

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,

passion, and optimism she brings to public service. I always say that there is an understanding amongst mayors, and we make some of the best legislators. Together in Utah, we worked on projects that shaped our communities, and I had the privilege of watching her take that same determination to a national stage when she ran for and won a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, something I shared with her after I joined her in Washington in 2017.

Mia is young, vibrant, and full of life. She carries herself with an infectious energy, always greeting me in a way that lifts my spirits. No matter the challenges she has faced—whether in governance or as a trailblazer in politics—she meets them with grace and determination. Being a Black woman in the Republican Party comes with its own set of hurdles, but Mia has never let barriers define her. Instead, she breaks them. Her memoir was appropriately titled, “Qualified.” Mia was qualified to break barriers and inspire people to see great possibilities—not because of her heritage, gender, faith tradition, or political party—Mia was qualified because of the content of her character.

In Congress, she was deeply respected by her colleagues and admired by her constituents, not just for her policies, but for the way she made people feel: valued, heard, and empowered. Her decision to stop treatment and cherish the time she has left with her family is a reflection of the strength and clarity with which she has always lived her life.

I am grateful for the time I have known Mia, for the work we have done together, and for the example she continues to set for so many. My thoughts are with her, her family, and all who love her during this difficult time.

#### TRIBUTE TO MARYALICE CROFTON

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, the spirit of volunteerism is one of Maine's greatest strengths. For the past 30 years, that spirit has been nurtured and enhanced by Volunteer Maine Executive Director Maryalice Crofton, and I join people throughout our State in honoring Maryalice for her outstanding leadership and in wishing her all the best in her retirement.

Volunteer Maine is our State's National Service Commission that supports AmeriCorps and Senior Corps. During Maryalice's tenure, which began just 1 year after those programs were launched, more than 4,200 individuals have served as Maine volunteers, contributing more than 3.9 million hours to support housing, education, environmental conservation, healthcare, childcare, and emergency preparedness efforts across our State. While increasing their job skills and knowledge, student volunteers have earned nearly \$27 million in awards to further their educations.

In addition to advancing the well-being of Mainers and expanding civic

engagement, Maryalice has been an innovative leader at the national level helping to shape workforce development and public-private initiatives. She has been instrumental in efforts to ensure that national service programs are guided by community priorities and local concerns.

At an event celebrating the 30th anniversary of AmeriCorps last year, Maryalice described the importance of people stepping forward to address unmet needs in their communities with these words: “If you're thinking that someone else will take care of it, that's probably not true. You've got to get out there.”

With Maryalice Crofton leading the way, Maine's AmeriCorps volunteers have gotten out there and made a real difference. Her exceptional spirit of service to others will inspire volunteers for years to come.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### RECOGNIZING 100 YEARS OF THE BENTONVILLE ROTARY CLUB

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the Bentonville Rotary Club in celebration of its 100th anniversary. This organization of volunteers and community leaders has made a tremendous impact on northwest Arkansas throughout its history, and I am grateful for the many ways its members live the Rotary mission to promote peace, education, and goodwill through service.

The Bentonville Rotary Club's work has been a key part of the community's extraordinary growth over the last century. When it was first founded, the city's population was 2,300 people. Since then, it has become the focal point of one of the fastest growing regions in the Nation and a hub for global business and entrepreneurship.

This growth has also been seen in the club's leadership and expansion. In 1924, its founding was sponsored by the Rogers' Rotary Club. The first president was Dave Peel, and his successors have often been leaders in other capacities, including Walmart founder Sam Walton, while the club has expanded its impact through sponsoring additional clubs in Bentonville/Bella Vista Daybreak, Holiday Island and Bella Vista Sunrise, in addition to the Bentonville Satellite club.

I am grateful for the many contributions the Bentonville Rotary Club has made and continues to make in the community. These include fundraisers like the New Kids on the Block and Snack Packs for Kids. Rotarians also help beautify the city by planting redbud trees along West Central Avenue, as well as provide opportunities for local residents by sponsoring a library meeting room and an exhibit at the Scott Family Amazeum, donating over \$15,000 in scholarships to students at Bentonville High School and supporting local food banks.

After more than 100 years, the Bentonville Rotary continues to be truly dedicated to “service above self” through leadership and action. Its impact provides inspiration throughout the State, and I am grateful for the many ways its members continue working hard to make northwest Arkansas a special place to live.●

#### RECOGNIZING PLANTPEDDLER

• Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, as chair of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week, it is my privilege to recognize Plantpeddler of Cresco, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

On June 28, 1980, newlyweds Mike and Rachel Gooder purchased Cresco Greenhouse, a local, century-old greenhouse that they planned to revitalize. As recent graduates of Iowa State University with degrees in horticulture, the couple updated the existing infrastructure, optimized production methods, and diversified the variety of plants grown. They rebranded to Plantpeddler and grew their small business quickly. In 1984, the couple successfully launched a wholesale division with the support of their second retail location. This new department led the way for the Gooders to serve independent and middle-market retailers with their premium crops, ranging from garden mums to begonias. The Gooders traveled to Europe in an effort to learn longstanding techniques in transportation, horticulture, and genetics. By 2001, Plantpeddler introduced the young plants division, becoming a major producer of vegetative genetics for the floriculture industry. Plantpeddler continued to invest in state-of-the-art greenhouse technology and currently boasts a production space of over 500,000 square feet.

Today, the company excels as a global leader in supplying young plants, finished plants, and specialty horticultural products, and its impact is felt far beyond Iowa. Plantpeddler serves 3,200 growers across the U.S. and beyond, shipping plants to all 50 States and another 15 countries worldwide. The Cresco-based powerhouse operates as the United States' No. 1 propagator of begonias and ranks second for poinsettias, shipping over 15 million plants annually.

In 2014, Mike and Rachel's son John Gooder joined the company to follow in his parents' footsteps. With a degree in horticulture from Iowa State, John took on a key role in the company to explore advancements in automation and genetic research. A decade later, in 2024, John became a part-owner, helping manage the business and a team of 99 community employees.

In 2017, peers in the greenhouse industry selected Mike Gooder for the inaugural class of the Horticultural Industries Leadership Awards. In 2023,