just gave Iran 10 billion more dollars.

The Biden administration set aside billions of dollars to build EV stations across this country, plug-ins. Up here, we toss money around like it is nothing, and then we turn around and tax Americans' Social Security checks. It is unfair for the millions of Americans who paid into Social Security to have to suffer for their government's incompetence.

My two sons ask me all the time if they are ever going to see the money they have paid into Social Security. At this rate, they have got a better chance of seeing world war III than ever seeing that 6 percent that was taken out of their paychecks since they started working. How bleak is that?

That is why when President Trump says he wants to fight for Social Security to protect it and preserve the retirement age, it resonates with people. People listen because it sounds like somebody is going to help somebody.

The American people aren't dumb. They know there has been funny business going on at the Social Security Administration for many, many years and that they may never see a dime of the money that they are owed.

Americans aren't dumb. Every election year, you hear our Democratic colleagues saying Republicans want to cut Social Security benefits or raise the retirement age. Yet it was Joe Biden who voted to tax your Social Security check. As usual, our Democratic colleagues just keep throwing money at other programs, projects, and wars, neglecting one of the biggest problems facing our country.

With President Trump coming to town, we are finally going to make

sure the government is serving the people, not bleeding them dry. President Trump is going to make sure the government is accountable to all American taxpayers. At the very least, he is going to give it to you straight, not just tell you what you want to hear.

The Department of Government Efficiency—or what we are calling now DOGE—will play a big role in solving this problem. Elon and Vivek will make sure the American people know exactly what is going on in Washington. There will be no secrets.

The bottom line is this: We need to get bureaucrats' and politicians' hands out of the mess that they made with their Social Security money. We need to make sure Americans get what they were promised.

President Trump's pick to be the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration is a great choice to get Social Security cleaned up. If he doesn't, we will change him. Frank has an excellent track record as an executive in business and finance. He is not a politician. As President Trump said, Commissioner Frank will deliver on the Agency's commitment to the American people for generations to come.

It is about time Washington, DC, starts working for the people we are supposed to represent—what a thought—not to special interests, not for career politicians and entrenched bureaucrats or the liberal pet projects or foreign wars that don't deserve our interest.

Instead of spending money we don't have on things we don't need, let's put it back in the pockets of the Americans who have worked and paid for this. Not only is it in America's best interest to do this, it is the right thing to do.

I yield the floor.

(Ms. ROSEN assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA). The Senator from Tennessee.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, last week, I spoke in this Chamber about President Trump's excellent picks to lead our Nation's Federal law enforcement Agencies. Those were Pam Bondi as Attorney General and Kash Patel at the FBI. And, today, I would like to take a moment to discuss President Trump's picks to oversee our Nation's national security.

Across the board, these selections prove that President Trump is prepared to restore American strength after 4 years of the Biden-Harris failures in our Nation's national security. Look no further than the President's outstanding choice for Defense Secretary. That is Tennessean Pete Hegseth. As a Bronze Star recipient who deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan, Mr. Hegseth knows exactly what our servicemembers need to defend our freedoms. He knows what the men and women in uniform need to carry out their mission.

Under President Biden, this administration has demoralized our soldiers,

sailors, marines, and airmen—from anti-American DEI programs to weakness and appeasement abroad. Under Mr. Hegseth, this assault on our military will come to an end as he works to restore the Defense Department to its core mission: securing peace through strength.

Joining him in this fight are three talented congressional colleagues: our colleague here in the Senate, Senator MARCO RUBIO of Florida, as Secretary of State; Congressman MIKE WALTZ as the National Security Advisor; and Congresswoman ELISE STEFANIK as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. All three are proven leaders who have stood up to our adversaries, strengthened relationships with our allies, and defended U.S. interests.

To restore American strength, we also need intelligence Agencies that are focused on protecting the American people, not targeting them. Thankfully, President Trump's pick for Director of National Intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard, has demonstrated the leadership needed to restore accountability at the DNI. As a lieutenant colonel for over 20 years in the U.S. Army Reserves, she has seen firsthand the critical role of intelligence in national security. She handled highly classified information, led troops on deployments, and understands the gravity of safeguarding American lives.

But what sets Ms. Gabbard apart is her willingness to challenge the status quo. For years, she has been an outspoken critic of abuses within the intel community, especially under the Biden-Harris administration. Under her leadership, though, the intel community will return to its rightful purpose: defending the American people and upholding our constitutional freedoms.

America shines as a beacon of freedom in our dangerous world because of the powerful sacrifices our Active-Duty servicemembers and veterans have made to preserve freedom. Last week, I had the pleasure of meeting with our next VA Secretary, former Congressman and Air Force veteran Doug Collins, who will ensure that no veteran is left behind and that all veterans receive the benefits and timely access to quality care that they deserve.

With all of President Trump's picks, he is making one thing clear, and it is this: Starting in January, his administration is committed to supporting our troops, restoring military readiness, and making America stronger than ever before.

KIDS ONLINE SAFETY ACT

Mr. President, I am so pleased to spend a few minutes on the floor and just really so honored that my colleague Senator BLUMENTHAL is joining me on the floor, because we are at crunch time for the Kids Online Safety Act.

As the Presiding Officer knows, this is a piece of legislation that Senator BLUMENTHAL and I have worked on for about 4 years. And we are so honored that 72 Members of this Chamber stand

as cosponsors of this legislation, and it passed out of this Chamber in July on a vote that was 91 to 3. So it is time to hold that final vote on this legislation in the House.

Now, there is a lot of misinformation that is out there about the Kids Online Safety Act. And if we can get this passed in the remaining few days, what you will have is, for the first time since 1998, there will be legislation passed to protect our children in the virtual space and provide safeguards for minors.

You know, when you look at product design and product safety, nearly every product—every product—that is sold in this country has some kind of safety design attached; that is, every product except what you are seeing in the virtual space. And, of course, while we have laws in the physical space that protect children from the harms of alcohol, tobacco, and firearms and protect them from cyber bullying and protect them from exposure to sexual exploitation or pornography, in the virtual space, we do not have those laws.

KOSA has been in the House, as I said, since July, and it has stalled over there because there are blatant falsehoods that are being peddled by the Big Tech lobbyists about this legislation, including one that they have made up—a falsehood. They keep saying: Well, KOSA would lead to censorship. Nothing is further from the truth because this is not a content bill; it is a product design bill.

So to put this false narrative to rest, Senator BLUMENTHAL and I worked with Elon Musk and X CEO Linda Yaccarino to update the bill's text to make clear that KOSA will safeguard free speech while protecting children online.

To be clear, no one is probably more qualified to speak on the issue of free speech than Elon Musk.

Among the changes is language that reaffirms that KOSA does not permit the government to penalize platforms based on users' viewpoints or alter existing protections for third-party content under section 230. These are protections that have been put in place.

With the new changes, both Elon Musk and Donald Trump, Jr., are now publicly calling on the House to immediately pass the bill, which is also supported by tech companies like Microsoft and Pinterest—and for good reason.

