

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 949

Mr. UDALL. Madam President, I am very happy to be joined on the floor with Senator MERKLEY, who has worked with me for a long time on the For the People Act, and we will both be speaking here in that order.

The American people sent us here to do the people's business, but under Republican leadership, the Senate is not responding to what the American people need and want. We are not solving the kitchen table issues the American people elected us to face every day.

For example, we are not making sure every American has access to affordable, quality healthcare. We need to lower costs and take on Big Pharma, and we are not doing that. We are not passing commonsense gun safety legislation that 90 percent of the voters support in order to stop shootings in the schools, on our streets, and in our communities. If we can't pass bills that save children's lives, our democracy is not working. We are not even taking on the most pressing issue that faces our planet—climate change. Younger generations are urging us to act, but this body is running away from taking any action.

The number of gravestones in the majority leader's legislative graveyard—where urgent bills are stalled and buried—steadily mounts. Bills keep going into the majority leader's graveyard, but Congress will not and cannot do the people's business when the bills to fix our democracy also rest in that graveyard.

The House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed the For the People Act, H.R. 1. It passed it in March. At the same time, I introduced the Senate companion to the For the People Act, which has the support of all 47 Democrats and Independents in the Senate. Yet, along with a pile of other good and necessary bills, Leader MCCONNELL has buried the For the People Act.

The For the People Act repairs our broken campaign finance system, opens up the ballot box to all Americans, and lays waste to the corruption in Washington. These are all reforms that the American people support. Why will the Senate majority leader not let us vote on them?

There is hardly a day that goes by that we don't see evidence of why it is so important that we pass the For the People Act. Foreign influence in our elections is only growing, and 2016 was just the start. Associates of the President's personal lawyer have been indicted for laundering foreign money into our elections. The President's lawyer is under investigation for the same. Political ads from foreign sources are flooding social media.

Our bill fights foreign tampering in our democracy. It prohibits domestic corporations with foreign control from spending money in U.S. elections. It cracks down on shell companies that are used in order to launder foreign money into our elections. Our bill makes sure that American elections

When it came to women and children, she was there every day in that fight—the fight for a stronger Violence Against Women Act and the fight for the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, so women can be paid commensurate with their male colleagues. She authored the Newborn Screening Saves Lives Act to maintain and continue the support for mandatory screening for newborns.

She fought for workers and middle-class America and manufacturing jobs for Americans and for equal opportunity by sponsoring the Employment Nondiscrimination Act, which passed on the Senate floor 6 years ago.

She proceeded to work on banking and financial issues. She was the lead on the SAFE Act Confidentiality and Privilege Enhancement Act, which had to do with some of the nitty-gritty of mortgage licensing. She worked to ensure that groups like Habitat for Humanity could lend money on a zero-interest loan to their homeowners and be able to do so without violating the legal precepts of American law. It was issue after issue.

When I think of her journey, I think about the parallel structure between her life and mine, in that she ran for the legislature in North Carolina the same year that I ran for the legislature in Oregon. I won a seat in the Oregon House and she won a seat in the North Carolina Senate. We both spent 10 years there. We both then decided that we should attempt to take our philosophy of fighting for the people to the U.S. Senate. We threw our hats into the ring at the same moment, running campaigns against incumbent Senators, and we both won.

I recall how every time I checked on how she was doing, she was always doing 5 to 10 points better than I was, and I just kept thinking: I just have to follow Kay Hagan's example. Then, before the campaign was over, she called me up one day, and we hadn't actually met much or talked much, and she said: I just want to check in on how you are doing.

We connected and bonded over our parallel paths and the fight we were in, which was such an intense effort of campaigning with the desire and determination to make this country a better place.

Of course, as I have noted, when she got here, she threw herself into so many aspects of our national life and our legal structure. I was pleased that we were both assigned by Senator KENNEDY to the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. We were able to work on the ACA, or the Affordable Care Act, to try to greatly increase health coverage and make it more affordable and available throughout America—really important for the people of North Carolina, the citizens of my State, and citizens across this country.

Then, we were both assigned to the Banking Committee, and it was Dodd-Frank. We worked on questions such as

how do we end some of the predatory lending practices? Both of us worked on payday-loan predatory actions, where interest rates could be 500 percent. We knew the damage done to our families across the country. We didn't succeed on that particular piece of legislation—the payday loan piece—but we were stemming in this fight from the same place. I so applaud her determination to end predatory practices and lending.

Many of the things that we were fighting for did get into Dodd-Frank in terms of fairness and mortgages so that homeownership would be a dream of homeownership that would result in equity for middle-class Americans rather than a nightmare of homeownership, in which interest rates would double after 2 years, and the family would go bankrupt, and they would be foreclosed on and could lose their house.

Apart from all of that, Kay was such a beautiful voice and spirit in this Chamber—cheerful, determined, thoughtful, gracious. She just made you enjoy being here.

I also think about her, as when she served, she was the healthiest Member of this Chamber. She paid a lot of attention to the diet she ate, the food she ate, how she exercised, how she brought balance to her life. That, too, was an inspiration to us.

Here we find that our journeys on this planet are pretty precarious. We never know what is going to happen on the next day or the next week. I think it is a reminder to all of us to use our moments wisely, to treat each other with the sort of graciousness she exemplified—this sort of spirited fighting for “we the people,” the people of the United States for whom she was determined to deploy and champion on the floor of the Senate.

