

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BRAUN). The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 141, H.R. 3055, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes.

## CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

## CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 141, H.R. 3055, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, John Cornyn, John Thune, John Hoeven, John Boozman, Thom Tillis, Steve Daines, Roger F. Wicker, Pat Roberts, John Barrasso, Richard Burr, Shelley Moore Capito, Roy Blunt, Mike Rounds, Mike Crapo, James E. Risch.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I withdraw the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2020—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 140, H.R. 2740.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 140, H.R. 2740, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020.

## CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for the motion to proceed.

The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

## CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 140, H.R.

2740, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, John Cornyn, John Thune, John Hoeven, John Boozman, Thom Tillis, Steve Daines, Roger F. Wicker, Pat Roberts, John Barrasso, Richard Burr, Shelley Moore Capito, Roy Blunt, Mike Rounds, Mike Crapo, James E. Risch.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

## TURKEY AND SYRIA

Mr. ROMNEY. Mr. President, I rise today to address the current situation in Syria.

First, I welcome the Vice President's announcement of a cease-fire, which will prevent further loss of life. I hope the agreement is honored. But at the heart of this matter is a central question of why these terms and assurances were not negotiated before the President consented to withdraw our troops.

Let me briefly recount what has happened in the past 7 days since the United States announced our withdrawal. The Kurds, suffering loss of life and property, have allied with Assad. Russia has assumed control of our previous military positions, and the United States has been forced in many cases to bomb our own facilities to prevent their appropriation by Russia and Turkey.

The announcement today is being portrayed as a victory. It is far from a victory. Serious questions remain about how the decision was reached precipitously to withdraw from Syria and why that decision was reached.

Given the initial details of the cease-fire agreement, the administration must also explain what America's future role will be in the region, what happens now to the Kurds, and why Turkey will face no apparent consequences. Further, the cease-fire does not change the fact that America has abandoned an ally. Adding insult to dishonor, the administration speaks cavalierly, even flippantly, as our ally has suffered death and casualty. Their homes have been burned, and their families have been torn apart.

We know the truth about our Kurd allies. They lost 11,000 combatants in our joint effort to defeat ISIS. We dropped bombs from the air and provided intelligence and logistics behind the lines. The Kurds lost thousands of lives, and 86 brave Americans also lost their lives so tragically.

It is argued that the Kurds were fighting for themselves. Of course they were. That is the nature of an alliance. We fight together, each pursuing our own vital interests. America leaves no soldier behind, often at great cost in blood and treasure. We recover our

dead and our wounded, and we free our men and women who are held captive. This is a matter of American honor and promise. So, too, is the principle that we stand by our allies, that we do not abandon our friends.

The decision to abandon the Kurds violates one of our most sacred duties. It strikes at American honor. What we have done to the Kurds will stand as a blood stain in the annals of American history.

There are broad strategic implications of our decision, as well. Iranian and Russian interests in the Middle East have been advanced by our decision at a time when we were applying maximum pressure on Iran. By giving them a stronger hand in Syria, we have actually weakened that pressure. Russia's objective to play a greater role in the Middle East has also been greatly enhanced. The Kurds, out of desperation, have now aligned with Assad. So America is diminished, and Russia, Iran, and Assad are strengthened.

So I ask how and why this decision was reached. I serve on the Foreign Relations Committee, and given the Syria decision taken by the administration, I might be forgiven for wondering why our committee even exists. I say this because apparently the decision to leave Syria was made without consultation with the committee or even with the committee chairman and ranking member.

Just 3 weeks ago, our subcommittee held hearings to receive an extensive analysis of the conditions and the way forward in Syria. It was presented to us by the Syria Study Group, a bipartisan, congressionally mandated commission tasked with providing an in-depth assessment of the conditions in Syria and to provide recommendations for American strategy going forward. So far as I am aware, the administration made no effort to contact those who attended that hearing or to speak with the Syria Study Group to be able to understand the content in their extensive published report.

