

(C) in subparagraph (C), by striking “section 5(a)(7)” and inserting “section 5(a)(5)”.

(b) ORDER OF VESSEL TO LEAVE WATERS WHERE PACIFIC ISLAND PARTY INVESTIGATING ALLEGED TREATY INFRINGEMENT.—Section 11(b) (16 U.S.C. 973i(b)) is amended by striking “paragraph 7 of Article 5 of”.

#### SEC. 730. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION.

Section 12 (16 U.S.C. 973j) is amended to read as follows:

##### “SEC. 12. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION.

“(a) PROHIBITED DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN INFORMATION.—Pursuant to section 552(b)(3) of title 5, United States Code, except as provided in subsection (b), the Secretary shall keep confidential and may not disclose the following information:

“(1) Information provided to the Secretary by the Administrator that the Administrator has designated confidential.

“(2) Information collected by observers.

“(3) Information submitted to the Secretary by any person in compliance with the requirements of this Act.

“(b) AUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN INFORMATION.—The Secretary may disclose information described in subsection (a)—

“(1) if disclosure is ordered by a court;

“(2) if the information is used by a Federal employee—

“(A) for enforcement; or

“(B) in support of the homeland security missions and non-homeland security missions of the Coast Guard as defined in section 888 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 468);

“(3) if the information is used by a Federal employee or an employee of a Fishery Management Council for the administration of the Treaty or fishery management and monitoring;

“(4) to the Administrator, in accordance with the requirements of the Treaty and this Act;

“(5) to the secretariat or equivalent of an international fisheries management organization of which the United States is a member, in accordance with the requirements or decisions of such organization, and insofar as possible, in accordance with an agreement that prevents public disclosure of the identity of any person that submits such information;

“(6) if the Secretary has obtained written authorization from the person providing such information, and disclosure does not violate other requirements of this Act; or

“(7) in an aggregate or summary form that does not directly or indirectly disclose the identity of any person that submits such information.

“(c) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—

“(1) Nothing in this section shall be construed to adversely affect the authority of Congress, including a Committee or Member thereof, to obtain any record or information.

“(2) The absence of a provision similar to paragraph (1) in any other provision of law shall not be construed to limit the ability of the Senate or the House of Representatives, including a Committee or Member thereof, to obtain any record or information.”.

#### SEC. 731. CLOSED AREA STOWAGE REQUIREMENTS.

Section 13 (16 U.S.C. 973k) is amended by striking “. In particular, the boom shall be lowered” and all that follows and inserting “and in accordance with any requirements established by the Secretary.”.

#### SEC. 732. OBSERVERS.

Section 14 (16 U.S.C. 973l) is repealed.

#### SEC. 733. FISHERIES-RELATED ASSISTANCE.

Section 15 (16 U.S.C. 973m) is amended to read as follows:

##### “SEC. 15. FISHERIES-RELATED ASSISTANCE.

“The Secretary and the Secretary of State may provide assistance to a Pacific Island Party to benefit such Pacific Island Party from the development of fisheries resources

and the operation of fishing vessels that are licensed pursuant to the Treaty, including—

“(1) technical assistance;

“(2) training and capacity building opportunities;

“(3) facilitation of the implementation of private sector activities or partnerships; and

“(4) other activities as determined appropriate by the Secretary and the Secretary of State.”.

#### SEC. 734. ARBITRATION.

Section 16 (16 U.S.C. 973n) is amended—

(1) by striking “Article 6 of” after “arbitral tribunal under”; and

(2) by striking “paragraph 3 of that Article” and all that follows through “under such paragraph” and inserting “the Treaty, shall determine the location of the arbitration, and shall represent the United States in reaching agreement under the Treaty”.

#### SEC. 735. DISPOSITION OF FEES, PENALTIES, FORFEITURES, AND OTHER MONEYS.

Section 17 (16 U.S.C. 973o) is amended by striking “Article 4 of”.

#### SEC. 736. ADDITIONAL AGREEMENTS.

Section 18 (16 U.S.C. 973p) is amended by striking “Within 30 days after” and all that follows and inserting “The Secretary may establish procedures for review of any agreements for additional fishing access entered into pursuant to the Treaty.”.

#### Subtitle C—Other Matters

#### SEC. 741. NORTH PACIFIC RESEARCH BOARD ENHANCEMENT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “North Pacific Research Board Enhancement Act”.

(b) AMENDMENTS.—Section 401(e) of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998 (43 U.S.C. 1474d(e)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (L), by striking “and” after the semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (M), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(C) in subparagraph (N), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(D) by inserting after subparagraph (N) the following:

“(O) one member who shall represent Alaska Natives and possesses personal knowledge of, and direct experience with, subsistence uses and shall be nominated by the Board and appointed by the Secretary.”; and

(E) by adding at the end the following: “Board members appointed under subparagraphs (N) and (O) shall serve for 3-year terms, and may be reappointed once.”;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (6); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following:

“(5) If the amount made available for a fiscal year under subsection (c)(2) is less than the amount made available in the previous fiscal year, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration may increase the 15 percent cap on administrative expenses provided under paragraph (4)(B) for that fiscal year to prioritize—

“(A) continuing operation of the Board;

“(B) maximizing the percentage of funds directed to research; and

“(C) maintaining the highest quality standards in administering grants under this subsection.”.

(c) WAIVER.—Beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending on the date that is 5 years after such date of enactment, the 15 percent cap on funds to provide support for the North Pacific Research Board and administer grants under section 401(e)(4)(B) of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998 (43 U.S.C. 1474d(e)(4)(B)) shall be waived.

Mr. CRUZ. I yield the floor.

#### HALT ALL LETHAL TRAFFICKING OF FENTANYL ACT—Motion to Proceed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

#### TRUMP EXECUTIVE ORDERS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I want to note that we just learned that the Trump administration is getting ready to cut nearly 80,000 employees from the VA. Slashing nearly 80,000 VA staff is a benefit cut by another name. No one should think this doesn't dramatically hurt our veterans who have served us so well.

This staffing cut is a betrayal of our promise to our servicemembers—a betrayal to the promise of our servicemembers. It is going to mean longer wait times, fewer appointments, and ultimately less healthcare for our veterans. It is outrageous.

No one in America bargained for this, and Democrats are going to fight this tooth and nail, working with our veterans service organizations to fight these awful, unfair cuts that take out the desire to give tax cuts to billionaires on our veterans who served us so well. This is just one of the most outrageous things they have done, and there is a long list.

#### UKRAINE

Now, another outrageous thing that is happening with the Trump administration is what is happening in Ukraine.

First, I want to thank my colleagues for bringing these five resolutions to the floor. I thank Senator SANDERS for taking the lead on this issue, Senators BENNET, VAN HOLLEN, DURBIN, BLUMENTHAL, and WELCH. Let's start by speaking some much needed truth.