Every day—every day—that goes by without passing the Kids Online Safety Act, more children are being put at risk, more children are losing their lives. And for years, my colleagues and I on the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Commerce Committee have heard heartbreaking stories from parents across the country who have lost their children to social media harms. I could read through these stories today. They are heartbreaking. We know from working with these parents, from listening to these parents, and also listening to young people, listening to pe-

diatricians and principals—we know what is happening in the virtual space. We know that Big Tech looks at these children as the product.

We know that they are so invested in keeping kids endlessly scrolling. Meta has even assigned a dollar value to what a child in the virtual space is worth to them as they look at profits. That is \$270 of profit per kid. That is what they consider.

Children, grandchildren are important to each and every one of us, and it is disgusting that you have corporate executives who have done so much work and so much surveying and so much review of how their platform is used, they can tell you what that user is worth.

These companies should be better than that. They should agree that in the physical space, we have those laws to protect children, to protect them from exposure. They do not exist in the virtual space.

And for the naysayers and the falsehood spreaders that are out there saying this would compromise free speech, as I said, we have addressed this; we have amended language; we have brought it forth; and you now have X CEO Linda Yaccarino, you have Elon Musk, and others who are tweeting in support and are saying to the House Republicans: It is time to pass this legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, let me begin by expressing my profound thanks to Senator BLACKBURN for her leadership as a champion of the Kids Online Safety Act.

We have worked together over these years—yes, it has been years—through the hearings, the drafting, the redrafting, the revisions on the redraft. Tirelessly, she has been a partner—and a true bipartisan partner—as have been Senator SCHUMER and Senator THUNE, Senator MCCONNELL and Senator CRUZ.

I want to give my thanks to colleagues on both sides of the aisle for bringing us to this truly momentous and historic point in advocating for the Kids Online Safety Act. I am grateful to them and to Chair McMORRIS RODGERS on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Representatives BILIRAKIS and CASAR, and to all who have joined us from the tech community, including supportive companies like Microsoft and Pinterest. Their leaders have endorsed this legislation.

I express my appreciation as well to Elon Musk and Linda Yaccarino.

Over the weekend, we negotiated a redraft that clarifies what we have said all along: This bill is about product design. It is about protecting kids from toxic content driven at them by products designed specifically to addict them, to take them down dark rabbit holes, to drive toxic content about bullying and eating disorders, self-harm, even suicide—a scourge that every parent in the United States recognizes must be stopped and stopped now—not

next session or the session afterward—because children are dying.

They are literally in peril every day, as we know, because we are parents, we are grandparents, we are public officials who visited schools where young people, elementary school students, tell us about how their companions, their friends, their family members are harmed day in and day out and resort to suicide because no one is protecting them.

We are saying the Kids Online Safety Act will give you protection. It will give you tools and safeguards so you can take back your online lives and so that the bullies can't follow you, literally, into your bedroom at night. They are not confined to the schoolyard anymore but free to follow kids wherever they go because they are in jeopardy everywhere.

What we clarified is that there is no censorship in this bill. There is no content moderation. There is no blocking of specific content. It is about choice—giving young people choice and their parents safeguards, tools to protect their children, and imposing a duty of care, which other producers of any kind of product know they have. They have a duty of care to stop harm when they know or should know it is going to cause physical or emotional harm to people they should protect.

We are now one step away. We are so close to the Kids Online Safety Act becoming law. This measure passed in this body 91 to 3. How many measures pass the U.S. Senate these days by 91 to 3? Major steps forward in legislation passing with that kind of bipartisan support is virtually unheard of.

And today, in the House of Representatives—let me just be very blunt—it will pass by the same overwhelming bipartisan majority if it is given a vote. Let them vote. Let them do their job. I call on the House leadership to simply enable the democratic process to move forward.

We based this legislation on the kind of process that is the ideal here. We started with a recognition that the United States of America faces a mental health crisis. We can all give speeches. We can all recite the rhetoric about the mental health crisis in America that afflicts teens and preteens—a dramatic increase in anxiety, depression, eating disorders, and suicide. We can all agree—we do all agree—that social media is exacerbating and, indeed, fueling that mental health crisis in America.

Senator BLACKBURN and I have worked over years through hearings to demonstrate that kids' online safety is an idea whose time has come now. We heard from young people and parents across the country who have shared their experiences. They have come forward. They are our strongest supporters and advocates.

We received documents from whistleblowers demonstrating that Facebook—now known as Meta—consciously knew its products were harm-

ing people, and they continued because it made money. They knew that they were attracting more eyeballs for longer periods of time and, therefore, more advertisers collecting more data. It is all about the money.

They decided to put profits ahead of young people. And that is not from us; it is from their own documents that we can draw those conclusions. We brought in the Big Tech executives, and we grilled them on their appalling business practices. They said to us: Yeah, we know regulation is necessary. And they repeated it as a mantra when we had hearings: Regulation is important, just not that regulation.

Let me just say, bluntly, I challenge Meta, Facebook, and Google to support this legislation as Microsoft and Pinterest and now Elon Musk have done. Don't tell us it is a censorship measure. Don't tell us you are defending the First Amendment or free expression. Listen to Elon Musk, the champion of First Amendment free expression among tech executives, who now supports this bill because the arguments that you have given to us about censorship and free expression, the money that you have spent to fight this legislation, the armies of lawyers and lobbyists that still you use against us, simply cannot overcome the voices and faces of young people who have been harmed.

I want you to meet some of them. You know, there is a saying that every good story has a villain, a victim, and a hero. Our heroes are the young people and parents who have come forward to watch this moment. The world is watching us in the U.S. Congress at this moment. And the victims are young people and parents—parents who suffered losses of their children. Some of them are with us here today in spirit to demonstrate the cost of congressional delay and inaction, the cost that every parent should fear and feel today.

That is what happened to Mason Edens, who is here in this picture. Mason loved football and loved making other people smile. He wanted to serve his country when he grew up. He talked about becoming a police officer.

In 2022, Mason experienced his first heartbreak. Quickly after, Microsoft's algorithms inundated him with messages promoting self-harm. He even sought help on TikTok. But instead of providing that help, TikTok sent him more suicidal messages. He was trapped in a rabbit hole.

Depressed, having lost control, in November of 2022, Mason—this young man—took his own life at the age of 16.

I have four children. They are a lot older than 16 now, but every one of us knows a 16-year-old. We know how vulnerable young people are at that age.

TikTok is delighted to addict kids at all costs. What happened to Mason is a consequence of their business model. It is not some random occurrence. It is the direct result of a business model that is unconscionable.

And his death was preventable. He is just one of a dozens of deaths and horrific harms that we know happened while Congress waited—we waited and we waited—to pass the Kids Online Safety Act.

Another one of those victims is T'Saya Yapuncich. T'Saya was a Native American girl, young woman. Her name means eagle woman, one with Earth, and little huntress.

Her parents did what they could to set rules around her use of social media, but they didn't know that TikTok and Snapchat began to connect T'Saya with sexual predators. They exploited her trust. By age 11, T'Saya was experiencing self-harm and suicidal ideation—again, fueled by social media. No matter what help her parents tried to get her, T'Saya sank deeper into depression.

This Saturday, T'Saya would have reached 16 years old. Instead, she took her life last March—again, one of a dozen, like Jesse Harrington.