I ask whether it is the position of the administration that the Senate—a body of 100 people representing both political parties—is to be entirely absent from decisions of the magnitude just taken in Syria.

Some argue that we should not have been in Syria in the first place because there was not a vote taken by the Senate to engage in war there. I disagree. Congress has given the President legal authority and funding to fight against terrorists in Syria.

However, for purposes of argument, even if one believed that no authorization had been given, that is really irrelevant to the decision as to the withdrawal once we have allied with a people—the Kurds—committed to defend them, and together defeated ISIS. Once you jump in the ocean to save a drowning soul, you don't turn around with the excuse that you didn't have to jump in in the first place. It is a matter of commitment.

Others argue that we should just get out of a messy situation like this. Middle East, they say, has had wars going on forever; just let them have at it. There is, of course, a certain logic to that position, as well, but again, it applies only to the original decision as to whether we should have gone into Syria. Once we have engaged and made the commitments we made, honor, as well as self-interest, demands that we not abandon our allies.

It has been suggested that Turkey may have called America's bluff—telling the President they were coming no matter what we did. If that is so, we should know it, for it would tell us a great deal about how we should deal with Turkey now and in the future.

Some have argued that Syria is simply a mess, with warring groups, subgroups, friends and allies shifting from one side to the other, and thus we had to exit because there was no reasonable path for us to go forward. Are we incapable of understanding and shaping complex situations? Russia seems to have figured it out. Are we less adept than they, and are our principles to be jettisoned when we find things get messy?

The administration claims that none of these reasons are accurate. Instead, the President has said that we left to fulfill a commitment to stop endless wars, to bring troops home, to get them out of harm's way, and perhaps to save money. I find these reasons hard to square. Why? Well, we withdrew 1,500 troops in Syria, but we are adding 2,000 troops in Saudi Arabia. All totaled, we have some 60,000 troops in the Middle East.

Assuming for the sake of understanding that getting out of endless wars was the logic for the decision, why would we take action so precipitously? Why would we not warn our ally, the Kurds, of what we were about to do? Why would we not give them time to also withdraw or perhaps to dig in to defend themselves? Clearly, the Turks had a heads-up because they were able to start bombing within mere hours. I simply don't understand why the administration did not explain in advance to Erdogan that it is unacceptable for Turkey to attack an American ally. Could we not insist that together we develop a transition plan that protects the Kurds, secures the ISIS prisoners, and meets the legitimate concerns of Turkey, as well? Was there no chance for diplomacy? Are we so weak and so inept diplomatically that Turkey forced the hand of the United States of America—Turkey? I believe it is imperative that public hearings be held to answer these questions, and I hope the Senate will be able to conduct those hearings next week.

I note in closing that I also hope the cease-fire agreement is honored and that Turkey ends its brutal killing, but I note that lives are already lost and American honor has already been tarnished. We once abandoned a redline; now we abandon an ally. We need an-

swers. What has happened in Syria should not happen again. And we, the Senate, must take action to make sure that it does not.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to discuss the situation in Syria. Let me commend my colleague Senator ROMNEY for his very thoughtful and very timely and very important comments.

We all recognize that the situation in Syria is highly fluid. I think it is important to state the case with respect to the President's decision to acquiesce to President Erdogan's offensive against the Kurds. The President's decision is a disaster for our partners in the fight against ISIS and United States foreign policy more broadly.

While I welcome the temporary cease-fire announced a short time ago and hope that a permanent cease-fire can be achieved, it does not absolve President Trump of his responsibility for his betrayal of our Kurdish partners and his role in unleashing violence and instability in northern Syria. It is not clear whether Turkey made any concessions as part of the deal struck with the U.S. delegation or whether Kurdish forces will comply. If not, I am concerned that additional violence is likely to follow and we will have little leverage to prevent it. In fact, there is a quote attributed to the Turkish Foreign Minister, Mevlut Cavusoglu, by the White House reporter for CNN. She quotes the Turkish Foreign Minister as saying:

This is not a cease-fire. We will pause the operation for 120 hours in order for the terrorists to leave. We will only stop the operation if our conditions are met.