Three years ago, Vladimir Putin brought war and destruction to the people of Ukraine. He started the war, not any mythology that comes from Donald Trump or our Republican colleagues. Vladimir Putin started the war. Full stop.

His tanks and airstrikes have obliterated homes and schools. He is slaughtering civilians as a way to try and win territory in Ukraine. He has kidnapped children. The people of Ukraine did not ask for this war. President Zelenskyy did not start this war. Putin did. That is the truth of this lie after lie after lie that comes out of the Trump administration. This is one of the most egregious.

The people of Ukraine have struggled. President Zelenskyy has led them valiantly, risking his own life, and now the nerve of Donald Trump and others to say Zelenskyy started the war.

Donald Trump is trying to rewrite history and gain favor with Vladimir Putin. He blames Ukraine for starting the war, and now he is shutting off, halting, military aid that Ukraine desperately needs on the battlefield—desperately needs—and we need to restore it.

He has frozen critical intelligence sharing between our countries. He has allowed Putin to launch cyber operations against us, here in the United States. That jeopardizes the privacy of American citizens.

He has frozen intelligence sharing between our countries, and he has brought President Zelenskyy to the Oval Office, only to lecture and insult him in front of the whole world.

Guess who was laughing as he watched. Vladimir Putin.

To side with Putin is to put America at risk. My Democratic colleagues will make that clear over the next several hours. To side with Putin is to betray the values that define America, values our troops have died for in battlefields across the world, from Gettysburg to Normandy, to Iwo Jima.

The Senate must respond. Democrats and Republicans have done so before. I worked with then-Leader McCONNELL to get Ukraine desperately needed aid. And today's resolutions affirm very basic bipartisan ideas that, hopefully, still remain with our Republican colleagues—that the U.S. Senate stands with democracy, stands with the great people of Ukraine, and against the dictator—the brutal dictator—Vladimir Putin and his war crimes.

History is clear—perfectly clear. Appeasing autocrats is like putting out a fire with kerosene. In the long run, it will only make autocracy more powerful and the citizenry of America less safe. That is why today the Senate must speak in one voice, Democrats and Republicans together, and pass these resolutions.

I hope that is what happens, and I yield the floor to my colleague from Vermont, who has led the charge on this so important an issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 109

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I thank the minority leader for his comments.

I am here tonight with colleagues who have worked extremely hard to protect the sovereignty of Ukraine and to defend democracy in that country and, in fact, throughout the world. And I thank all of my colleagues for getting on the floor this evening and for the resolutions that they will be bringing forth.

I am not a historian, but I do know that, for the last 250 years, since the inception of our great country, despite our imperfections, the United States has stood in the world as a symbol of democracy. And all over the world—all over the world—people have looked to our country as an example of freedom and self-governance to which the rest of the world could aspire. People have long looked to our Declaration of Independence and our Constitution as blueprints for how to establish governments of the people, by the people, and for the people.

Tragically, all of that is now changing. As President Trump moves this

country toward authoritarianism, he is aligning himself with dictators and despots who share his disdain for democracy and the rule of law.

Last week—just last week—in a radical departure from longstanding U.S. policy, the Trump administration voted against a United Nations resolution which clearly stated that Russia began the horrific war in Ukraine. That U.N. resolution also called on Russia to withdraw its forces from occupied Ukraine, in line with international law.

The resolution was brought forward by our closest allies, countries that we have been aligned with for God knows how many years, including the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, and dozens of other democratic nations. And 93 countries at the U.N. voted yes on that resolution.

Rather than side with our longstanding allies to preserve democracy and uphold international law, President Trump voted with authoritarian nations like Russia, North Korea, Iran, and Belarus to oppose the resolution. Many of the other opponents of that resolution are undemocratic nations propped up by Russian military aid.

But it wasn't just the U.N. vote. Pathetically, President Trump also told an outrageous lie, claiming that it was Ukraine that started the war, not Russia. He also called Zelenskyy a dictator, rather than the leader of a democratic nation, as he is.

As we discuss Ukraine tonight, it is terribly important that we not forget who Vladimir Putin is and why he is no friend of the United States and why we should not be in an alliance with him against Ukraine.

Putin is a man who crushed Russia's movement toward democracy after the end of the Cold War. Putin is a man who steals elections, murders political dissidents, and crushes freedom of the press. He has maintained control in Russia by offering the oligarchs there a simple deal: If they grant him absolute power and share the spoils—and he, by the way, is one of the wealthiest people in the world—he would let them steal as much as they wanted from the Russian people.

The result: While the vast majority of the Russian population struggles economically, Putin and his fellow oligarchs stash trillions of dollars in offshore tax havens.

And so today, 26 years after he took power, Putin is the absolute ruler of Russia, and I think, as everyone knows, Russia's elections are blatantly fraudulent—a sham.

And Putin is the man who sparked the bloodiest war in Europe since World War II. More than 3 years ago, on February 24, 2022, Putin ordered a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, in clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Russian land, air, and naval forces have attacked and occupied territory across Ukraine.

Since that terrible day, more than a million people have been killed or injured because of Putin's war. Putin's forces have massacred civilians and kidnapped thousands of Ukrainian children, bringing them back to Russian reeducation camps.

These atrocities led the International Criminal Court to issue an arrest warrant for Putin in 2023 as a war criminal—a war criminal. That is who we are aligning ourselves with.

And still today, Russia continues its attacks, raining down hundreds of missiles and drones on Ukrainian citizens. Russian forces illegally occupy about 20 percent of Ukraine's sovereign territory.

This war could end today, right now. If Putin gave up his outrageous effort to conquer a neighboring country, the war could end today. The killing could stop right now if Putin gave that order, and that simply is what my resolution says to Vladimir Putin: Stop the killing. Obey international law. Withdraw your forces and cease your attacks on Ukraine. And I, honestly, just don't know how anybody in the U.S. Senate could object to that simple demand.

Now, more than at any time in recent history, it is imperative that the Senate come together in a bipartisan manner to make it clear that we stand for democracy, not authoritarianism; that we stand for international law, not conquest by force; and that we stand with Ukraine and fellow democracies throughout the world, not with the murderous dictator of Russia.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 109, which was submitted earlier today; further, that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I rise to object to this. Senator SANDERS has brought us a resolution which very simply states that Russia must immediately and completely and unconditionally withdraw from the territory of Ukraine. This isn't even a law. It isn't even a bill. It is only a resolution.

Now, there isn't anybody that disagrees with this. I certainly agree with the substance of this, but this is going to have absolutely zero effect of any kind. If my good friend Senator SANDERS believes that Vladimir Putin is watching this show on TV and says, "Huh, they passed a resolution saying I should get out of Ukraine; so I guess I will pack up and go," you are delusional if you think it is going to have any effect of any kind on Vladimir Putin.