Jesse is here. He wanted to be a firefighter when he grew up. He wanted to save lives. He didn't get his first phone until last Christmas, at age 15. That is a pretty late age to be getting a phone these days.

He became addicted, unable to sleep, unable to look away from endless scrolling, unable to look away from the nudges of Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok. And he began having trouble in school, getting into conflicts with others.

Now, that part of the story, I think, occurs thousands and millions of times in America today—the distraction, unable to look away, the addictive impact.

On October 29 of this year, Jesse took his life. That part of the story, fortunately, is not common to as many children. But for Jesse, it was the end. Police found his device open and streaming when they arrived.

Mason, T'Saya, and Jesse were all horrific experiences. They didn't need to happen. They were preventable. We have examples and examples. I could spend the rest of the day into tomorrow with more specific examples: suicide, self-harm, bullying, eating disorders, fentanyl poisoning, sexual exploitation. All of it happens right now, right here in America, in realtime, to our young people.

That is not the message we want to send to America as a Congress. Senator BLACKBURN and I have addressed every single issue that Big Tech has thrown in our way. There are no excuses for delay. Anybody saying, "Let's wait until next session so we can get it really right," that is saying they are OK with more kids dying. They are, in effect, with all due respect, playing political games with those lives that are at risk today in realtime in America—more families shattered, like Mason, T'Saya, Jesse. When I say shattered, I mean shattered.

I want to finish by quoting another mom, someone who has been a fierce

advocate for this legislation. I have come to know her from this fight. I greatly respect her and admire her courage and strength: Deb Schmill.

Deb told me, and I am quoting:

Letting it go to the next legislature means children are going to die. It means another year of children dying. And who wants to be accountable for that?

We can't wait another year. We need this now.

Now, we can't bring back her daughter Becca, a beautiful young woman, or Mason or T'Saya or Jesse, but we can prevent other families from suffering the worse loss imaginable. We have it within reach to do it. Passing the Kids Online Safety Act is not some convenient step we can take to make people feel good. It is real action.

We don't often, here in this body, have an opportunity to save lives, to save futures, to save young people. We have that opportunity now.

I challenge the House of Representatives to do the right thing. Pass the Kids Online Safety Act.

I yield the floor.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, on behalf of the majority leader, at 5:15 today, I ask the Chair to execute the order of November 20 with respect to the Wise nomination.

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

The Senator from Delaware.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. CARPER. As you know, we have a term called "seatmates," and, for years, this man has been my seatmate, and I have never been prouder of him for all that he does.

It is wonderful to be your friend and colleague.

Well, thank you very much to the Presiding Officer and to our colleagues who are coming in to join us.

In just a few weeks, I will be stepping down as one of Delaware's two U.S. Senators, ending a half century of service in the U.S. Navy and in elective office.

God willing, in the weeks that follow, Martha, my bride of 38 years, who is sitting right up there, and I will turn the page and hit the road together, visiting family members near and far and exploring parts of America that we have yet to see, before beginning to look for new ways to serve the people of Delaware and our country.

Recently, a friend told me that I have lived a charmed life. And do you know what? He is right. I have been truly blessed. Although, truth be known, it didn't start that way.

My sister Sheila and I were born in a coal-mining town in West Virginia. We didn't have much, but we had the good fortune of being raised in a home by parents who instilled in us a strong work ethic, along with a deep faith that embraced the Golden Rule: to treat other people the way that we want to be treated. Our parents also instilled in us an abiding love for our

country and for this planet that we call home. Our father and most of our uncles served in World War II or in Korea or both.

My mother's youngest brother, Bob Patton was killed at the age of 19 in a kamikaze attack on his aircraft carrier in the Pacific, in 1944. His body was never recovered. Our grandmother was a Gold Star mother.

This life-size—bigger, actually; bigger than life-size—picture of him in his dress blues still hangs in my Senate office here on Capitol Hill. He was my hero when I was a kid growing up, and, truth be known, he still is.

Our parents never went to college, but they wanted us to go, and they expected my sister and I to figure out how to pay for it. Fortunately, in my senior year in high school, I won a Navy ROTC scholarship, and with the help of that scholarship, I was able to work a couple of jobs at Ohio State, including washing pots and pans, in order to keep from starving.

And I graduated at the height of the Vietnam war and would go on to complete three tours of duty in Southeast Asia as a naval flight officer and eventually as a Navy P-3 aircraft mission commander.

The best days of the week for us on those 6-month deployments were the days that the mail came, bringing cards, care packages, newspapers, and magazines. And following the 1972 election, the issues of both Time and Newsweek included stories of a stunning upset in Delaware, where a 29-year-old upstart named Joe Biden defeated an icon—a Delaware icon—named Caleb Boggess.

I remember over, literally, on the other side of the world, thinking: I would like to meet that young guy some day and see what he is made of. And then, one day, that is what I did.

Later on, after I fulfilled my military obligation, I enrolled in the University of Delaware's M.B.A. program. Within a week of enrolling, I affiliated with the Reserve Navy P-3 aircraft squadron in nearby Pennsylvania, and I found a place to live in Delaware.

Shortly thereafter, I had just a chance meeting with a professor at the University of Delaware, on campus there, who was planning to run for Congress, and I got to know him. And later—not much later—he asked me to be his campaign treasurer, and I agreed. I think I had been in Delaware for like a couple of months, and I found myself as a campaign treasurer all of a sudden.

Miraculously, I was invited, a month or two after that, to join a pep talk and a strategy session at the home of none other than Delaware's junior Senator, Joe Biden. And that day, he could not have been more gracious, more helpful. After learning of my military service in Southeast Asia, he embraced me and welcomed me to Delaware, marking the beginning of a friendship that has lasted for 50 years.

Following the completion of my M.B.A. studies, I went to work in eco-

nomic development for the State of Delaware. Less than a year later, when no Democrat volunteered to run for State treasurer, I offered to run and was elected State treasurer at the age of 29, on the same day that Republican Pete du Pont was elected our State's Governor.

When I called my parents in Florida and told them that I had been elected State treasurer at 29, they said: You don't even know how to spell "cash management." How are you going to do that?

And 2 months later, in his very first State address in the legislative hall, Governor Pete du Pont announced that the State of Delaware was bankrupt, and, later that week, Delaware's credit rating fell to the lowest of any State in America.

There I was, 29 years old, and I thought: What do I do now?

Well, as it turned out, even though I didn't know a lot about cash management, the end of the story is a pretty good one. And we may not have known a lot in those days about cash management, but what we did have, fortunately, on our side was a new Governor who quickly put together a talented team to turn our State around. And he invited me, a Democrat of all things, to become part of that team. And remarkably, it worked. It worked, and less than 4 years later, Delaware's credit rating was about to be raised to a respectable AA, after it had been literally at the bottom. We were ready to go to AA within a couple of years, and the Governor asked me, of all people, to announce to the world that our credit rating was being raised to AA.

And following that announcement—I did make the announcement—I got a lot of attention. But in the regularly scheduled election, a week later, the people of Delaware elected me to serve as their lone Congressman, unseating the incumbent Republican. And the rest, as they say, is history.