Her illness and her death are a real loss to all of us. It is important that we carry her in our hearts. She certainly has a place solidly secured in my heart and, I think, the hearts of everyone who served with her.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CORTON). Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 4 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 3:02 p.m., recessed until 4:03 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. BLACKBURN).

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS, TRANSPORTATION, AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2020—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

are decided by American voters without there being foreign interference. It protects our democratic institutions, increases oversight over election vendors, requires paper ballots, and supports security upgrades for States' voting systems.

This body should have gotten serious about election security immediately after the 2016 election, but under the majority leader's direction, we have not done that.

At a time of increased foreign interference, the President has invited foreign assistance in any way it might benefit him personally, politically, or financially. Day in and day out, we see this President taking full advantage of his position to benefit himself, his family, and his political prospects.

The President never divested. He never formed a blind trust for his assets. Every day, we see foreign officials and foreign nationals currying favor with the President and padding his pocketbook, wining and dining at the Trump properties. Indeed, Mr. Giuliani and his two close associates lunched at the Trump International Hotel, right here in Washington, just before these two individuals were picked up at the Washington Dulles International Airport with their one-way tickets abroad. The same individuals have been charged with illegally funneling foreign money into our democracy. In addition, the President only relented from hosting the next G7 summit at his Doral resort in Miami after the Republicans told him that even they couldn't defend that.

All the while, the President calls the emoluments clause—intended to stop these very abuses—phony.

The For the People Act requires the President to fully disclose his or her financial interests and disclose the last 10 years of his or her tax returns, which is something this President has never done. It requires the President to fully divest and transfer all of his or her assets to a blind trust. The American people deserve to know their President is acting in the national interest, not in his or her own self-interest, and not being subjected to leverage by foreign interests that seek to corrupt our electoral process.

The intelligence community has been very clear with its disturbing warnings. Adverse foreign interests are actively trying to manipulate our democracy. They did so in 2016 as the Mueller report and prosecutions from that investigation confirmed. They will try to do so again in 2020. We are watching it happen in realtime before our eyes.

These foreign interests are not red or blue—not Democratic or Republican. They will use whomever they can to pursue their interests—interests that are often opposed to ours or are simply corrupt. We must unite in the defense of our electoral system and in the defense of the sanctity of our democracy. Like the other bills the Democrats are seeking to pass this week, the For the People Act would provide that protec-

tion. The House's version, H.R. 1, would do so as well.

We want to partner with the Republicans in these efforts, and we are open to negotiation. Yet, while the American people demand that we fix our out-of-control campaign finance system, make sure elections are secure, and root out the corruption in Washington, bills to address these issues gather dust on the leader's desk.

I, for one, will not stop fighting for the comprehensive democratic reforms that we need and for bringing power back to the people—where the Founders intended it to be. Our democracy will always be worth the fight.

Once again, Senator MERKLEY has been a great partner to work with on the For the People Act.

I yield to the Senator from Oregon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I am honored to join my colleague who has led this battle for the vision of the For the People Act that will restore the “we the people” democratic republic.

Here we are on the floor of the Senate. It is an institution that once reverberated with great debates on the great issues our Nation faced—issues of war and peace, of civil rights, of healthcare and housing, of education and infrastructure, and of living-wage jobs; issues of equal opportunity and of environmental pollution; issues that affect the fundamental success of each family in America and our collective success as a nation.

Yet, if you are sitting here today and are observing the Senate from the benches up above, you will be hard-pressed to see any of that because those debates are not happening in the U.S. Senate. This Chamber is silent on the great issues that face America.

Before he was the majority leader, the majority leader promised that things would be different under his leadership.

He said:

A Senate majority under my leadership would break sharply from the practices of the Reid era in favor of a far more free-wheeling approach to problem solving. I would work to restore its traditional role as a place where good ideas are generated, debated and voted upon.

Now, one of the fundamental principles is that every Senator should be able to raise any issue and have the chance to defend it, to present it, to see it attacked, to respond to those attacks, and to have the American people see where we stand. But, today, the Senate is not operating in that manner today. The reality is reflected in a different quote by the majority leader from this past year.

He said:

Donald Trump is still in the White House, and as long as I am Majority Leader of the Senate, I get to set the agenda. That's why I call myself the Grim Reaper.

The majority leader is taking great pride in preventing this Chamber from

being the legislative body that was envisioned in the Constitution, one in which we examine the issues that the citizens of our States present to us with great concern and ask us to resolve so as to take this Nation forward. Instead, we are deeply mired in the legislative graveyard that the majority leader has been so proud to create.

How about the Bipartisan Background Checks Act? It is now engraved on a tombstone. The Paycheck Fairness Act? Engraved on a tombstone. Violence Against Women? On a tombstone—or how about Save the Internet? Or the Climate Action Now Act?

How about healthcare? Across my State, in rural areas and urban areas, everybody wants the same fair price, even if they have preexisting conditions. That is the fundamental nature of an effective insurance strategy for healthcare, but the Protecting Americans With Preexisting Conditions Act has never been debated on this floor.

The American Dream and Promise Act, the Securing America's Federal Elections Act? How about the Raise the Wage Act? How about the Equality Act that grants every member of our society, LGBTQ Americans, the full opportunity to have the doors of opportunity opened, rather than slammed shut—debated and passed just down the hall, each and every one of these bills, but here, they haven't been debated. The Senate is failing its constitutional responsibility.

In fact, during the last 2 years, there has only been three priorities that have seemed to have arisen in this Chamber. One was the goal of stripping healthcare from 30 million Americans. It failed by the slimmest of margins. A second is to pack the courts with judges who believe in a supercharged amendment to give power to the powerful, rather than power to the people.