However, having said that, I don't think it is a secret to anyone that there are very delicate negotiations going on. There are four entities involved. Obviously, Ukraine is involved,

the United States is involved, Russia is involved, and our European allies are involved. There is constant conversation going on.

I think a lot of people were upset when they saw the exchange this weekend, understandably. But, look, what you are looking at is the tip of the iceberg. Everybody wants the same outcome and that is to have peace in Ukraine.

There is one man on this planet—one man—that can make that happen, and that is Donald J. Trump. He promised he would do that in the election. He is making very significant strides in that regard.

And to my good friend Senator SANDERS, this is not helpful to the activities that are going on to try to get this resolved. You may think you know what is going on, but I can guarantee with absolute certainty, you do not know what is going on as far as the negotiations are concerned to get this over with. What you are looking at is the tip of the iceberg, and this is not going to be helpful to getting to the point that you want to get to, that I want to get to, that everyone wants to get to, and that is to get peace in Ukraine.

On that basis, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Let me respond to my friend from Idaho. I think he said, to paraphrase him a bit, there is one man who can stop the war. You are right. But that man doesn't live here in Washington, DC. That man happens to live in Moscow, and his name is Vladimir Putin. He is the one who started the war. And, in my view, when we ally ourselves with Putin, when we threaten and, in fact, cut back on military support or intelligence support for Ukraine, do you know what we are telling that one man? We are saying you have got a green light. The United States is withdrawing. You do what you want. You continue the war. You continue to pummel the people of Ukraine, who have already suffered so terribly.

So I think it is true that there are many approaches to how we can end this war, and I agree with my friend that we all have the common goal of wanting to end this war. But I think the fastest way forward is in a bipartisan way. You have 100 U.S. Senators and hopefully 435 Members of the House who stand up and say: Mr. Putin, you started this terrible war. You are acting illegally. You are acting barbarically. Stop that war.

That, in my mind, would be a major step forward to ending the atrocities we are currently seeing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MCCORMICK). The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I respect my friend, but I vehemently disagree that this resolution is going to cause Vladimir Putin to end this war.

My good friend says that Vladimir Putin could end this war. He does not

have the ability to end this war. This war is going to end when there is an agreement by the four entities involved: Ukraine, Russia, the United States, and our European allies. When those four reach an agreement, there will be an end to this war. That can be done by Donald J. Trump.

I guarantee you, Vladimir Putin does not have the ability to bring those four entities together to end this war.

Again, this is not helpful. You don't know what the negotiations are that are going on, and this is going in the wrong direction, and that is the reason I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. One brief remark because I strongly disagree on this issue with my friend.

You think it takes Trump to end the war. You think that Putin alone can't end the war. Well, who do you think started the war? Who do you think runs Russia with an iron fist? If, tomorrow, Putin thought it was to his advantage to end this war, he would do it, and as a dictator, he can do it.

So, with that, Mr. President, I would—I don't want to yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Again, to my good friend Senator SANDERS I would say that Putin does not have that ability. He simply does not have the ability. You talked about how he started this and how he could end it. He could have ended it shortly after he started it. He is in so deep in this, he cannot end it. It is going to take an agreement between the four entities to end it. That is how it is going to end.

Mr. SANDERS. Could I ask my friend—I mean this sincerely—Senator RISCH, would you agree with me that he is a dictator who runs Russia?

Mr. RISCH. I don't—the answer to that is yes, but I don't want to do a quiz here.

Mr. SANDERS. All right. The point is, he is a dictator, and he can end the war unilaterally, in my view.

I yield the floor.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 110

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am going to ask unanimous consent on a resolution concerning one aspect of this conflict in Ukraine that is particularly compelling, from my point of view. It is a little different than the Senator from Vermont's, but I think it is very important that it be raised and part of our consideration.

War brings out the worst in humans, there is no doubt about it. Russia, under the bloody leadership of Vladimir Putin, has been guilty of some of the worst wartime atrocities the mind can imagine—murders, mass murders, rapes, torture, deliberate targeting of hospitals and civilians. That has been the 3-year strategy of Vladimir Putin to bring Ukraine to its knees.

But one of the most horrific atrocities is Russia's kidnapping of Ukrain-

ian children. I cannot even imagine the reality of this. Since Russia's full-scale war of aggression started in 2022, the Government of Russia has abducted, forcibly transferred, facilitated the illegal deportation of at least 20,000 Ukrainian children—20,000 children forcibly taken from their homes, families, and communities to a place they have never known.

The depravity of this Putin strategy is hard to imagine, but Putin and his government know no humanity, no morality. It is not surprising that Putin would stoop to such a repulsive strategy. That is why today I am asking unanimous consent to pass a resolution condemning Russia's abduction of Ukrainian children.

I am calling on Russia to work with the international community to return all of these children to their families. There is no tactful way to violate the sovereignty of a nation, but Putin takes depravity to a new extreme with his kidnapping of Ukrainian children. This barbaric act must be condemned.

It should be easy for Members on both sides of the aisle to just imagine for a moment if this had happened to American children. It should be clear to everyone that President Trump cannot side with this grotesque child-kidnapping by President Putin. I am sure he does not.

But it has to be a priority of any peace process to acknowledge Putin's responsibility for the invasion and the terrible policies in Ukraine.

So I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 110, submitted earlier today; further, that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, to my good friend from Illinois, I say I am going to object to this, and it is not because of the substance of the resolution. You correctly stated what the resolution states, but, again, I think you, along with myself and every Member of this body, want to see the fighting stop in Ukraine. That is a necessity. It has to happen.

The things that are happening are going on right now. There are discussions going on right now. As I said to my good friend Senator SANDERS, you may think you know what is going on on this because you watched what happened this weekend. I can tell you with absolute certainty that you do not know the discussions and what is happening as the train moves forward to try to resolve this.

This isn't a resolution that is going to happen with a whole bunch of people getting involved and trying to lay out different things that they want to get to resolution. It is going to be complicated. It is going to be complex.

Again, I come back to the fact that there is one person who is in the center

of this that can make this happen, and that is Donald J. Trump.

Our passing resolutions here is not helpful to the efforts that are trying to be done to resolve this. So as a result of that, I am going to object to it, and as a result of that, I do object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would just like to say briefly, I respect my friend from Idaho. We have a difference of opinion on this.

I cannot imagine any resolution of this conflict on Ukraine that does not take into consideration these 20,000 kids who have been kidnapped by the Russians. They are going through this terrible indoctrination where they are being punished if they won't sing the Russian national anthem, where they are demanding that they learn a new language and develop a new loyalty to Russia. This is outrageous.

The international courts have branded Vladimir Putin as a war criminal, and this is one of the reasons.