So, indeed, even this supposed cease-fire may not materialize as a cease-fire.

But the reality is that the blood of many Kurds is on President Trump's hands, and thousands of hardened ISIS prisoners could be let loose as a result of his hasty and uninformed decision.

President Trump's decision to abandon our close partners also strengthens the hand of Erdogan, Putin, Assad, and Khamenei. Those are not friends; they are, in many cases, adversaries and antagonists.

Members of the administration claim that the U.S. Government opposed the Turkish incursion, but the President's own actions and statements make clear that he gave Erdogan a green light. The President ordered our military to begin a phased withdrawal from Syria last December—a decision that prompted the resignation of former Secretary of Defense Mattis and that surely gave the Turks the impression that he would fold when pressed by Erdogan. Not surprisingly, he did. In that phone call, Erdogan was pushing against an open door. He knew it. The President knew it. That is why the Turks went across the border.

Stating that we should let the Kurds and Turks fight it out because of their

longstanding grievances, as the President has said repeatedly, betrays both our national security interests in the Middle East and our own American ideals.

It is shameful that the White House's statement that was released after the President's call with Erdogan did not even criticize the planned Turkish incursion or warn of potential consequences if it went forward. It wasn't until the following day, after a bipartisan and international outcry, that the President began to express any concerns about Turkish plans while at the same time reiterating his invitation for Erdogan to visit the White House next month. It is impossible to read the President's initial statements as anything but acquiescence.

Furthermore, the President's statements over the following days have sought to distance the United States from the Kurds and the foreseeable consequences of his decision with regard to ISIS and the humanitarian challenges in northern Syria.

The violence we have witnessed over the last few days in northern Syria has been the direct result of an impulsive President who has made decisions that are counter to the advice of our national security experts. President Trump has often expressed disdain for the career military, diplomatic, and intelligence professionals our Nation relies on to develop and implement sound national security policy. We are once again seeing the ramifications of his incompetence.

The President's stunning ignorance of the complexities in the Middle East was on full display over the weekend in a tweet in which he seemed not to have an understanding of the location or identity of the separate Kurdish groups with whom we have partnered in Syria and Iraq.

The Secretaries of Defense and State both insist they were consulted by the President on this decision. Maybe so, but it is clear that he didn't heed their advice or that of our national security experts. I am not aware of any security experts who advocated for standing by while the Turkish military carried out an offensive against our Kurdish partners.

In fact, on October 2—just 4 days before the phone call between Presidents Trump and Erdogan—the State Department's Special Envoy for Syria, Joel Rayburn, publicly warned: We certainly think that a conflict along the Turkey-Syria border would serve the interests of all the bad actors in the conflict and in the surrounding region—whether that is ISIS or al-Qaida or the Iranian regime or what have you.

That was President Trump's Special Envoy.

The President's capitulation to Erdogan runs directly counter to all of the administration's stated objectives in Syria. The administration's stated strategy is to, No. 1, defeat ISIS; No. 2, force the removal of Iranian-aligned

foreign forces from Syria; and No. 3, achieve a negotiated political settlement to the Syrian civil war in line with the United Nations' resolutions.

The security and humanitarian catastrophe that President Erdogan has unleashed with Trump's approval will make achieving any of these goals nearly impossible. The violence in northern Syria over the last few days has led to the displacement of at least 160,000 people, the suspension of humanitarian assistance into affected areas, the escape of an unidentified number of ISIS detainees, and the horrific killings of unarmed civilians, including incidents that Secretary of Defense Esper has described as potential war crimes.

Just weeks ago, at our urging, the SDF removed personnel from border areas, relocated heavy weapons, and destroyed defensive fortifications in northern Syria. They did so even in the face of a continued Turkish military buildup along the Syrian border because they believed the United States and Turkey had agreed to a security mechanism in good faith that could avoid bloodshed. It seems that they were wrong to put their faith in this administration.