So what lessons might we all take from this? For me, one lesson was that our elected leaders surrounded themselves with the best people they could find. Another key lesson was that in adversity lies opportunity. I have probably said that about a million times: In adversity lies opportunity.

The third lesson was the importance of job creation, and the realization is that, while our elected leaders don't create jobs, we help create a nurturing environment that supports job creation.

In addition, I learned from Joe Biden that all politics is personal and that all diplomacy is personal.

And I learned that just because someone is your adversary one day, they don't have to become your enemy. They don't have to become your enemy.

And I also learned an ancient proverb that some of you have heard along the way, and it goes something like this: If you give a person a fish, you can feed them for a day. If you teach a person to

fish, they can feed themselves and their families for a lifetime.

Since announcing, over a year ago, that I would not be running for reelection, I have had a number of interviews, and among the questions that have been asked of me are a lot that you might have been asked yourselves, but one of the questions is: Why did you decide not to run for reelection?

And I tell them tongue-in-cheek—only partly in cheek—that I was following the advice of singer-songwriter Kenny Rogers, whom I met my senior year at Ohio State, trying to get him and his group to come to a concert at Ohio State, and I would meet him again as Governor of Delaware, 30 years later. He was the second best male recording artist in history.

Then I met him again at the State fair, 30 years later. He did not remember me from Ohio State, but he asked me if there was a song that I would like for him to sing and dedicate to me that night at the State fair, with like 10,000 people in the stands. I said that would be great. And I asked him to sing “The Gambler”:

You’ve got to know when to hold ’em; [got to] know when to fold ’em.

And when I announced, with Martha by my side, years later, those words—I announced that I wasn’t going to run. I gave a little tribute to Kenny Rogers, and he is getting another shout-out here today.

But among the questions that I have also been asked of late is: What are you proudest of in your 24 years in the Senate? And one of them is building a trusting partnership on the Environment and Public Works Committee with Ranking Member SHELLEY CAPITO, who is seated right over there, whose father was the Governor of West Virginia when my sister and I were born in West Virginia. And SHELLEY, like me, is a native West Virginian. Our committee enjoys a well-deserved reputation as a workhorse committee and one whose members consistently work across the aisle. Our relationship has enabled us, among other things, to craft a comprehensive 2-year Water Resources Development Act, which includes the reauthorization of the Economic Development Administration.

We have also learned to and worked to advance a package of critical recycling bills to confirm important nominations and to enact transformational legislation like the bipartisan infrastructure law, the most transformational infrastructure law in the history of our country—And she and I managed this bill right out here on the floor—and also to pass significant nuclear legislation like the ADVANCE Act and major legislation to reduce powerful greenhouse gas emissions known as HFC, hydrofluorocarbons. And that is just a few.

And we have demonstrated time and time again that bipartisan solutions are lasting solutions; that even in today’s polarized environment, it is still possible to accomplish a great deal for

our country, for our planet, and for our citizens.

There is a lot that we have helped accomplish in this Senate, but there remains unfinished business, as you know, that I want to encourage our colleagues to continue once I weigh anchor—that is a Navy phrase, “weigh anchor”—and sail off into the sunrise.

Almost daily, I am asked here in DC and in Delaware: How do you like being retired? How do you like being retired?

I tell them: I am not retired, and I hope I am never truly retired. And I smile and tell people: I hope—I want to find other ways where I can continue to make a difference for as long as I live.

In truth, I have spent many years helping to lead the effort to combat global warming, as some of you know, and many of you have been partners in that important effort. In Delaware, we are especially aware of the effects of climate crisis, and our State is sinking. Our State is sinking, and the seas around us are rising. That is not a good combination. Like much of our country, we are experiencing intensifying storms and scorching heat waves.

My wife spent part of last month in North Carolina, Western North Carolina, and just saw the devastation that has been wreaked on our hometown many weeks ago.

And that is why I worked so hard to help pass the Inflation Reduction Act with some of you, which is a prime example of a package that reduces, on the one hand, the cost of prescription medicines while also helping us to fight the climate crisis and, just as important, creating hundreds of thousands of new American jobs, good paying American jobs. The night that we voted here in this Chamber on that bill, we stayed up all night. We finished up at about 6 in the morning. As many of you will recall, it passed by one vote, and that one vote was cast by our Vice President, KAMALA HARRIS, who was presiding over the Senate.

About 6 in the morning, I walked back to my office, headed down to the train station to catch a train and go back to Delaware. I got there about 7:30, got off the train. I thought on my way home, Maybe I should just go by Wawa. And for the people who don’t have an idea who Wawa is, it is convenience stores up and down the East Coast people have just a great affection for. And I went by Wawa to pick up a cup of coffee before, kind of to celebrate before I went home. And it is about 7, 8 in the morning. The lady who was the cashier, I got a small cup of coffee and went to pay for it. And she said—I will never forget—she said: Your money is no good for a small cup of coffee. That is what she said: Your money is no good for a small cup of coffee.

And I said: Could I get a bigger cup of coffee?

(Laughter.)

She said: No. Your money is no good for a small cup of coffee. So I made do

on a small cup of coffee. Then she went on to say, she said: You have been up all night, haven’t you?

I said: Yes.

She said: I know what you have been doing, haven’t you?

I said: Yes, ma’am.

She said: I have a son and a daughter, and I want to make sure that they have a planet to grow up on and a planet to grow old on.

And for all of us who have children or maybe nieces or nephews or grandchildren, the idea to make sure that—we want to make sure that they do have a planet to grow up on and a planet to grow old on.

We also want to make sure that they have jobs, good jobs, so they can support themselves and their families.

Now, this says I am supposed to conclude. I am not finished.

(Laughter.)

This is crazy. In any event, let me conclude—I am almost done, but I am not quite done, but let me conclude with a couple of thoughts relating to a date that just passed, and that was December 7. That is a date that in our State is well-known. It is called Delaware Day, and it is a celebration of December 7, 1787, the day that the people of Delaware ratified, through their 25 representatives, the Constitution. Before anybody else had, Delaware ratified the Constitution. We became the first State, and I hope that years from now we will continue to celebrate Delaware Day in my home State and, frankly, in other places, too. And I hope that people across our Nation will continue to be inspired by the words of our Founding Fathers.

As many colleagues have heard me say here on this floor in the past, Ben Franklin, as he was exiting the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787, was asked: Mr. Franklin, what have you brought here? What have you created here? He said famously:

A Republic, if you can keep it.

A Republic, if you can keep it. The brevity of that response should not cause us to undervalue its essential meaning. Democratic republics are not merely founded on the consent of the people, but they are absolutely dependent upon the active and informed involvement of the people for the continued health of our democracy.

And while there were many things that our Founding Fathers disagreed upon, the one thing that they all agreed on, as you know, is that they didn’t want America ever to be ruled by a king. They wanted to make sure that never happened. And you know what? We still feel that way today.

When we pledge allegiance to the flag or take an oath to defend the Constitution against its enemies, foreign and domestic, we don’t pledge our allegiance to a person or to party. We pledge our allegiance to the country and the Constitution under which we were established.