The third is a \$2 trillion tax cut to enrich the richest Americans. In any chamber that truly represents the people, you don't see the goal of destroying healthcare for 30 million Americans and giving \$2 trillion to the richest Americans. But that is what we have seen here, while we fail to see the bills on healthcare, on housing, on education, on infrastructure, on living wage jobs—the fundamentals by which the American families prosper.

Why is it that this Chamber is now a completely owned subsidiary of the most powerful people in this country? It is because of the fundamental corruption of our constitutional system, starting with gerrymandering.

Many of us hear that phrase, “equal representation,” and understand we are talking about fundamental fairness of distributed power, but gerrymandering is the opposite of that. The Supreme Court has given complete license to extreme partisan gerrymandering, instead of defending the constitutional vision of equal representation. It is principle in a democracy and in a republic that the citizens choose their legislators, the legislators don't choose

their citizens. But that legislation to address that, to create nonpartisan commissions to prevent that gerrymandering, hasn't been debated on the floor of this Chamber.

A second piece of corruption is voter suppression. The Supreme Court opened the doors by gutting the Voting Rights Act, again failing to defend the vision of the Constitution. But have we remedied that here on this floor? Have we addressed that fundamental corruption in which all kinds of tactics are created to prevent people from voting across this country—all kinds of clever ID laws to disempower communities that are minority communities or college communities or poor communities or Native American communities? We have not.

There is perhaps the most vicious form of corruption, the dark money flowing through our campaign systems. Jefferson was very clear that if you have government by the powerful, you end up with laws for the powerful. So you have to have distributed power so that the power of the people results in laws that reflect the will of the people. That is the difference between the vision of our constitutional system here in the United States of America and the system of kingships that dominated Europe.

But because of the corruption of dark money in our campaign system, it has created the concentration of power, the exact opposite of what Jefferson laid out and our Founders laid out in our Constitution. We start our Constitution with those powerful first three words, "We the people," because that is the vision of our Constitution—not "We the powerful," not "We the privileged."

So a bill has been crafted, H.R. 1, the For the People Act. My colleague from New Mexico has led this charge to address this fundamental corruption in order to restore the vision our Nation was founded on because, if we restore that foundation, then we would be addressing healthcare on the floor of the Senate, making it more affordable, stopping the price gouging of Americans, the challenges of access in communities across this country.

We would be addressing the shortage of housing that is driving a homeless epidemic in this country, partly because of the economics, the structure of our economy, and partly because of unaddressed mental illness and drug addiction.

We would be addressing education because education is the path to full participation; yet today, we have seen a shrinkage of the opportunities through apprenticeships for working people and through college—affordable college for the dreams taking you in that direction if you weren't previously burdened by a debt the size of a home mortgage. We would be addressing infrastructure and jobs. We would be addressing the environmental challenges our planet faces if we restore the vision of our Constitution.

This For the People Act is the most important piece of legislation because everything else we care about as Americans is going to fail if we let this Chamber be controlled by powerful special interests through this corrupted system. So let's take it on. Let's take on the gerrymandering and the voter suppression and the dark money. Let's have the courage to debate it on this floor because that is what we were elected to do, was to work on the big challenges facing our Nation, and there is perhaps no bigger challenge than this.

Madam President, I yield back to my colleague from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Finance Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 949, the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Reserving the right to object, I would like to object. I would like to talk about this bill for a minute.

In March, the House passed a bill that would give the Federal Government unprecedented control over elections in this country, despite the fact that, for more than 200 years, we have had a history of State-run elections. That diversity is part of the strength of our system. I objected to the request at that time to pass that bill.

S. 949 appears to be almost exactly the same bill. Apparently, the powerful special interests that my friend, Mr. MERKLEY, talked about are the State governments because that is where we are taking authority from here. We are taking authority from the State governments.

The For the People Act is really the For the Federal Government Act. It represents a one-size-fits-all Federal power grab that would take control of election administration away from the States, at the great expense to the American people. It requires all the States to fit into, frankly, what House Democrats saw as a narrow view of what elections should look like and, just as frankly, what House Democrats for 20 years have had in mind that would in every case, in their view, give them an advantage in the election process. The security of our elections comes, in large part, from the very diversity of the way they are set up and the way they are administered. This bill would really undermine that decentralized system.

I spent 20 years as an election official, part of it as the chief election authority in what was then the third largest county in our State, and the rest of it was as the secretary of state, the chief election official. I know for a fact that people who conduct these

elections are unbelievably focused on a fair process before an election day and on election day.

I also know for a fact that the very fact that they can't blame some far-away regulator on their inability to do what needs to be done makes a difference. I have seen that happen at 6 o'clock in the morning. I have seen it happen at 12 midnight as the last precinct comes in. I have seen it happen as people were doing everything they can to be sure that people that are trying to vote are able to vote. I have seen the development of the provisional ballot system that the States all use now if someone for some reason believes they should vote and the records aren't there to allow that.

So there are a lot of things that Senator MERKLEY understands better than I do. I am sure there are a lot of things that Senator UDALL understands better than I do. I look forward to the times when I have and will continue to seek advice for them on those issues. I am pretty sure that this is an issue that, at least from the point of view of the strength of the local election system and the State election system, I have reason to have confidence.

In fact, former President Obama expressed the same view when he said: "There is no serious person out there who would suggest somehow that you could even rig America's elections, in part, because they are so decentralized and the numbers of votes involved." He said that late summer, early fall 2016.