I cannot imagine there will be any resolution of this peaceably without bringing these children back home to their families, and for us to be on the record saying that does not seem to me to be intrusive or a radical point of view. It just reflects the reality of where America should be.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I agree with my good friend from Illinois that this is amongst many, many facts that are going to be taken into consideration as the parties negotiate in what is going to be a very complex negotiation to get to the end point. There are going to be a lot of things that do need to be considered.

The difficulty is that when this institution, the U.S. Senate, puts something out like this, it does have an effect on the parties that are sitting at the table. And you don't really get to a resolution by prodding on these kinds of things. You talk about what it takes to stop the fighting, not what it took to get into it, not the actions that were taken during the fighting. But if you want to stop the fighting, you have to talk about where we are and where we need to get to.

This simply, I can assure you, Senator, is not helpful to those negotiations that are going on.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 111

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I want to join this conversation and broaden it a little bit. In my view, we are witnessing the great betrayal during these last 44 days. We have the great betrayal here at home of the American people because the President promised certain things that he was going to deliver on, and we haven't seen those. We see the great betrayal of our Ukrainian friends and our allies around the world and freedom-loving people around the world.

Here at home, Candidate Trump, of course, promised that on day one, he was going to cut prices, that he was going to help working families. Last night, we witnessed the longest speech in American history to a joint session of Congress, and no plan was presented for lowering prices.

Grocery prices are going up, rent prices are going up, and home prices are going up.

We did see Elon Musk in the Gallery—the guy who said he wanted to take a chain saw to important services that benefit every American family. This is all part of a plan to cut taxes for very wealthy people like Elon Musk at the expense of everyone else.

So in these 44 days, we have seen that great betrayal, but we have also seen the other betrayal. We have seen President Trump throw the Ukrainian people under the bus. I don't think any of us could have imagined a day when the United States sided with Russia and North Korea on a U.N. General Assembly resolution that condemned Russian aggression, where we voted with them and against our allies—against Ukraine, against all of our European allies, against all of our friends in Asia. Heck, even North Korea abstained. Even China abstained.

So here we are throwing our allies under the bus. The folks that are openly cheering are the Russian leadership. I mean, this isn't just rhetoric; we have actually seen them expressing glee over the U.S. position. And of course they were very happy with the terrible spectacle in the Oval Office of the President and Vice President of the United States bullying President Zelenskyy.

We have all met with President Zelenskyy. Nobody wants peace more than President Zelenskyy and the Ukrainian people. They have lost thousands of people. They have sacrificed a lot. But they want a durable peace, and they want a peace that will recognize their sovereignty and their freedom and their independence. That is what they want.

We have all heard President Zelenskyy repeatedly thank the American people for our support. In fact, on one occasion, he brought an American flag signed by Ukrainian soldiers expressing gratitude for all our help. And what he has gotten in exchange for that great sacrifice—a sacrifice that helps support freedom-loving people everywhere—is the back of a hand he received in the Oval Office.

So I think this is a moment where we need to speak with moral clarity, and we should do it together as a Senate. We are not directing the negotiations; we are expressing simple truths here on the Senate floor.

The simple truth that I want to express here through the resolution that I will ask to be considered is that the Russian armed forces committed crimes against humanity and war crimes in Ukraine. It is pretty simple, and I would just draw my colleague's

attention to a resolution that was considered by this Senate back in 2022. I have it right here in my hand, S. Res. 546, authored by Senator GRAHAM, cosponsored by then-Senator Rubio, now-Secretary of State Rubio.

What this resolution that the Senate considered just 3 years ago says—and I am going to read it—is:

[The Senate] strongly condemns the ongoing violence, including war crimes, crimes against humanity, and systematic human rights abuses carried out by the Russian Armed Forces and their proxies and President Putin's military commanders, at the direction of President Vladimir Putin.

That was the resolution we considered just 3 years ago. This resolution passed unanimously. Not a single Senator objected. Now, of course, we have new Members of the Senate, but every single Senator who was here at that time supported this simple statement of moral clarity.

Two things have happened since then. In February of 2023, the Department of State determined that members of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and officials of the Government of the Russian Federation have committed crimes against humanity and war crimes in Ukraine. And in September of 2022, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine concluded that war crimes have been committed in Ukraine by the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation.

So the Senate adopted a resolution with the simple truths a number of years ago. Those truths were reaffirmed by the Department of State in 2023 and by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry in September 2022.

Regardless of the state of negotiations, I would think that we would be able to reaffirm today the same truth that we expressed unanimously just a few years ago.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 111, which was submitted earlier today; further, that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. WICKER. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, my friend in Maryland and I participated in a bipartisan delegation on Friday morning last where we met with the President of Ukraine before what we hoped was going to be a signing ceremony. There were a number of Democrats that met with President Zelenskyy.

As chairman of the Armed Services Committee, I participated and chaired that meeting. The distinguished chairman of the Budget Committee was also

there and the President pro tempore of the U.S. Senate was also there, along with quite a number of Democrats. We were wishing for the very best because we thought a significant agreement was about to be signed that would move us toward a reconciliation of this terrible war.

I was distressed—I was devastated, even—when I saw the conversation that took place later on that day. I wondered if the damage could ever be repaired. Thankfully, the damage is being repaired, and we have had very hopeful signs of progress being made.

I made the statement to the public and to members of the Armed Services Committee at a hearing just yesterday. It is time for those of us in the political realm who are not part of this negotiation to be silent; to take a deep breath and not do anything that could interfere with the excellent news that we saw coming yesterday with a very fine statement from President Zelenskyy, with the quoting of that statement with approval by the President of the United States last night.

This is not the time for elected Members of the House and Senate to be passing resolutions. Take a deep breath. Let the negotiators do their work. And for Heaven's sake, not do anything that might, in some way, be interpreted as being belligerent or counterproductive. For that reason, I do object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I want to thank the Senator from Mississippi, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, for his commitment to this issue to working to end the war in Ukraine but to do it in a way that preserves the freedom and sovereignty of the people of Ukraine and as a durable peace.

It escapes me how reaffirming truthful statements that the Senate has made in the past can possibly get in the way of a resolution of this crisis. I would argue that it is the President of the United States who has gotten in the way of a resolution of this crisis in the sense that, No. 1, he has clearly embraced Vladimir Putin in so many of his comments. And he went into this discussion by unilaterally giving away important leverage that is needed to result in a resolution that is a just resolution.

You don't go into a negotiation by giving up the issue of American participation and security guarantees, however that might look. You don't go into a negotiation by unilaterally giving up on territorial concessions.

This is why it is important, in my view, for the Senate simply to reconfirm the truths that we have already stated in the past. This seems to be a simple one—that war crimes have been committed by the Russian Army and that they have committed crimes against humanity. That is all this resolution says.

I hope that we can, at some point, come back and revisit this because it is going to be very important to achieve not just a peace but a just peace.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. I am simply responding and not attempting to prolong this. The negotiation process is underway.