Let me just close, if I can. I want to thank all of my current and former

staff members for joining. Probably have a bunch of them today, and a lot are watching as well.

Somebody came up with the word “Carpertown.” I don’t know who, but I love it. And it refers—it is kind of like, remember the song by the Eagles, “Hotel California”? “You can check out, but you can never leave.” Carpertown is like that. And there are a lot of people in Carpertown. And for people that worked with me in the Navy and State Treasurer, Congressman, Governor, Senator, to today.

But I want to ask unanimous consent that all of the names of my Senate staff here and back in Delaware be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Jake Abbott, Jessica Abramovich, John Afordakos, Meeran Ahn, William Albanese, Wendy Anderson, Deirdre Armstrong, Janay Austin-Carlson, Landon Bailey, Rony Baltazar, Portia Bamiduro, Missy Banashak, Alexandra Barchuk, Sean Barney, Janine Barr, Gabby Batkin, Jordan Baugh, Sylar Bayer, Cody Baynori, Christina Baysinger, Lauren Beam, Christopher Bell, Bradford Belzak, Roberto Berrios, Sonceria Berry, Elizabeth Berry, James Berryhill, Jan Beukelman, Tanner Bielefeld Pruitt, Marjorie Biles, Giulia Bisconti, Sandra Bodeau, Lora Bonicelli, Mayley Boyce, Latisha Bracy, Alan Bradley, Layla Brooks, Carl Brown, Jeffrey Bullock, Taylor Burnett, Kevin Burris, Jeddiah Bush, Brian Bushweller, Kristin Butler, Cerron Cade.

Brian Cahill, Jacqueline Cameron, Son-Djerry Cameus, Anne Canning, Victoria Carle, Italo Carrieri-Russo, Timothy Casey, Ann Marie Chaney, Rachit Choski, D’Andrea Church, Rachel Chute, Richard Colley, John Collins, Nicole Comisky, Arthur Connolly, Kenneth Connolly, Laura Coogan, Susan Corbin, Egan Cornachione, Carly Covio, Troy Cribb, Megan Cullen, Emily Cunningham, Cecily Cutbill, Natasha Dabrowski, Annie D’Amato, Vijay Das, Bryer Davis, Olivia Davis, Jeffrey Dayton, Heather Dean, Joan DelFattore, Thomas Dessoie, Evelyn Diaz, Krista DiEleuterio, Moira Dillon, Greg Dotson, Matthew Dougherty, Avery Douglas, Gary Downes, James Drueckhammer, Ashley Duffy, Robin Dutta, Susan Edwards, Brian Eiler, Joel Elliott, Tierra Evans.

Jillian Farquharson, Courtney Fillmore, Jared Fish, Owen Fournier, Michael Freehoff, Edward Freil, Maureen French, Natasha Frosina, Imani Games, Susan Gardiner Kimball, Stephen Gardner, Harlan Geer, John Gentile, Laura Gentile, Shahram Ghasemian, Bill Ghent, Lane Giardina, Evan Giesemann, Laura Gillam, Joseph Goffman, Sheila Grant, Katherine Grasso, Kristin Gray, Tamara Green, Heather Guerke, Luke Guidinger, Lauren Gutierrez, Alexander Hackett, Jessica Hafer, Lindsey Hall, Nick Halstead, Beth Hammon, Eric Hanson, Ellen Harrington, Courtney Harris, Stuart Harris, Anaya Harrison, Diane Hastings, Olivia Hayden, Christine Hennessey, Gregory Hershman, Deborah Hersman, Stephen Herst, Rebecca Higgins, Michael Hill, Brian Hockin, Samuel Hodas.

Dylan Hoff, Tyler Hofmann-Reardon, Elwood Holstein, Erik Hopkins, Rebecca Huang, Lisa Hubbard, Kristine Iannelli, Holly Idelson, Amir Ingram, Lori James, Brenna James, Nicolas Jenner, Paige Jennings, Hilary Jochmans, Charles Jones, J. Jonathon Jones, Tyrone Jones, Caroline Jones, Isabel Jones, Andrea Jones, Gary Jones, Helen Kalla, Jennifer Kane, John

Kane, Kajol Kapadia, Katherine Kenna, Mary Scott Kennedy, Peter Kenny, Saadia Khan, Nabeel Kibria, Natasha Kieval, Lauren Kilian, Jessica Killin, John Kilvington, Daniel Kim, Susan Kimball, Trevor Kincaid, Olivia Kirchberg, Steven Klausner, Agatha Kotani (Gucyski), Stephanie Kotin, Jennifer Kramer, Tara Kroft, Mark Lally, Trevor Lalonde, Trey Lambert, Jamaal Lampkin.

Grant Lane, Thomas Lawler, Alexandra Lemieux, Jack Levine, Rachel Levitan, Sarah Lewis, Elizabeth Lewis, William Lewis, Pamela Lilly, Elizabeth Mabry, Bryan Mack, Carolyn Mack, W MacPherson, Jacqueline Maffucci, Ian Magarik, Laurence Magill, David Mapp, Lena Marceno, Joseph Marinelli, Matthew Marshall, Jordan Marshall, Kenneth Martin, Isabelle Martire, Matthew Marzano, Laura Matthews, Eric McBride, Aidan McDonald, Sean McGinty, Karen McGrath, Margaret McIntosh, Charles McLeod, Brooke Meadowcroft, Mark Mendenhall, Kusai Merchant, Lillie Moller, Kaitlyn Montimurro, Mason Moore, Emily Moore, Ashley Morgan, Ethan Morgan, Anne Morgan, Noah Moss, Yasmee Moten, Brooke Mulhearn, Avery Mulligan, Kiley Mulligan, Jonas Munson.

Sheila Murphy, Maryrose Myrtetus, Diana Naylor, Curtis Newman, Blas Nunez Neto, Paul O’Brien, Asi Ofosu, Noah Olson, Latisha Omeruah, Elizabeth Osborne, Amy Overton Hunt, Patricia Pace, Anthony Panicola, Victoria Panzera, Brian Papp Jr, Tony Park, Evan Park, Laura Pastre, Meghan Pennington, Colin Peppard, Elizabeth Phelan, Joseph Pika, Zach Pilchen, Anna Podmaniczky, Laura Poppti, Christopher Prendergast, Edward Prettyman, Kaitlyn Pritchard, Kathryn Pumphrey, Laura Quinter, Judy Rainey, Jessica Ramos-Velazquez, Madeline Ranalli, Meghan Raychaudhuri, Madge Reed Farooq, James Reilly, Mary Frances Repko, Roland Reynolds Jr., Frank Rich III, Chad Robinson, Marcus Robinson, Jaida Rodrigues, Andrew Rogers, Meredith Rosenthal, David Rostker, M Rouse, Houston Ruck.