I think that was true when he said it; I think it is true now. This bill tells States how to run every aspect of their elections. It takes away the authority of the States to determine their own process for voter registration. In fact, it requires online voter registration. If you are trying to focus on election security, online voter registration would not be at the top of that list.

It requires automatic voter registration. It requires same-day registration. It requires States to accept voter registrations from people who are not old enough to vote yet. It dictates the criteria that people can be removed from the voter rolls or can't be. It tells the States what kind of election equipment they must use, how their ballots must be counted, how the ballot counts must be audited. It even goes so far as to tell the States as to what kinds of marks must be made on ballot-marking devices and what kind of paper their ballots must be printed on. It tells States they must offer early voting sites. It tells them those early voting sites where they must be and what hours they must operate.

The bill doesn't stop at election administration. It tells States how they redistrict, how they establish redistricting commissions, who can be appointed to that commission, how the lines are drawn. This would be a major Federal takeover of a system that would not benefit from that takeover. It also creates a program for public financing for elections, tax dollars to politicians to run elections with.

And so, Madam President, I do object to the unanimous consent request, and I think for good reason.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. UDALL. Madam President, this bill does just the opposite. It supports States. It doesn't take over from States. The States have asked us for help when it comes to actions like cybersecurity and other things that are happening out there. It roots out foreign interference in our elections which happens in Federal elections and happens in State elections and, I think, can only be done at the Federal level.

The distinguished Senator from Missouri says that these things that are being required, States are adopting all of these. States are moving very aggressively forward with things like automatic registration and moving to make it easier to vote, and we are trying to lay a consistent basis so the States know how to operate. So this is a good bill. It is a solid bill. It puts the American people back in charge.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I might just respond by saying that, if States are adopting these things because they think they are a good idea, that is one thing. For Washington, DC, to tell them they have to do it because we think it is a good idea, that is another thing. If my friend from New Mexico is right and States are adopting many of these changes, I guess there would be no particular reason to have the bill. I am pleased that this is a bill that is going to take further study before it is ready to come to the Senate Floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

H.R. 3055

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, the substitute amendment to H.R. 3055 contains the Appropriations Committee-reported versions of four bills: Agriculture; Interior; Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, one bill; and Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies.

I was very excited to see today's earlier cloture vote, which passed 88 to 5, which means that we can see those four bills to help fund government move forward.

The Commerce-Justice-Science portion of this minibus, or CJS, was reported out of the Appropriations Committee on a unanimous 31-to-0 vote. I particularly care about this bill as ranking member on that subcommittee.

The CJS bill provides \$70.8 billion to protect the Nation from criminals and terrorists, warn us about violent storms and climate change, enable fair trade, promote manufacturing and sustainable fisheries, partner with State and local law enforcement, and provide resources for the census to count every person in the United States fairly and accurately.

CJS Subcommittee Chairman MORAN and I took a collaborative approach to

drafting this important bill. The CJS Subcommittee held substantive hearings, considered 1,564 individual and group requests from 75 Senators, and worked in a bipartisan way to meet the needs of the Nation and our individual States.

Under the Constitution, since 1790, every 10 years the United States has conducted the census, and we only get one chance every 10 years to get it right. In addition to determining the number of Representatives each State will have, Federal programs rely on census data to distribute more than \$900 billion annually, nearly \$4 billion of which goes to my home State of New Hampshire.

Chairman MORAN and I have worked together to make sure the census has the resources it needs. The bill provides \$7.6 billion for the Bureau of the Census—nearly double the amount provided in fiscal year 2019. This fully funds the life-cycle estimate for the 2020 census, along with contingencies that have been recommended by Secretary Ross but were not requested in the budget.

The bill also directs the Census Bureau to invest in partnership and communication efforts in hard-to-count areas in order to increase self-response rates and offset the need for expensive door-to-door followup.

Once again, the subcommittee has provided increases to law enforcement and grant programs that fight gun violence and violent crime. The bill includes at least a 3-percent increase for Justice Department law enforcement agencies—more than \$476 million higher than the fiscal year 2019 level for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the FBI, and the Marshals Service.

Especially important, we have provided \$131 million for the FBI's National Instant Criminal Background Check System, NICS—\$24 million more than last year. This system is the key to making sure firearms are purchased legally and helping keep weapons out of the hands of those who wish to do harm. The bill includes increases for States to improve record submission to NICS and for mental health courts.

We continue to provide the full \$100 million authorized for STOP School Violence Act grants. But as we know, gun violence isn't just happening in schools, so we have included funding for other grant programs, like \$8 million for community-based violence prevention and nearly 10 percent more for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to help keep children and their families safe in their neighborhoods.

We are also addressing another form of violence facing our law enforcement officers, and that is police suicide. I would really like to provide more statistics regarding this important issue of police suicide, but unfortunately I can't, and neither can anybody in this body because no Federal agencies col-

lect data on the subject. That is why in the CJS bill, we direct the Justice Department to begin a national data collection to report on police suicide so we can all better understand the scope of the problem. We also direct the Department to report on best practices for officer mental health and wellness programs, including peer mentoring.

One thing we do know about police suicides, though, is that we lose more police officers to suicide each year than we do to officers killed in the line of duty. Our police officers need help now, so we have been able to add \$3 million for grants to allow State and local law enforcement to provide improved mental health services, training to reduce the stigma of officers seeking help, and programs to address resiliency for departments and officers to handle repeated exposure to stress and trauma.