The Turkish incursion into Syria has undermined years of effort against ISIS by the United States and the international community. Despite the elimination of the so-called physical caliphate, ISIS is not defeated. Former Secretary of Defense Mattis correctly warned over the weekend that ISIS will resurge if pressure against the group isn't sustained.

Perhaps even more damaging than the current situation in Syria is the long-term impact of the President's decision on our standing in the world and our ability to achieve the goals outlined in the national defense strategy of his administration. The President's shortsighted abandonment of the Kurds is a strategic disaster that raises grave doubts among our allies and our friends about whether the United States under this President can be counted on to defend our shared interests.

Given the diverse national security challenges we face, we must attract and rely upon partners who share our interests. Our military leaders often promote the virtues of the "by, with, and through" approach, especially when it comes to counterterrorism.

Since 9/11, we have built partnerships with local forces throughout the world—from North and East Africa, to the Middle East, and across the Pacific—to enable efforts against violent extremist groups. We have sought to apply exquisite capabilities only possessed by the U.S. military to support local partners doing the preponderance of the fighting and dying in service to our shared objective of containing and defeating such violent groups.

Contrary to President Trump's assertions, we are not engaged in an endless war in Syria. In fact, the Kurd's partnership with the United States should

be viewed as a model of how to leverage an "economy of force" commitment of U.S. military capabilities to achieve strategic effects, thereby obviating the need for large numbers of U.S. personnel to be put at risk. In Syria, relatively small numbers of U.S. forces on the ground enabled a Kurdish and Arab ground force of approximately 60,000 personnel known as the Syrian Democratic Forces, or SDF. With our help, the SDF liberated millions of innocent civilians from the violent oppression of ISIS and defeated the so-called physical caliphate. Some have estimated that the SDF lost more than 10,000 fighters taking on ISIS.

It is true that many who joined the SDF did so to liberate their homes from ISIS; however, it is also true that even after their homes were liberated, the SDF—Kurds and Arabs alike—continued to pursue ISIS all the way through the Euphrates River Valley, where the last remnants of the physical caliphate were ultimately defeated earlier this year.

Those in the SDF were not only fighting for themselves; they were also fighting for us. They were fighting to help ensure that there were no more ISIS-directed or -inspired attacks like those carried out in Paris, Brussels, Istanbul, Orlando, and San Bernardino.

After the SDF successfully liberated the territory that was formerly controlled by ISIS, it also maintained custody of more than 10,000 ISIS detainees—including more than 2,000 foreign fighters—even when many of their home countries refused to take them back. Given the sacrifices of the SDF in the fight against ISIS, it was particularly insulting for President Trump to imply that the SDF may now be releasing ISIS detainees to get us involved, in his words, in the ongoing violence in northern Syria.

As our military leaders will tell you, our partnership with the SDF was not only built on our shared opposition to ISIS but also on the trust established between our forces in their fighting shoulder to shoulder against a common enemy. They deserved more from the United States and President Trump in the face of demands by Turkey's autocratic leader. Given all the SDF has sacrificed in furtherance of the fight against ISIS and our partnership, our betrayal of their trust is nothing short of appalling.

Again, just days before President Trump's fateful call with Erdogan, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East publicly stated: "We, quite frankly, could not carry out our national defense strategy if it weren't for partners like [the SDF]."

I fear that the President's impulsive abandonment of the Kurds has done significant and lasting damage to the standing of the United States in the world and has shaken the confidence of our allies and partners. We are losing valuable partners in a region where the United States has critical national security interests.

Congress and the international community must send a clear, bipartisan signal to the President that we do not condone the Turkish incursion into northern Syria or the President's decision to abandon the Kurds.

President Trump must rescind the invitation to President Erdogan to visit the United States in November. We should not welcome an autocrat who is responsible for endangering our troops on the ground in Syria, the release of dangerous ISIS fighters, the mass displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians, and violence against non-combatants, which, if reports are true, may amount to war crimes.