John Runyan, Wali Rushdan, Racquel Russell, Morgan Russum, Linnea Saby, Sanika Salim, Ian Sams, Michael Santora, Victor Santos, Paul Schmid, MaryBeth Schultz, Kelly Scully, Jim Secreto, Gohar Sedighi, Brian Selander, Lynn Sha, Claire Shanklin, Abigail Shenkle, Andrew Shine, Lauren Sills, Sarah Silverstein, Margaret Simmons, Cathryn Simon, Bradley Simon, Rachel Skaar, Amanda Slater, Jahlilia Smallwood, Monisha Smith, David Smith, Andrew Smith, Alex Smith, Ryan Smith, Robert Snowberger, Sarah Soviak, Emily Spain, Garth Spencer, Rachel Spruill, Donametrina Stallings, Mackenzie Stamp, David Starr, Noah Steimel, R Stokes, Jake Strickland, Angelina Strobach, Stephanie Swain, Alistair Swank.

Julianne Sweeney, Hanna Sweet, Kata Sybenga, Sophia Tarabicos, Katharine Targett, Courtney Taylor, Layne Taylor, Alexandra Teitz, Alex Terr, Mischa Thompson, Emily Tucker, Christophe Tulou, Kaylyn Turner, Kimberly Turner, Peter Tyler, Kathleen Valentine, Jazmin Vargas, Kyle Victor, Alyssa Villanueva, Stephen Vina, Michael Wagers, Campbell Wallace, Erin Walls, Xzaquoinett Warrick, Lydia Wehrley, Richard Welsh, Matthew Wes, Jymayce Wescott, Jennie Westbrook Courts, Emma Wethered, Abram White, Sylvia Whitlock, Melissa Wier, George Williams, Lawrence Windley, Timothy Winstead, Stefan Wirth, Andrew Wishnia, Laura Wisler, Amber Withrow, Raymond Wittlinger, Alexander Wood, Cassandra Worthington, Duane Wright, Bonnie Wu, Lucy Xiao, Jason Yanussi, John Young, and Naomi Zeigler.

Mr. CARPER. I just want to take a moment, if I could, to thank my family

Martha, who is seated right up here to my right. And over the years, I have spoken with members of the Armed Forces who are married, and I have not only thanked them for their service, but I have also thanked their spouses for their service. You know, I have got the person in the uniform; the spouse is not wearing a uniform, but that spouse has served just as much as the person in uniform.

And I want to just say that during the years that I have been privileged to serve as a naval officer, as a Congressman, as a Governor and treasurer, and Senator and all, my wife Martha has served as well as I have, and we are in her debt. And God knows I am in her debt.

Martha, thank you. I love you.

I am also proud to have helped raise three boys who have gone on to become terrific young men that any parent would be proud to call their own, and I also want to salute those who served alongside me representing Delaware, including Members of the Delaware congressional delegation, over the years—people like Ted Kaufman. I am sure our leader here remembers Ted who succeeded Joe Biden; and Mike Castle, who was a House Member, Governor of the State; John Carney, our Governor, former Congressman, and gone on to be mayor of Wilmington pretty soon; and Joe Biden. Those are just some of the people I have gotten to serve with in the House and the Senate.

But I especially want to note my fellow Senator CHRIS COONS, sitting over to my right. How are you doing, bud?

We call each other a lot of things, but I call him “wingman.” And he is my wingman, and I am his as well. He has always had my back, and I will always have his. CHRIS is one of the smartest people and brightest people I think I have ever worked with. He surrounds himself with terrific people as well. He is the senior member of the Foreign Relations Committee. He has traveled the world, and he knows the world’s leaders like I think none of us ever have. He calls Delaware home, and I know he will continue to represent our State very, very well.

And now let me just mention our Senator-elect. I don’t know if she is here today.

Hi, LISA. LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER. LISA is a beloved Member of the U.S. House of Representatives, where she serves as a highly effective member of a much sought-after committee, and that is the Energy and Commerce Committee. But many years ago, she joined my congressional team as an intern. And from that humble beginning, she went on to become a two-time cabinet member when I was Governor of the State of Delaware. She is smart, is a caring daughter, sister, mother, and now a grandmother, too. She leads an excellent staff and has a can-do attitude, as well as a deep faith. She is also a great dancer, for what it is worth.

For when my Senate colleagues said to me: TC—a lot of people here call me TC. Some call me other things.

(Laughter.)

But when they say: TC, we are really going to miss you in the Senate, I say to them: 2 weeks after LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER joins you in the Senate, you won't remember my name.

(Laughter.)

And they said: Oh, yes, we will. Yes, we will. I don't know that I believe them, but it is nice of them to say that.

In closing, just once again let me thank the people of Delaware for entrusting in me the responsibility of serving them for all of these years. It has been a privilege. It has been a source of great joy that I will always cherish.

I want to say to our leader, before I close, thank you very much for your kind words earlier in the morning. One of the things I understand he mentioned is our love for music and music lyrics. So with that in mind, let me close with this—with apologies to Neil Young of Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young, let me end with this:

Keep on rockin' in the free world. Keep on rockin' in the free world.

It has been my joy to be your colleague, and I am looking forward to getting to know all of you and working with you in Delaware, if we can ever be of help or support in any way at all. God bless you all. Thank you so much. (Applause. Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). The Senator from Delaware.

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS R. CARPER

Mr. COONS. Madam President, I rise to speak in thanks and in recognition of my dear friend and colleague, the senior Senator from the great State of Delaware, TOM CARPER.

All of us have had a chance to hear his farewell speech, but I get a chance to add just a little bit here on the end.

You know, when folks have said to Senator CARPER: What do you plan on doing in retirement at home? He has repeatedly said: I don't plan on retiring.

And this has a history to it. As you know, in the arc of his decades of service in our Senate and in our State, he was our Governor. And he has described himself many times as a "recovering Governor" who never really recovered. He never stopped being intimately interested in and engaged in every detail of our community.

And I cannot thank you enough, TC, for your more than five decades of service to our Nation, to our State, to our party, to the world. I have a lot of remarks, and I will try not to use all of them, but I think you are the alltime champion, having been elected 14 times statewide: State treasurer, Congressman, Governor, Senator. You are frugal. I have had the experience of your having made a modest contribution to a very early campaign of mine, and I failed to timely deposit the check, and

not long thereafter, you accosted me and said: You never cleared this check. It is in my checkbook.

Everybody knows that you drove a fabulous minivan more than 400,000 miles. And you took that passion for frugality and for reasonableness and for attention to details to being the State treasurer, as you shared with all of us, to restoring our triple A bond rating.

When I first became county executive, nothing was more important than that lesson: Protect your bond rating. And you did a great job as State treasurer.

You also are someone who as Governor had a saying you were very fond of: Figure out what works; do more of that.

Figure out what works; do more of that.

Everybody here knows he makes you say important things twice.

And so as an active member of the National Governors Association, as a mentor to other Governors, as a mentor to young county elected officials, TC did a great job with figuring out what worked well in other States around the country and then applying it both at home and making sure that other Governors had a chance to learn from that around our country.

I can't neglect Senator CARPER's remarkable commitment to our Nation's military.

As you saw, of all the people he could have chosen to honor in his farewell speech, his Uncle Bob, his family, service and sacrifice anchors him. Having gone on a naval ROTC scholarship to Ohio State and having served three tours in Vietnam and then for decades in the Navy Reserve, Senator CARPER is the last Vietnam veteran to serve in this body. That is a long and proud legacy that stretches from Senators McCain and Kerry to Hagel to Harkin.