This is an issue, sadly, we know all too well in New Hampshire, where in the last couple of months, in the city of Nashua—our second-largest city—we lost a very much appreciated, well-respected, and loved police officer to suicide. We were lucky because the chief of the Nashua Police Department and the family of that officer were willing to talk about that suicide to raise concern about this issue so that we can know and try to address it.

Another area of funding in this bill that will help our first responders, in addition to the support to our State and local governments and community organizations, is the \$505 million in dedicated grant programs to fight substance abuse, including opioids, and to fight drug trafficking. This amount is \$37 million higher than the fiscal year 2019 level and \$127.5 million higher than the budget request.

In part because of the resources we have brought to bear on the opioid crisis in New Hampshire and throughout New England, the substance use disorder epidemic is developing and changing, and we are now seeing a rapid rise in the use and trafficking of meth amphetamines. When efforts are focused on preventing and stopping one drug, sadly, we see others gain traction, and that is what is happening.

After hearing from local law enforcement and community organizations, this bill provides more flexibility to allow communities to respond to a variety of substance abuse issues in addition to opioids in the Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program. Communities should not be turning away individuals who have substance use disorders because we have a narrow definition of the programs that can help.

Another way this bill seeks to keep Granite State communities vibrant—and this helps other communities that depend on coastal economies—is we reject the elimination of grants that help our coastal communities and their economies. The bill keeps key weather satellites on track and provides an increase for job-supporting coastal programs like Sea Grant, Coastal Zone

Management Grants, the National Oceans and Coastal Security Fund, and the National Estuarine Research Reserve System.

The bill includes continued funding to prevent a burdensome and costly at-sea monitoring fee from being imposed on New Hampshire and other New England fishermen. I have heard directly from our fishermen in New Hampshire that without this support, they would have to stop fishing and declare bankruptcy. So many seacoast communities rely on a strong fishing industry. That is why the bill also includes \$2.5 million for New England groundfish research, including looking at measures to improve stock assessments.

Beyond the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, the bill also supports strong investments in research and development at the National Science Foundation; the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, NASA; and the National Institute of Standards and Technology, NIST. The bill includes a 5-percent increase for NIST, which is an agency that promotes U.S. innovation and competitiveness through scientific and technological standards and measurement.

I am pleased that the bill provides \$2 million for NIST to study whether firefighters are subject to PFAS exposure, a chemical that has been linked to serious adverse health implications.

What we have seen is that—we think the actual equipment that is used by so many firefighters has PFAS chemicals in that equipment, so that while risking their lives fighting fires, firefighters also may be exposed to a dangerous chemical that can affect their health. The last thing our firefighters need when they are on duty is to be concerned about the safety of their own firefighting gear.

Within NASA, we have provided balanced funding that enables science supported by decadal surveys, supports the International Space Station, continues developing and flying new transportation systems, and allows for an eventual return to the Moon by humans.

We have also provided more than \$900 million to restore widely supported programs that the administration proposed to eliminate—programs like Space Grant; EPSCoR; the Wide Field Infrared Telescope or W-FIRST; the Plankton, Aerosol, Cloud ocean Ecosystem mission, PACE; and Restore-L. What is important about these programs is that they allow young people—students in every State—to be involved with NASA and implement high-priority science objectives and to get excited about space and the opportunities space investment offers us.

These are some of the highlights of just the Commerce-Justice-Science portion of this minibus. I believe it is a strong, comprehensive bill. I am proud it is on the floor. I hope it is going to pass with as strong a margin as we saw this morning's vote give us, and I hope we will be able to enact this bill into

law before the current continuing funding resolution expires on November 21.

I want to give credit to all of the members of both the majority and the minority on the Appropriations subcommittee that helped negotiate our CJS bill and all of the bills that are on the floor. They do tremendous work, and they deserve our credit for all of their effort.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. ROMNEY. Madam President, I rise today to talk about two problems that are related. These two problems have been spoken about for I think virtually decades here in this Chamber and across the political spectrum.

One relates to preserving our extraordinary entitlement programs—Social Security, Medicare, our highway trust fund, and the like. These programs are very much under threat because within 13 years, each of these trust funds, each of these programs will face insolvency.

The other problem I want to talk about is the massive overspending, the deficit and the debt we have. That is something which Republicans and Democrats have been speaking about for a long time, although speaking about it less frequently as of late.

These two problems are related because two-thirds of our spending at the Federal level is automatic. It is associated with our entitlement programs. So let me start with the debt.

When I was running for President and when I had the chance also to run for the Senate, the No. 1 issue among the people in my State was the issue of whether we would stop spending more money than we take in. We took in about \$3 trillion last year in tax revenue, but we spent about \$4 trillion.

There are some people who have decided to stop thinking about the deficit, to stop worrying about the debt, but as the debt reaches almost \$23 trillion, it is beginning to be a real issue. I don't think we are about to face a failed auction where people won't be willing to buy our debt. We are, after all, the reserve currency of the world, and people want to have American dollars. But I am concerned that the interest is beginning to have an enormous impact on our capacity to meet our priorities.

Last year we spent almost \$300 billion on interest on the Federal debt, and over time, this debt, as we add to it year after year after year, is going to mean that the burden of interest payments on the American people will get larger and larger.

There is a small group of people who say: Well, this isn't a problem because interest rates are so low.

Well, it is not a problem until it becomes a problem, because if interest rates start creeping up at some point, it can become an extraordinary burden on the American people.

If we are sending hundreds of billions of dollars to people like the Chinese,

when they use those dollars to confront our military, we have a real problem leading the free world.