The United States does not need to stand alone in condemning the violence in northeastern Syria. Our partners in the counter-ISIS coalition share our concerns about the damage the Turkish incursion has caused to our efforts to defeat ISIS and the potential humanitarian costs. The United States should take the lead within the United Nations and NATO to organize efforts to denounce Turkey's actions and restrain the strategic consequences. We must also redouble diplomatic efforts to seek a negotiated settlement to the Syrian civil war that is consistent with U.N. Security Council Resolution No. 2254 and that protects the equities of the SDF and civilians who are living under their protection.

Unfortunately, the greatest impediment to securing our national security interests in northern Syria and bringing about an end to the conflict there appears to be President Trump's inability to grasp the strategic significance of his actions.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, I rise to call attention to the dire situation that continues to unfold in northern Syria.

Turkey embarked on a reckless and brutal intervention on October 9, 2019, ostensibly to clear northern Syria of terrorist elements. It has ironically dubbed this operation "Peace Spring." The departure of U.S. forces in the days just prior to this incursion left nothing between Turkish military forces and the predominantly Kurdish militia, known as the Syrian Democratic Forces, or SDF. Up until the cease-fire agreement that was announced today, the SDF bore the brunt of the Turkish assault.

The Kurds are deeply stung by what they see as America's abandoning them—this after a long, hard, and successful fight against ISIS.

At the height of its power, ISIS controlled territory larger than the United Kingdom. As many Americans know, ISIS directed and inspired terrorist attacks on our homeland, in communities across the United States, and staged numerous attacks against our troops overseas. ISIS's branches across the globe have conducted unimaginable atrocities, including targeting Christians, Yazidis, Kurds, and others who

opposed ISIS's corrupt interpretation of Islam. Examples of these atrocities are the heartbreaking stories of so-called Yazidi brides who were forced into marriages with ISIS fighters. They were raped and brutalized repeatedly and were forced to decide whether to abandon their children or to make an escape. There are multiple stories of ISIS's terror that has been inflicted on those with disabilities, such as babies being suffocated simply for being born with Down syndrome.

The United States, together with a coalition of over 30 countries, engaged in a campaign to rid the world of ISIS and to restore peace and stability to that region. Yet it was not a nation-state that bore the brunt of the fighting against ISIS. The Kurds and the Arabs who made up the Syrian Democratic Forces took the fight to the heart of the caliphate. With the help of U.S. Special Operations Forces and airstrikes, the SDF liberated lands held by the terror group, imprisoned thousands of terrorist fighters, and restored hope to hundreds of thousands who suffered under ISIS rule.

In our fast-moving and quickly changing world, it is easy for some to forget the terrible threat ISIS once posed while they were at their most powerful, but it would be wrong to think we can now allow ourselves to take our foot off of our enemy's throat.

Even now, ISIS cells are seeking to take advantage of the chaos in northern Syria to reconstitute and once again pose a direct threat to Americans right here in our homeland.

You cannot watch what is unfolding in Syria without being fundamentally concerned about the security of our friends and our neighbors. A recapitalization of ISIS is a threat to us all.

It is for this reason that I have introduced a resolution which calls on the Department of Defense and the Department of State to provide a plan within 30 days which will outline a strategy to ensure ISIS will never again threaten Americans or our allies now or in the future.

This strategy will address the ongoing threat that ISIS poses regionally and globally and will outline the plan to prevent an ISIS resurgence, contain ISIS expansion, mitigate the threat ISIS poses to the United States and our allies, and describe how our gains against ISIS since 2014 will be further protected.

We cannot afford to take our eyes off of this vital task of ensuring the lasting and irreversible defeat of ISIS. We must consolidate our gains to rid the world of this terrible organization and insist on a sound strategy to ensure our success to that end.

Too many of our partner forces and indeed American brothers and sisters in arms have fought and died in this fight, and we must ensure that those sacrifices were not made in vain.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### SAUDI FUGITIVE DECLASSIFICATION ACT OF 2019

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I have come to the floor to fight for answers—answers that are long overdue.