It may be that the negotiators are in different cities and in different continents at this point. But the matter is very sensitive. We should be very careful not to interfere with something that may make us all proud and give relief to thousands of millions.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 112

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I greatly respect the representation made by my colleague and friend from Mississippi, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, and Senator RISCH, our colleague, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee about timing.

I want to talk about timing because we have just passed the third year of this war. This moment is crucial.

Thank you to Senator SANDERS, Senator VAN HOLLEN, Senator DURBIN—soon we will hear from Senator BENNET. We have resolutions that support Ukraine at a critical moment in its history.

I have been there six times. I have come to know President Zelenskyy not only from meetings there, but in Paris, Munich, a number of times here in Washington, DC, and I will never forget my first meeting with him shortly after he was offered an escape. Do you remember what he said to President Biden when he offered a helicopter to exit the country: Don't send me a helicopter; send me ammunition—that courage and determination in the face of Russia coming within just a few miles of his bunker.

I visited him and I then went to Bucha where I saw the remnants of the Russian tanks that came within a 10-minute drive of killing him and taking Kyiv. I also saw the mass graves where women and children were buried after the Russians shot hundreds of them in the back of their head, committing those war crimes that became so despicable in the eyes of the world and resulted in criminal charges against Vladimir Putin. It is the reason why I have urged that we regard the Putin regime as a terrorist organization.

I recognize we are at a critical moment in these negotiations, as well as in Ukraine's 3-yearlong fight. Actually, it is well longer than 3 years because the invasion first occurred in 2014, not long after Ukraine gave up its nuclear weapons on the assurance that the free world would come to its aid if its security was ever threatened.

It is that history that Volodymyr Zelenskyy tried to remind President Trump and Vice President Vance about last Friday—betrayal of agreements by

Vladimir Putin. He is a thug. He understands force. He will assure the security of Ukraine only if force is guaranteed to meet another invasion if this one is stopped.

On these negotiations and the timing, Senator VAN HOLLEN said it well. You don't have to be an expert on the art of the deal to know you go into negotiations from a position of strength. Strength never hurts; it only helps in a negotiation.

We are not dictating an outcome. We are not prescribing what the result of the negotiation should be. We are not telling the President or President Zelenskyy what their positions would be. We are saying to Ukraine: We have your back. We are going to be your backstop.

And at that meeting, which I attended along with the Senator from Mississippi and Senator VAN HOLLEN on that bright, sunny Friday morning, President Zelenskyy was asking us to assure that he had a security backstop. Of course, his preference is to be in NATO—no secret there. But security, as I suggested to him, through some bilateral agreement might be an acceptable outcome.

We are not prescribing what that security should be, but only that Ukraine has support from the American people. That is the purpose of these resolutions. That support strengthens his position.

We are not saying a specific amount of military aid should be provided or a specific negotiating position should be dictated for anyone. But only that—and I read from my resolution—we reaffirm the support of the United States for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine in the face of the illegal invasion of its territory by the Russian Federation and the bonds of friendship and shared values between the people of the United States and allied fighting forces.

Now, by any measure of military success, Ukraine has done the impossible. I am not giving away classified information when I tell you that in the days right after the invasion, we were assured by our military that the Russians would be in Kyiv within weeks. They weren't. The only reason they weren't was because of the ingenuity and inventiveness and just plain guts and grit of the Ukrainian people.

Their success will go down as one of the most important feats of modern warfare in this century, and their accomplishments in the use of drones—an inventive use of drones—in their use of intelligence—our intelligence and their intelligence—in their success in the destruction of half or more of the Russian fleet in the Black Sea. They have developed techniques of warfare and platforms with our help that are absolutely remarkable.

On every one of those six trips—in fact, in every meeting that I have had with President Zelenskyy—he has begun by declaring his gratitude for the aid from the United States. On

March 3, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, which is their Parliament, expressed its “profound gratitude to President Donald Trump, Congress, and the American people for their firm and consistent support of Ukraine’s independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, as well as for the security assistance packages provided to Ukraine, which have helped stabilize the situation on the frontline.”

The people of Ukraine are beyond grateful. If you walk through the streets of Ukraine and you are identified as an American, people will come up to you and thank you. In the Ukrainian community here in the United States, supporters of Ukraine have been thanked again and again and again. I wear a pin—and have done so for some years—with the American and Ukrainian flags. I have a bracelet that has the Ukrainian colors. The people of Ukraine thank me for those insignias of my support.

We all know that Ukraine’s fight is our fight and that our national security is at stake because Putin will keep going. If he swallows Ukraine, if he has dinner in Kyiv, he will want to have dinner in Finland and Sweden and Poland. They are NATO allies. We will be obligated to put troops on the ground. The soldiers of Ukraine are saving our soldiers from a fight where they will be in harm’s way. They are bleeding and dying for our national security.

So, when we talk about timing, let’s recognize that now is the moment to make clear that Ukraine must be as strong as possible for our security if it enters these negotiations.

Let me just finish with this thought: You know, I think it is difficult to describe what it is like to be in Ukraine in the midst of an air attack. On a couple of my visits, we were forced into bunkers when the sirens started. Obviously, we were never injured, and I want to avoid any misrepresentation. I never felt like I was going to be bombed right then and there. But if I had been there 365 days in a year and the apartment house next to me or my school or hospital were bombed and I came out of it and saw the bodies and realized how close I had come and how near death was—day after day after day, the Ukrainian people are living with this nightmare, not to mention the blackouts of electricity, the impacts of their quality of life, the loss of their loved ones, the injuries, and the maiming of young men, whom I have visited.

The Ukrainian people want peace. The Ukrainian people want peace more than any of us. They certainly want peace more than Vladimir Putin, who has no respect for the lives of his people or the Ukrainians. They have fought for 3 years to stay free, to stay independent, to stay sovereign, and they have fought for years before that. The history of their people is one of fighting for their independence. They will continue fighting as long as peace threatens their sovereign and free sta-

tus. They believe in peace. They want Donald Trump to succeed in achieving peace. We should support them in their goals, in their quest for peace with freedom and sovereignty for their people.

I want to offer my resolution. So I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 112, which was submitted earlier today; further, that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, the Book of Ecclesiastes, in the Old Testament, has provided mankind with some of the greatest words of wisdom ever imparted.

In chapter 3 of Ecclesiastes, the words say:

For everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven.

It goes on to say there is “a time to speak and a time to be silent.”

Now, I have spoken, perhaps, not as eloquently but, perhaps, as often as my friend from Connecticut about this war—about who is to blame and about what should happen. I have been disappointed, over a 3-year period, at the previous administration for what I viewed as a slow-walking of aid which might have given us a different situation currently on the ground in this European country.