The issue is, how come we can't deal with the debt and the deficits, and why haven't we been able to do so? There has been effort to talk about that, even though more recently it has been kind of quiet. It relates, of course, to what I started to speak about, which are our trust funds, with Medicare, with Social Security, our retirement programs. Social Security, the disability program, as well as the highway trust funds—these are scheduled to run out of money within 13 years.

To deal with this issue, Senator JOE MANCHIN, Senator TODD YOUNG, Senator DOUG JONES, Senator KYRSTEN SINEMA, and I have proposed something called the TRUST Act. It is designed to save the trust funds associated with these major programs. It is designed to make sure we have a process for finally getting balance in Social Security—both trust funds in Social Security, as well as Medicare, as well as the highway trust fund.

This is an effort that has been undertaken in the past unsuccessfully, and a lot of people say that it can't be done now. But it has to be done now. If it is not done now, the burden that will fall on our seniors eventually will become extraordinary. And the burden that will fall on the next generation, as they don't know whether Social Security and Medicare be can be depended upon, is unthinkable.

The approach that Senator MANCHIN and these other Senators and I have taken is pretty straightforward. We are not laying out a specific plan to change these programs. Instead, we have laid out a process for modernizing these programs.

For each one of these trust funds, our bill proposes that the leaders—Republicans and Democrats—in both Chambers, House and Senate, put together a rescue committee. For each trust fund, there will be a rescue committee that goes to work to see if, on a bipartisan, bicameral basis, we can come up with a solution to get these trust funds on a solvent basis for at least 75 years.

That is an effort that will be successful only if both parties agree. If we do get that agreement in any one or each one of these different rescue committees, on a privileged basis, their recommendation, their proposal, their bill will be brought to the floor of the House and Senate and voted upon.

On that basis, we have a process for actually resolving the insolvency issue that faces Social Security, Medicare, and the highway trust fund. We also have a pathway to finally get our budget balanced and end the extraordinary growth in our debt and the burden the interest payments are having on the American people today and in the future.

I look forward to hearing from my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. I hope we get great support from people who are willing to sponsor this effort

to be part of these rescue committees, to go to work to resolve the impending challenges that we have in these trust funds and in our overall financial status.

I mentioned the names of the Senators I have been working with to put together this TRUST Act. I also want to mention a number of Congresspeople who are helping out and our cosponsors, original cosponsors: MIKE GALLAGHER, ED CASE, and BEN MCADAMS. Again, Republicans and Democrats, House and Senate—together, I think we can finally save these essential programs.

With that, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

MR. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I want to thank my good friend Senator ROMNEY for taking this initiative and, basically, all of us working together.

Let me say this. We were Governors together—the Governor from Massachusetts and the Governor from West Virginia. The bottom line is, we had the same balanced budget amendment we had to work with. We had to work on a daily basis, a weekly basis—whatever it took—to balance our States' budgets. We had to stay within our means. We couldn't spend more than what we had coming in, and we couldn't put our people in debt.

That was something I thought was pretty simple because it is the same thing you do in your personal life, the same thing you do in your small business or large corporation: You live within your means. If you are going to grow, then you grow, basically, in a balanced way.

As Senator ROMNEY has said, our debt is almost \$23 trillion. You can look back through history when we have hit these numbers, but then if you look back, during the war, we weren't worried about balancing the budget during the war. We were worrying about whether we would survive as nation, and we did.

Coming out of that war, we had over 100 percent debt to GDP. We were able to bring that back down and work in a prudent manner. Then it ballooned up.

Let me tell you how I signed on to Bowles-Simpson. If you look at recent history, the last time—and the only time for 40 years—we balanced the budget was in 1997, up to 2001. That was with Erskine Bowles and John Casey working together—a Democrat working for President Bill Clinton and a Republican Congressman from Ohio. They sat down and worked out a plan and a tax system that worked for America. It worked so well that we were spinning out, basically, surpluses.

We were told that by 2006 we would be debt-free on the path we were going. We had 9/11 come up. We had two wars we never paid for—the first time. I tell people, if you are a Democrat and you want to blame Republicans, go ahead. They are guilty. If you are a Republican and you want to blame Democrats, go ahead. They are just as

guilty. There is basically blame for both sides. But sooner or later, you have to do something.

When Erskine Bowles and Alan Simpson came together, Democrats and Republicans said: We have to get our financial house in order.

It made sense to me. I had just been elected. It was in early 2011. I was elected in November 2010. I started looking, and it made sense. We came so close that it would have been forced to a vote, as Senator ROMNEY has just explained the TRUST Act.

We think that someone has to have their eye on the ball here because when these interest rates balloon—and they will—and when people lose confidence and faith and will not put their money in and buy our paper, basically, for the low return we are giving them—or no return at times—and demand more, then we are going to have to outbid, and it is going to cost a lot more to do business in our country.

Sooner or later, we are basically writing checks our kids can't cash. That is about it in a nutshell. If we are responsible to leave our children and the next generation in better shape than how we received it, we have done a very poor job. We truly have.

Again, I thank the good Senator from Utah for basically bringing this fiscal plan we have worked together on and looking at where we are. The roadmap is pretty clear. If you haven't learned from history, you will make history. And it is not going to be a good kind of history you are going to make.