In 2018, my hometown newspaper, *The Oregonian*, identified a handful of cases where Saudi nationals accused of serious crimes in the United States, like manslaughter and sexual assault, fled the country and escaped American justice.

Since then, *The Oregonian* has identified numerous similar cases—in fact, almost two dozen such cases across the United States. That includes 19 in just the last 7 years.

Today I want to tell the Senate about just one of those cases.

Three years ago, not far from my home in Southeast Portland, a young woman had her life taken from her. Fallon Smart was then a rising sophomore at Franklin High School, and she was aspiring to be a teacher. By all accounts, she would have been a terrific teacher.

She was 15, and according to everybody who knew her, Fallon was warm and smart and friendly. She had her whole life ahead of her.

According to police, she lost her life when she was crossing the street in front of stopped traffic, and a vehicle illegally swerved into the left-hand lane and hit her at 55 or 60 miles per hour. Her mom was in a car half a block away and ran to her daughter. Fallon died in her mother's arms, and the car that hit her just sped away.

A Saudi Arabian college student named Abdulrahman Sameer Noorah later returned to the scene and was arrested. He was eventually charged with manslaughter in Fallon's death and then released on \$1 million bail. The Saudi consulate posted his \$100,000 bond, according to *The Oregonian* newspaper.

In the United States, in our country, there was every expectation that Mr. Noorah would get a fair shake from the justice system. Our justice system was working the right way here until 2 weeks before Mr. Noorah was scheduled to go to trial. His tracking bracelet was somehow cut, and he disappeared. Mr. Noorah has never stood trial for Fallon Smart's death.

Eventually, this spring, the State Department confirmed in a letter to me that Mr. Noorah had returned to Saudi Arabia.

I felt then, and I do today, this raises an important and a serious question: How does a foreign national charged with manslaughter, whose passport was seized, disappear from the United States without a trace? How does this

person escape the country and make it thousands of miles back to Saudi Arabia with there being no record of his doing so?

News reports in 2018 suggest that the Saudi Arabian Government knew about Mr. Noorah and these other fugitives and potentially helped them flee justice.

I have five children. I cannot imagine the grief I would feel if one of them was taken from me, and the person responsible somehow managed to evade the justice system. It is almost impossible to comprehend the anger and the helplessness and the frustration any parent would feel in a situation like this.

I met with Fallon's mom Fawn, and while she and all of Fallon's loved ones have borne this miscarriage of justice with extraordinary grace, they are just heartbroken.

In addition to being heartbroken, they are angry. They are outraged by the notion that the person charged with killing their daughter may have just been able to escape scot-free and face no consequences for his action.

For some time, I have been demanding information from the Trump administration. In my view, the victims of these crimes, their families, and the American people are owed some essential answers. How did this happen? What is the U.S. Government doing about it?

I have written the Department of Justice. I have written the State Department. I have written the U.S. Marshals Service. I have written to the Department of Homeland Security. As far as I can tell, I would have gotten better answers from the Saudi royal family themselves.

In fact, when I asked Secretary of State Mike Pompeo what he was doing to try to return the Saudi fugitives to the United States, basically what his Department did is that we just got a collective shrug of the shoulders. I sent the Secretary of State a letter last December. He didn't respond.

So I sent another letter in February. I said: The State Department needs to use all its resources and all the tools at its disposal to hold the Saudi Government accountable. I asked whether our Ambassador pressed the Saudi Government about this disturbing, shocking pattern of Saudi nationals skipping bail.

The State Department finally did respond to my second letter. What I got was a whole bunch of nothing. One of Mr. Pompeo's aides said that without an extradition treaty, there wasn't anything they could do about it. This is from a Secretary who tried to rebrand State as the "Department of Swagger." That swagger was nowhere to be found when it was time to protect innocent Americans.

Today, I am not writing any more letters. I am here on the Senate floor asking for action—action today. I am