But Senator CARPER, in our State, has done more to fight for the VA, to fight for veterans, to fight for a veterans cemetery, to fight for a veterans home, and to personally engage on Memorial Day with the families of every Delawarean who has fallen in combat in living memory. The decency, the commitment, the passion for those who put their life on the line for our Nation is unmatched in our State's history. And we and our Nation are grateful to you for that.

As the chair of two different committees, HSGAC and EPW, you worked tirelessly to build relationships, even with some of the most famously difficult of our colleagues. I make no reference to a former Senator from Oklahoma. I am just saying, that when you tackled postal issues, many of us wished you all the best. And you put your optimism and your positive spirit to the wheel and made real progress.

Along with Senator CAPITO, of your native State of West Virginia, you have made amazing things happen, from WRDA to the Inflation Reduction Act to the bipartisan infrastructure law.

Your passion for air quality and for clean air and for making sure that we preserve the blessings of our natural environment will be remembered fittingly by having the Bombay Hook Visitor Center named for you.

We talk in Delaware about something called the Delaware Way, which I really principally learned from how you led as Governor. You cleaned up our party. You worked across the aisle. You balanced the budget. You managed a State of great complexity and importance. But you found it by building personal connections by being kind and respectful to others and by building a remarkable community that served alongside you.

I don't know either where the term "Carper Town" came from, but it is an amazing network of alumni that includes people of all different ages and backgrounds, skills, and traditions who have been brought together to join your passion for public service.

When asked at your retirement announcement what you would most miss about being a Senator, TC answered: "My staff," which is a reminder that you have built an incredible community dedicated passionately to service.

When I first got here to the Senate, my senior Senator was the one who literally showed me the ropes. He gave me the combination to the gym. He urged me to go to weekly Prayer Breakfast or Bible study and to learn from codels overseas and from time spent over meals together here in the Senate.

We have been guided by our shared faith, our shared commitment to family, a commitment to bipartisanship, and a deep and abiding love of Amtrak. I will never forget a night where we were stuck for 7 hours in the bracing cold as two power lines shut down the Amtrak line north. Senator CARPER remained cheerful, upbeat, and optimistic about the possibility that we would someday get off that train and be warm again. And the Newark Amtrak station is named in his honor, appropriately.

TOM, you are a grounded man. Your childhood dreams for playing for the Detroit Tigers may not have been realized, but you as a native son of West Virginia have made an incredible mark on your adopted, beloved home State of Delaware. You have made a lasting mark: as State treasurer and Governor, as Congressman, and Senator.

I will never forget when as a very, very young man I had just returned from South Africa and a member of my church arranged an opportunity for me to have lunch with you in the House dining room. I was 25. You gave me your undivided attention, your enthusiasm, your passion. You made me feel like the center of the world, and it had an enormous impact on my commitment to service.

And when I ran for county council president—a long-shot bid that I should not have won in a four-way primary—and you were running for the U.S. Senate, an important and difficult race,

you didn't just call me once and wish me well; you didn't just send me a \$50 check. You agreed to stand beside me at football games, at Wawas, at community picnics, and to introduce me to thousands of Delawareans.

You have given Annie and me a gift we can never repay. I am so grateful for your service, your leadership, and your compassion.

You are anchored in your family.

And, Martha, thank you so much for being an incredible partner, not just to Tom but also to our State, for having been the first lady and for having been someone with an incredible career of accomplishment at DuPont and around the world. To the two of you for raising Christopher and Ben and Greg and for sharing them with us as well, thank you.

You are rooted in your faith: II James teaches us, "Faith without works is dead." And St. Francis once said: "Preach the Gospel always; when necessary, use words."

By your acts, we have known your faith. And it has made all the difference. And you have changed me, our delegation, our State, and our world.

Captain CARPER, Bravo Zulu. Well done, sir. Thank you.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, on May 22, 2023, TOM CARPER told a crowd of admirers in Delaware that he would not seek a fifth term in the Senate, bringing to a close nearly 50 years in public service. Two days later, he delivered a keynote address at a reunion of 200 Vietnam war former POWs, which was held at the Nixon Library in California.

Those two events speak volumes about the character and commitment of my valued colleague and good friend TOM CARPER. From State treasurer to Governor to Congressman and Senator, TOM has been elected to statewide public office a record 14 times. In every way, he has justified the trust the people of the First State have placed in him.

That remarkable accomplishment came after TOM served three tours of duty as a naval flight officer in Vietnam. He is the last veteran of that conflict in the Senate and a powerful and effective voice for those with whom he served.

In 1991, then-Congressman CARPER led a bipartisan delegation of Vietnam veterans back to Southeast Asia. Thanks to TOM's leadership, that trip helped lay the groundwork for ongoing efforts to account for Americans listed as missing in action. He exemplifies the ethic of the U.S. military that no one is left behind or ever forgotten.

In the Senate, TOM's priorities have included improving our healthcare system, protecting our environment, investing in infrastructure, and strengthening our national security. And I feel so fortunate to have had the pleasure to work with TOM on many issues. As a

member of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee following the 9/11 attacks, TOM and I were strong allies in supporting America's first responders. He has been a champion for the SAFER and AFG Programs that help provide our firefighters with the equipment, training, and support they need. In fact, TOM and I serve as coauthors of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus.

TOM and I have also had a long partnership in strengthening the U.S. Postal Service. Twenty years ago, we introduced legislation that became law to reform the Postal Service—the first overhaul in nearly three decades to ensure universal service, affordable rates, and community access.

Another issue that brought us together is protecting the environment and public health from mercury contamination, a particular threat to children and pregnant women. The Comprehensive National Mercury Monitoring Act we have championed would allow the United States to take a leadership role in generating a long-term mercury monitoring program that would benefit not only our Nation but also the world.

And I think it would be a great tribute to Senator CARPER if we passed that bill and got it signed into law before the end of this Congress.

From Southeast Asia to Wilmington to Washington, Senator TOM CARPER has served with great distinction. Our Nation is grateful. And I wish him and Martha all the best in the years to come.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I want to thank the Senator from Maine for her great words of serving so long with our friend and colleague TOM CARPER.

First of all, I want to say to TOM, I appreciate the very kind words that he mentioned about me and us in our work together on the committee. As we have said, he has dedicated nearly his entire adult life to the service of our country in many different ways and to the home State of Delaware.

But don't let the "Delaware" next to his name fool you. All those good family values, all those good sturdy qualities of honesty and service, steadfastness were rooted in his birth in the great State of West Virginia. Anytime I tried to get anything over on him and say, "Yeah, but I'm from West Virginia," he would always say, "I am too." So he is always very proud of his West Virginia roots. He had a couple of family reunions there during our time of service together.

Then, in 2021, we had the opportunity to have an EPW field hearing in his birthplace of Beckley, WV, and I will tell you, at that particular—not one relative of mine was there, but Tom had his relatives there to cheer him on. So I know it was a very special occasion for him, and it certainly was for me as well.

As the ranking member of the EPW Committee, serving alongside my chairman, Senator CARPER, over the last 4 years, I have had the distinct pleasure to work in tandem with him on things he has mentioned, most especially infrastructure and energy and the environmental challenges our country faces. We don't always see eye to eye, but we have developed a relationship that is centered on trust and respect.