Let me tell you who these recessions hit the most. In my State, I have a very hard-working State, a very rural State, and a State that is not of the highest per capita income in the country by any means. With that, they are the first ones who get hurt. If we don't really care about Social Security, if we don't care about the highway trust fund, infrastructure, if we don't care about Medicare—this is a life-sustaining influx of money they have because very few people who work from paycheck to paycheck are able to put money aside so that they don't need Social Security and they can pay their own medical bills.

I have seen the effect of this. I can tell you, it is not pleasant. I have people on my side of the aisle who talk about Medicare for All. That is aspirational. We can't even pay for Medicare for Some—the “some” who have already earned it and paid into it.

By 2026, we are going to be in default. We are going to be out of funds. By 2032, Social Security could be out of funds. These are things that are fixable now. They will not be fixable in 2026 for Medicare. It will be too late. For Social Security, in 2030, 2032, it will be too late, and that is just around the corner. For the highway trust fund, look at the infrastructure. Everyone who has run for President within the last decade or so basically has talked about a big infrastructure package. It will be the first thing they have done. They get

elected, and guess what happens. Nothing. We don't see an infrastructure package.

It is the most politically right thing you can do. A pothole doesn't have an R's or a D's name on it. It is not partisan. It will bust your tire, and it will break your rim. It doesn't care who you are.

These are things we can fix, and they are things we can do to gain the trust of the public. Yet we fail to do them. We continue to divide this country and push us apart. This TRUST Act is what will bring us back together. It will put our priorities where they should be.

All of us have run for public office. We have put our names out there. We can go out there and explain: We are protecting your Social Security.

If you want to protect Social Security, then do something. The TRUST Act does that.

We are going to take care of your Medicare. Do you want to take care of Medicare? Support the TRUST Act. It will do that.

These are things we can do, and we can do them now. We shouldn't wait. We should bring this back to the floor, and you should go on record to vote. Are you really going to support Social Security? Are you really going to support Medicare? Then vote.

If you don't have the guts to vote, that means you don't support Social Security, and you don't support Medicare, and quit being a hypocrite going out there campaigning and saying you do. That is really what it comes down to.

We are just trying to fix something in an orderly fashion, where everybody has it—bipartisan, bicameral. If we can't do this bipartisan, bicameral, we can't do anything in a bipartisan, bicameral way. This is where we are today.

I thank my dear friend. I really do. I thank my friend Senator ROMNEY for saying: Let's do this, Joe.

I said: Absolutely, MITT, I am onboard. Count me in.

We have other Senators. Not surprisingly, we have former Governors. This is how we had to operate. These were our day-to-day operations. During the crisis of 2007, 2008, I used to meet once a week in West Virginia with my finance people. They would give me the projections, and we had to make adjustments. In 2007 and 2008, with the recession coming on as hard it was, we were meeting twice a day, trying to stay ahead of it and figure out how we could keep from getting in the hole. But we made it. I have never seen that type of attention here. I have not seen one Presidential candidate—right now with all of them out there—talking about the finances of our country, talking about what the children of the next generation will inherit, how they are going to be able to manage, how their mothers and their fathers and all of them are going to have Social Security secured and Medicare taken care of. I haven't heard that at all. Maybe we can get the dialogue started now.

With that, I yield floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor today to support the funding bill for the defense of our Nation. This funding package provides a well-earned, well-deserved pay raise for our troops—the men and women in uniform, the men and women I had the privilege of visiting earlier this month, part of the Wyoming National Guard deployments in multiple places around the world.

Yet Democrats have blocked a key vote. They did it last month. I want to make sure they don't do it again. It seems they are doing it for purely political reasons. It is a partisan blockade of our Nation's troops' pay raise. It is hard to believe they are doing it, but they did it, and it seems they want to do it again.

Both parties agreed to support our military, and they support our military families as well. They made that promise 3 months ago. Then they went back on the promise. It was part of that bipartisan budget deal that was signed in August.

By moving this defense funding measure, Republicans are keeping our promises; the Democrats are breaking theirs. Now it is time once again to vote. It is time for Democrats to stop blocking the bill. It is time to stop playing politics, especially with our troops' paychecks.

We need to pass this bill to fully fund the Defense Department. It honors our commitment to our troops. It delivers critical resources our military needs to keep us safe, to keep us strong, to keep us prosperous. The bill protects America's standing among our allies and our adversaries.

We need to get this done. It also funds Health and Human Services. That is what we are looking at as well. It includes our Nation's medical research.

It is time for the Democrats to get to yes. It is time to keep our promises to the military; it is time to honor our commitment to our troops; and it is time to get on with the business of our Nation. It is time to pass the bill.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

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

BOEING 737 MAX

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Thank you, Mr. President.

We just heard Senators ROMNEY and MANCHIN talking about our Nation's economic woes and legislation they are handling on a bipartisan basis. I think

it is always a good and positive thing when we can approach our work in a bipartisan way. It is what the American people are expecting us to do.

Yesterday, in our Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, we had bipartisanship at work again. We were carrying out one of the duties we have in Congress, which is to conduct oversight and to make certain that not only the processes of government and the fiscal health of our government are on a firm footing but also to look at things like consumer protection and public safety.

Our hearing yesterday dealt with these deadly and disastrous crashes that happened with the Boeing 737 MAX. We know that those crashes occurred and remember that one occurred in Indonesia and one in Ethiopia.

I will tell you that, in my opinion, the executives from the Boeing Company tried—and they failed—to explain to members of the Senate Commerce Committee why they allowed the 737 MAX aircraft to reach the commercial market.