But we are at a point where there are delicate negotiations going on which might save lives, which might lead to peace—and lasting peace—with a backstop by the United States and our allies in Europe. This is the Ecclesiastical time to be silent and let the negotiators do their work if they possibly can.

For that reason, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I want to make clear, first—absolutely clear—that I deeply respect my colleague from Mississippi, my friend and fellow Member, the leader of the Armed Services Committee, for his commitment to Ukraine. There should be no question that Senator WICKER is committed to Ukraine’s freedom and independence. I have traveled with him. I have worked with him. I sat with him just Friday. We have a difference of view. He has access to different facts that I don’t. I am going on basic principles, and I must confess I can’t cite Scripture for my position. But I think common sense tells me, although he has more knowledge about the negotiations, that supporting Ukraine at this moment—simply saying we have your back; we are your backstop; we are supporting you—can’t help but aid their position.

But let me just say, what is most important about this conversation is that

we will continue together on both sides of the aisle, in a bipartisan way, to support Ukraine. It isn’t about their being less strong, at least in the case of Senator WICKER. I am absolutely sure, and I respect his views on this topic even though we differ, and I hope that this cause will continue to be bipartisan.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 114

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I am sorry. The Presiding Officer seems to have the misfortune of being out here every time I come to the floor to speak. I regret that, and I feel sorry for him.

I am glad to be out here with my colleagues, today, on both sides of the aisle. We have heard the Senator from Mississippi refer to what he described as the greatest words of wisdom that came from Ecclesiastes. Those were words of wisdom.

I think another set of great words of wisdom came from Ronald Reagan, who said, “Peace through strength.” Peace through strength is what Ronald Reagan represented.

I know the President, last night, had a less clear message to the American people. I know that he said that he was the greatest President in American history. George Washington, I think, was second on his list.

For most of us in this Chamber, I think we probably would say Ronald Reagan earned a place there, even those of us who disagreed with him. One of the reasons was that he did what he said when it came to the national security interests of the United States of America. Because we have been following that path of peace through strength in a bipartisan way, the American people have been extremely generous in their support of the Ukrainian people since the invasion of Ukraine by Russia.

The American people have earned a profound debt of gratitude from free people all over the world, including in the United States. Their courage and our weapons and the weapons of our allies have held Putin’s army at the gates of Europe. Nothing else has. They have shown that democracies will stand up to defend themselves and will not roll over to dictators, whether they are in Moscow or Beijing.

But unlike us and unlike the rest of the world, the Ukrainians actually have paid a huge human toll. They have had almost 400,000 casualties. They have had over 40,000 deaths in this war. Their cemeteries are bulging with new graves that are piled high with flowers that testify to the sacrifice of the Ukrainian people in every community in Ukraine. Anybody who has been there has seen them. It is impossible to avoid the cemeteries that have piled up with soldiers who have been willing to pay the ultimate sacrifice on the frontlines of this war in Ukraine.



I delivered a speech just a few days ago, which the Presiding Officer may have had the misfortune of hearing, discussing President Trump's false accusation that Ukraine started this war with Russia.

To my colleagues who say it doesn't matter what the President says, that it is only the outcome that matters—be patient about this great negotiator who learned everything at the heels of Mr. Cohen while he was doing commercial real estate in New York—some of us are worried about it because words do matter, especially the words that the President utters.

Could you imagine anybody on this floor defending a President who said that Taiwan had invaded China when China had invaded Taiwan? That would be ridiculous. That would be absurd. But that is the situation that we face today. It is no different than that. It is identical to that.

He has called President Zelenskyy a dictator—the freedom fighter who is leading this battle and who has led this battle at Ukraine.

Ronald Reagan would turn over in his grave if he knew that the President has invited Russia to rejoin the G7, which is a group of the world's most powerful democracies—democracies—that suspended Russia after Putin invaded Ukraine for the first time in 2014. By the way, are we supposed to believe that he didn't invade Ukraine then; that he was invited in somehow to Crimea? Is President Trump really fooled by the little green men that Vladimir Putin sent there after his administration held supposed peace talks in Saudi Arabia without even the decency to include Ukraine, which has had more than 400,000 casualties?

Every single one of these statements and decisions have emboldened Putin. You can see it in the newspapers in Russia. You can see it on TV. And they have weakened Ukraine's negotiating position, profoundly undermining our own national security.

How this war ends will determine whether Putin sets his sights on our NATO allies, like Poland and the Baltics; whether dictators like China's Xi Jinping test our resolve by invading their neighbor, Taiwan; whether the post-World War II international order that the United States built and is today frittering away under this President's leadership remains intact; whether the United States can continue to provide the leadership on behalf of free nations all over this world and democracies all over this world that our parents and grandparents had the decency to sacrifice and build for us; whether we are going to face another conflict in this world that is actually started by a tyrant but ended by democracies.

The last thing we should be doing is undermining Ukraine's negotiating position and ours when we have this much at stake.

I know the Presiding Officer has spent his life in negotiations in the pri-

vate sector. I have spent time—not as much as the Presiding Officer. I certainly have spent time in these negotiations as well. Our discipline, when I was in the private sector negotiating these deals, was that we would let every deal die at least three times because our theory was no deal worth doing could be done the first time or the second time. I can see the Presiding Officer probably—he probably said it is five times before you can do it. But the point is, you wouldn't undermine your own negotiating leverage while you are going into a deal.

Today—today—the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency went on FOX News and told the world that we had shut down our intelligence-sharing with Ukraine. We met—I don't know if I can say. I am on the Intelligence Committee, let me be careful what I say. Today, the United States of America has said we have cut off Ukraine.

I don't know what anybody is doing in this Chamber if they are not coming here saying the United States of America should not be cutting off Ukraine's intelligence in midstream, in the ramp-up to a negotiation. If you come out here on this floor and say it is the right thing to do; that you, in the private sector, would make an equivocally idiotic, compromising, self-defeating move in a negotiation like this, come and defend it out here. Come and tell us how that is peace through strength.

We shut off our offensive cyber with respect to Russia and got nothing back from them. Ronald Reagan is turning over in his grave at a national security strategy that, I guess, has been concocted in the realm of social media and cable television but has nothing to do with the national security interests of the United States. It can't be defended.

I want to also say, while I have the floor and for the record—and I hope people will look it up—I have never met President Zelenskyy where he hasn't started the meeting by thanking the American people and ended the meeting by thanking the American people. He has done it in every meeting that I have been in. But I don't want us to lose sight of the fact that we also hold a profound debt of gratitude to him and to his soldiers and to the Ukrainian people.

The President doesn't seem to understand that. The President seems to think: Oh, my gosh, they are doing us a favor by using our weapons.

You are in tough shape; your country is in tough shape, he stated the obvious in that embarrassing interaction in the Oval Office the other day, where he couldn't even keep his temper for 5 minutes on the global stage.