We do talk every Thursday afternoon, and I want to tell you that I told your successor that I think this is something we need to continue because we kept that valuable relationship going through times when we might not have agreed and couldn't get to the same place.

But I think it is essential that the relationship we created really did give us these bipartisan achievements: the surface transportation reauthorization legislation, the drinking water and wastewater infrastructure legislation. Those bills became the foundation of the bipartisan infrastructure law. Had they not been there, I am not sure we would have ended up as well as we did as a body. It is paying dividends in my State, in his State, in Senator COLLINS' State—all across the country.

Additionally, we led the charge by offering the ADVANCE Act, which is the Advanced Nuclear Act. That bill, which is now law, I think will maintain America's nuclear energy leadership by encouraging more innovation and investment right here in our States. It sets the stage for the proliferation of reliable and safe nuclear power.

We also just recently crafted our—I think it might be our second or third Water Resources Development Act. It is pending. Hopefully, we will get it across the floor here in the next day or two, and it is my hope that we will soon pass this. But I did name this bill, so everybody is going to listen to this. Get down here and vote for the Thomas R. Carper Water Resources Development Act. Hopefully, we will do it tomorrow.

But outside of Chairman CARPER the legislator and the native West Virginian I have known, I have gotten to know the person as well. He is just a very kind man. He is always advising people.

We call them in our office—I don't know that I have ever told you this, but we call his sayings Carperisms. We have many Carperisms. I am skipping a few, but I am telling you the one that always, I think, embodies you, and that is to follow the Golden Rule and treat others as you would like to be treated. He has always shown respect to my staff, to our committee's witnesses, and to all of those who have worked together through the years.

He is also a very pragmatic leader, obviously being elected numerous times in Delaware in all different kinds of posts, guided by his mantra of—here is another Carperism—figuring out what works and doing more of it. It is

a pretty simple thing. And he is a self-proclaimed recovering Governor, but he is well-versed in the art of getting things done.

Above all, Chairman CARPER is a true American. He served his country bravely overseas in wartime, and he has given the last 23 years of his life to the service of this Chamber. Chairman CARPER has consistently dedicated himself to making our country as strong as it can be and delivering for the people he represents. His character, compassion, and, yes, dogged determination will certainly be missed in the U.S. Senate, but the impacts of his work will continue to make a difference for generations to come.

Chairman CARPER—my friend TOM—it has been an honor to work with you, alongside you, and deliver for our country and for the people we both love so very, very much. So I wish you the best—you and Martha the best.

I will tell you what. That man loves his wife Martha.

The way he talks about you in such a venerated way is the way we should all be talking about our loved ones. I have a deep appreciation for that.

So I wish you all the best. Thanks for your years of service, your friendship, and thanks for giving me a little part of your heart over these last several years because it has really helped me, and it has helped us work together so well.

Thank you.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Noel Wise, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

NOMINATION OF NOEL WISE

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Noel Wise to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California.

Born in Cherry Hill, NJ, Judge Wise earned her B.S. at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas in 1989; her J.D., cum laude, from Nova Southeastern University Law School in 1993; and her J.S.M. from Stanford Law School in 2002. After graduating from law school, Wise served as a law clerk to Justice Harry Lee Anstead on Florida's Fourth District Court of Appeals.

Between 1994 and 2002, Judge Wise served in various roles at the Department of Justice, including as a trial attorney in the environmental enforcement section from 1999 to 2002 and the environmental crimes section from 1998–1999; on detail as an assistant U.S. attorney from 1997 to 1998; and as an honors trial attorney from 1994 to 1997.

From 2002 to 2004, Judge Wise worked as of counsel at Stoel Rives, LLP, advising clients on civil and criminal environmental law, land use, energy, and grand jury inquisitions. She also litigated and settled civil and criminal

cases in State and Federal court. From 2004 to 2006, Judge Wise worked first as in-house counsel and later as the acting director/manager renewable power generation at Pacific Gas and Electric Company, PG&E. Before her judicial service, Wise ran her own law firm—Wise Gleicher—from 2006 to 2014.

Since 2014, she has served as a judge on the Superior Court of California in Alameda County. During this decade of service, she has held several additional roles in the California judiciary, including working as a judge and supervising judge in the family law division; being a panel judge and supervising judge in the appellate division; and holding those same roles in the State's civil division.

Judge Wise has issued at least 10,000 written decisions that are substantive orders or appealable judgments. In addition, she has conducted approximately 500 settlement conferences, presided over thousands of hearings, and issued approximately 290 decisions while serving on the appellate division.

The American Bar Association unanimously rated Judge Wise as “well qualified,” and her nomination is strongly supported by her home State Senators, Mr. PADILLA and Ms. BUTLER.

Judge Wise's judicial experience, coupled with her experience in public service and private practice, have prepared her to serve the Northern District of California honorably as a district judge.

I am proud to support her nomination.

VOTE ON WISE NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Wise nomination?

Mr. COONS. 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 executive clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL), and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 321 Ex.]

YEAS—50

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Sanders
Bennet	Hirono	Schatz
Blumenthal	Kaine	Schiff
Booker	Kelly	Schumer
Brown	Kim	Shaheen
Cantwell	King	Sinema
Cardin	Klobuchar	Smith
Carper	Lujan	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Coons	Merkley	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Warner
Duckworth	Murray	Warnock
Durbin	Ossoff	Warren
Fetterman	Padilla	Welch
Gillibrand	Peters	Whitehouse
Hassan	Reed	Wyden
Heinrich	Rosen	

NAYS—47

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

NOT VOTING—3

Marshall	McConnell	Vance
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The nomination was confirmed.

(Ms. HASSAN assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The Senator from Vermont.

NATIONAL PRIORITIES

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, as the holiday season approaches, it is an appropriate time to talk about our national priorities, where we are as a nation, and where we should be going into the future.

Right now, tonight, as we assemble here in Washington, DC, there are thousands of people in this city and in the surrounding areas who are sleeping out on the streets. And that is not just Washington, DC, it is almost every major city in the country.

When we talk about the housing crisis, it is not just homelessness, it is a reality that millions of people in Vermont and throughout this country are paying 40, 50, 60 percent of their limited incomes for housing. We have a major housing crisis. We need to invest in low-income and affordable housing.

Today, in the United States, in the richest country in the history of the world, which today has more income and wealth inequality than it has ever had, while the very rich become much richer, 60 percent of our people are living paycheck to paycheck and millions of workers are earning starvation wages, barely enough to stay alive.

The time is long overdue, when we talk about our national priorities, that this Congress pass a livable minimum wage. Raise that minimum wage to a livable level so that no worker in this country who works 40 hours a week lives in poverty—not a radical idea.

In the United States today, we have a broken and dysfunctional healthcare system whose major function is not to provide quality, affordable care to our people but to make billions in profits for the insurance companies and the drug companies.

The truth is that while 85 million Americans are uninsured or underinsured, while 60,000 die each year because they don't get to a doctor in time, the insurance companies and the drug companies make tens of billions of dollars a year in profit.