The Ukrainians are not just fighting for Ukraine; they are fighting for democracy. They are fighting for Europe. They are fighting for freedom. They are fighting for the international order that we created, that we led after the Second World War.

Should NATO pay its share? Yes, it should. But we are not some charity

case. We have benefited from the casualties that Ukraine has suffered. We have benefited from the exposure of the weakness of Putin's corrupt army. We have benefited from Xi Jinping's new knowledge that if a dictator tries to invade another country, the free world will stand together, until Donald Trump became President of the United States.

I want to say again, Mr. President, to you and to all of my colleagues here today, the United States has turned off our intelligence to the Ukrainian people. They are not in retreat. They are on the frontlines of this war today, in the middle of winter, on the steps of Europe, where 16 million people were killed by Hitler and Stalin, when my mother was born in Warsaw—a Polish Jew in 1938, the year before Hitler invaded Poland. And we turned off their intelligence.

They are killing more Russians there every month than they were 6 months ago. This is a catastrophe.

The other night when we had the budget reconciliation, I had a request for an amendment that simply would have said that it was the sense of the Senate that Russia invaded Ukraine; that Russia had started this war. I wanted to ask my colleagues just the basic question: Can we agree that Russia started the war in Ukraine? That seems like a shocking question to ask. I hope every schoolchild in America knows that that is true. Yet the President of the United States has said that Ukraine started this war. There are people around this city these days who are suggesting that Russia didn't start the war; that Ukraine started the war.

And I am not even talking about people like the new head of Intelligence for the Trump administration who has taken the view that Ukraine had what was coming to them, who tweeted out at 11:30 the night that Putin's tanks invaded Ukraine, a peaceful country—for the first time in Europe since World War II, a dictator invading a peaceful country—who took to social media to say that Ukraine had it coming to them. I am not even saying that; I am saying people who are unwilling to say that Russia invaded Ukraine when it launched an unprovoked, an unjustified, full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, following their already illegal annexation of Crimea and their illegal occupation of parts of the Donbas. So that is all my resolution says, and that is it.

That may seem like a basic and remedial task. I am sorry it is necessary.

I want to remind every schoolchild in America who started this war and whose side we are on and what the legacy of Ronald Reagan's peace through strength is all about.

This is a measure that will not in any way disrupt the progress in negotiations. I think quite the opposite. I think quite the opposite. I want us to assure ourselves that we are all clear here about who started this war.

I want us to fulfill our responsibility to the American people. We are not

here to repeat untruths from the Oval Office. We all have a patriotic responsibility to live up to. The President does as well.

I want us to demand, on behalf of the American people, that the United States lead for the sake of the Ukrainian people and for our national security and for the security of the world.

That is why this is not just a matter of how worried people in NATO are; it is how worried people in Southeast Asia are because they know if we don't get our act together here and support Ukraine, support our allies in Europe, the same thing could happen there. And China could invade Taiwan, and we could have an American President who claims he is the best President in American history, with George Washington second, saying that Taiwan invaded China.

I want us to avow, as Ronald Reagan proclaimed 40 years ago, that "freedom is America's core" and "[w]e must never deny it nor forsake it." That is what we risk today by withdrawing our support for Ukraine, allowing the President to promulgate falsehood after falsehood about who started this war and what is going on with this war.

If we abandon Ukraine, we are going to abandon the core of who we are.

This is a simple question. It is not a partisan one. And the answer couldn't be clearer.

So, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 114, which was submitted earlier today; further, that the resolution be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CURTIS). Is there objection?

The Republican whip.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, the American people want to see this war end. We want to see the killing and the bloodshed stopped.

President Trump shares those views. He wants peace. He wants to end the war. President Trump and the administration are negotiating right now, today, to achieve that peace. He addressed it last night in his address to Congress and to the Nation.

I think that President Trump is the very best hope to achieve lasting peace in Ukraine. He has my full support as the negotiations continue. The entire Senate should support those efforts, and therefore, Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, let me say—I know my colleague from Vermont is here, so I am not going to go on, but I would just like to respond to my friend from Wyoming by saying that it is shocking to me that tonight, in the Nation's Capital of the wealthiest country in the world, the place that we think of as the freest country in the world, our intelligence sharing with

Ukraine, which has been one of the most effective means of their ability to prosecute the war in Ukraine against Russia, has been shut off by the United States of America. And our arms have been shut off to some degree as well, in the middle of winter, while they are sacrificing on the frontlines for freedom and for democracy.

It is shocking that we are in the position that we are in, and I hope, for the sake of our kids and for our grandkids, for the sake of the allies that we have all over the world, for the sake of democracy and freedom in this world, that we pull together as a Senate and articulate the importance of pursuing this negotiation out of a position of strength and not of weakness.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 113

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, last week, the U.N. General Assembly voted overwhelmingly in favor of a resolution that acknowledged that Russia brutally invaded Ukraine. Among those voting in favor were all our friends and allies. Among those voting against it were most of our adversaries—Russia, Iran, North Korea, Nicaragua—and the United States.

Of course, no Americans that we represent want to see our country on a team with some of the world's most brutal dictators, but what made that vote remarkable was that the Trump administration voted against something so unquestionably true: It was Russia that was the invader; that Russia's invasion has been devastating; that too many have died, too many have suffered; that peace is long overdue; and that Ukrainian territory is Ukrainian territory.

The bottom line: This was a very simple resolution asserting that one country has no right to invade another country.

Americans know from experience that peace in the world depends on adhering to a core principle: Countries cannot change their borders by force. One country cannot steal the sovereign territory of another country. Over the years, many Americans have died to uphold this principle for our national security.

World War I, World War II, and the gulf war sent a clear message: America will support its friends and allies who are fighting to defend their own freedom and sovereignty.

Of course, the U.N. vote last week was followed by last week's meeting in the Oval Office between Ukrainian President Zelenskyy and President Trump. Just hours before that very disastrous meeting, right across from the White House, I, along with many of our colleagues, joined in a bipartisan group of Senators who met with President Zelenskyy. He told us he was extremely grateful for America's help. He told us how thankful he was for the help President Trump gave in his first administration with the delivery of

Javelin missiles and what he was doing in his second administration. There was not a hint of anything other than support and respect, and he told us how enthusiastic he was about meeting with the President and signing the minerals deal.

It blew up, and, of course, the press will debate whether President Zelenskyy derailed the meeting because he didn't wear a suit or he said a provocative thing or he was rude and not grateful enough, and others will say that it was a setup by the President to derail the meeting.

My view: I don't know the answer to that, and I don't really care because that is not the question. The one question that is profoundly important is the one that affects our national security: Whose side are we on? Do we continue to side with Ukraine against Russia and its invasion—with our NATO allies, with the principle we have fought for since the beginning of the last century—or do we flip sides and go with Putin?

There is every reason for many of us to be concerned about that being a question actively under consideration by the Trump administration, starting with his affection for Putin and with his assertion that it was Ukraine, not Russia, that started the war.

We are suddenly confronted with this unthinkable question of whether our President is realigning whose side we are on. That, in my view, is why all of us in the U.S. Senate—and there has been tremendous leadership on the Republican side of the aisle, and I would like to particularly acknowledge the leadership of Chairman WICKER and Chairman RISCH—for us to stand with Ukraine and with our NATO allies.

This year, we are going to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II. In the eight decades since that devastating war, America's global alliances and our leadership have been anchored on the principle—anchored on the principle—that no country should seize and occupy the territory of another country by force. That matters. It is anchored on the elementary principle that might does not make right—something that in the Putin invasion, where he thought he would be in Kyiv in days, was desecrated.

So my hope is that we in the U.S. Senate will reaffirm those principles of territorial integrity and do that on behalf of the American people.

I have introduced a resolution that does just this. It commits to the principle that the United States remains totally in favor of upholding and defending the proposition that no state shall threaten or use force against the territorial integrity or the political integrity of any other state. I think all of us know that is among the most fundamental propositions holding together the world's very fragile peace. It is also a fundamentally American principle that we have advocated for and defended. It is a principle that we must



uphold today on behalf of the people and the sovereignty of Ukraine—not just for their benefit but for our national security.

Therefore, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 113, which was submitted earlier today; further, that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, and for the reasons I have given previously, we want the killing to end. We want the bloodshed to stop. There are active negotiations going on right now, and I think the best hope to achieve lasting peace in Ukraine is the efforts of President Trump today. For that reason, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. WELCH. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

#### RELATING TO THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE DAVID LYLE BOREN, FORMER SENATOR FOR THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 115, submitted earlier today.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 115) relating to the death of the Honorable David Lyle Boren, former Senator for the State of Oklahoma.

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

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 115) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

#### MORNING BUSINESS

#### FALSE CLAIMS ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, 8 score and 2 years ago, President Abraham Lincoln signed the False Claims Act into Federal law. The anti-fraud tool, enacted March 2, 1863, became known as Lincoln's Law. Our 16th

President embraced meatier measures to go after fraudsters bilking the U.S. Treasury during the Civil War. Contractors were selling inferior supplies to the Union Army, outfitting the troops with poor quality uniforms and boots, mixing sawdust with gunpowder, and even selling blind horses to the Union cavalry.

Back then, Congress resurrected the legal principle known as *qui tam*—part of a Latin phrase that translates to "in the name of the king"—with origins from the 13th century England in which citizens could bring lawsuits on behalf of the king.

Lincoln's Law gave workers a financial incentive to blow the whistle on their employer's wrongdoing, rewarding them with a share of fines collected through litigation. This common sense, patriotic solution put more eyes and ears on the ground to save tax dollars and ensure Union soldiers were getting high-quality supplies the Federal Government purchased.

The principle also was anchored in the merits of our Nation's first whistleblower law enacted on July 30, 1778. The Continental Congress sided with naval informants who reported abuses by their supervisor. Since the earliest days of our Republic, our Nation's leaders affirmed it is the duty of every American to report wrongdoing "in service to the United States."

During my first term in the U.S. Senate, I launched a decades-long crusade to expose wasteful government spending, leaning on the inside scoop provided by patriotic whistleblowers such as Ernie Fitzgerald. A Pentagon analyst, Fitzgerald relentlessly pursued the facts and courageously told the truth. When he appeared before my Judiciary Subcommittee in 1984, he testified the Air Force pumped the brakes on his requests for information needed to properly analyze costs for weapons systems and spare parts. At the time, I remarked how "inefficiency is almost an underground economy in this town." Those comments offer a foreshadowing clue to the Trump administration's effort to drain the swamp.

Transparency brings accountability. It is impossible to expose wrongdoing if whistleblowers are muzzled and access to information is blocked. President Trump created the Department of Government Efficiency—DOGE—to derail the "underground economy" and scrutinize how taxpayer dollars are spent. Fleecing Uncle Sam's coffers is a tale as old as time, exploited during war, natural disasters, and economic crisis, including the pandemic. Honest Abe deployed the False Claims Act to unleash an army of private citizens to serve as watchdogs during the Civil War. Congress can't adequately do its constitutional oversight duty without them.

After hearing from truth-tellers like Ernie Fitzgerald, I dusted off the Civil War-era law to encourage more patriots to step forward and help put a stop to fraud and corruption. In 1986, I authored amendments to the False

Claims Act that beefed up the *qui tam* provisions in Lincoln's Law to strengthen financial incentives and protections for whistleblowers. It takes guts to stick one's neck out and report misconduct within an organization. Whistleblowers put their careers, livelihoods, and reputations on the line in service to their country. So, when a *qui tam* case is successful, the whistleblower can receive up to 30 percent of the recovery. My amendments to the False Claims Act put fraudsters across the sprawling bureaucracy on notice that fraud is no longer the cost of doing business and empowered whistleblowers throughout the private sector to report willful misuse of taxpayer dollars.

Since the enactment of my 1986 amendments, the False Claims Act has become the Federal Government's No. 1 tool to fight and deter fraud. It has returned over \$78 billion back to taxpayers and saved countless more by deterring would-be fraudsters. Last year, whistleblowers filed 979 suits, a historic number of *qui tam* actions in a single year. The False Claims Act recovered nearly \$3 billion in fiscal year 2024, of which \$2.4 billion came from whistleblower *qui tam* actions.

In just the last year, whistleblower *qui tam* cases exposed fraud in defense procurement, pandemic and disaster relief programs, Federal housing grants and underpaid royalties on Federal lands. Notably, the healthcare industry produced the lion's share of fraud recoveries. Whistleblowers exposed kickbacks, price fixing, double billing, unlawful prescriptions for opioids and controlled substances, and other fraudulent schemes that returned scarce resources to Federal programs, such as Medicare, Medicaid, and TRICARE. These False Claims Act whistleblowers also protected patients by exposing providers who billed for medically unnecessary, substandard, and potentially harmful care.

Every dollar lost to fraud rips off the American people and erodes the public trust. I will keep fighting misguided efforts to water down Lincoln's Law and build on whistleblower protection laws across-the-board so truth-tellers don't fear reprisal. I have asked President Trump and every President since the Reagan administration to hold a Rose Garden ceremony honoring whistleblowers. Such an event would complement President Trump's efforts to drain the swamp, eliminate waste, and promote government efficiency by welcoming the very whistleblowers who put Washington, DC, on notice to wake up and smell the roses.

#### TRIBUTE TO LUDMYA "MIA" LOVE

Mr. CURTIS. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and honor Representative Ludmya "Mia" Love, who has been battling glioblastoma.

Mia and I were first elected as mayors together in 2010, and from the very beginning, I saw firsthand the energy,