We discovered that the company's highest echelon neglected a responsibility to ensure that the aircraft met their highest safety standards. It was of concern to us. I don't know, and I think many of us were left trying to figure out, whether this was something that was a corporate culture problem, whether it was a communication problem, or whether it was a negligence issue.

Until a few weeks ago, executives, including president and CEO Dennis Muilenburg, had not read emails revealing how Boeing officials convinced the FAA to approve training materials and delete troublesome flight systems data and had not read text messages showing that employees lied to regulators about safety problems with the plane's MCAS system. That is the Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System. They had not read the text messages that spelled out there was a problem.

When asked at the hearing for technical details on the science and systems behind the MAX's approval, Muilenburg and his cohort were unable to even give a straight answer. We did not get the answers we needed on questions about their process, test pilots, or simulators.

Yesterday's hearing made it clear that Boeing leadership cannot provide the answers we are looking for, not for ourselves but on behalf of the victims and their families and on behalf of the flying public who, yes, safety is their priority.

The Senate really needs to look at this issue again. Our Commerce Committee should schedule another hearing on the people and the procedures and hear from the engineers and the test pilots behind Boeing's MAX program.

Perhaps these engineers and pilots will be able to do a better job than the executives did yesterday, and perhaps they can explain to the families of

these 346 crash victims how so many people ended up dead after choosing one the world's safest modes of transportation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CRAMER. Madam President, first of all, thank you for your flexibility at the chair today.

APPROPRIATIONS

Madam President, the purpose for rising today is to advocate on behalf of our military, the men and women who are the bravest in the world. I feel compelled to do so because I can imagine that in these days of hyperpartisan politics, some of them may feel like some of us are abandoning them, and I want them to know for sure that we are not.

We all took an oath to the Constitution, and the highest priority in the Constitution for the Federal Government is, of course, to provide for the Nation's defense against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

Unfortunately, my Democratic colleagues seem to be shirking from this responsibility lately. They are willing to settle for, seemingly, mediocrity, and right now we have excellence, the best. First of all, they are planning to come to this Chamber tomorrow to block the all-important Defense appropriations bill; that is to say, to block the funding for our military; that is to say, to block the largest pay increase for the men and women of our military in over a decade—just to name one topic that is being funded, or would be funded, by this appropriations bill that they are going to block.

Back in July, the House and Senate, on a bipartisan basis—I say to the Presiding Officer, you just gave a wonderful speech about the importance of working together. On a bipartisan basis, we passed a major budget bill. It was a win for our military and a win for our country because it was supposed to provide them with certainty and an important path forward as they chart that path—that strategic path—for America's superiority.

To echo the House Speaker and the Democratic leader at the time: "A bipartisan agreement has been reached that will enhance our national security." These aren't my words—although I agree with them—these are the words of the Democratic leadership of Congress.

After passage, the Democratic leader went on to say: This deal would "strengthen our national security and provide our troops with the resources they need." I agree with the Democratic leader. Please—please—change course while you still can and support this important funding bill tomorrow.

I agreed with my colleague from New York then, and I supported that legislation for the exact reason to "strengthen our national security and provide our troops with the resources they need."

This deal passed with strong bipartisan support. It was widely applauded.

Yet here we are today, this week, with our colleagues preparing to block the funding for our troops for which they were just a couple of months ago putting themselves on the back.

This whole process shouldn't even be this complicated. In fact, I am convinced that the American people are tired of us complicating simple things. We agreed to this 2-year budget agreement just a few months ago. I voted for it. Party leadership pushed for it. The President signed it. Then we voted for a short-term continuing resolution to get in order before getting to the final appropriations deal.

I reluctantly voted for the short-term CR, but the only thing worse than a CR, of course, is a government shutdown. So that was what we were confronted with.

If one asked the military community how they feel about continuing resolutions, they would be quick to tell you they don't work. They don't work at all. They do not provide certainty beyond certainty. They don't allow new programs to be launched. They don't allow the pay increases that our appropriations bill does. So evidently it has not been a priority for our Democratic colleagues, but they do have priorities, as we know.

This impeachment craziness, this obsession with eliminating, getting rid of our Commander in Chief a year before the election of the Commander in Chief is what their priorities are, clearly, not the priorities stated in the Constitution or that they were bragging about a couple of months ago.

Of course, in addition, they are now standing in the way of us passing the reconciled National Defense Authorization Act—the authorization that provides the guidance for these priorities that are also part of our appropriations bill.

We went through all of that, and for what? I didn't agree to the deals we made or take these tough votes just so the Democrats could block Defense appropriations and leave our military stuck with political gridlock that they have imposed on us now.

By failing to pass this appropriations bill, by standing in the way now of reconciling in the conference committee the National Defense Authorization Act, they really are standing in the way of our military. Now there is talk of a “skinny NDAA”—that is to say, a watered-down skinny version.

For 58 years in a row, we have done what you just talked about and what the previous speakers talked about. We have worked in a bipartisan way to pass an NDAA 58 years in a row.

As the first North Dakotan ever to sit on the Senate Armed Services Committee, I treated this NDAA with the utmost importance and still do. We made some significant progress, from nuclear deterrence to UAS development, establishing a Space Force, and honoring the sailors of the USS Frank E. Evans—a provision the Democratic leader and his colleague from New

York supported, I will add. Both the House and Senate versions of the NDAA advanced important policies for my State, for our country, and really for the world.

We should be working collaboratively to combine these versions and pass the best plan possible for our military. Instead, our work is being sacrificed at the altar of partisan politics, caught up in a partisan impeachment process that makes no sense.

Let's make something clear about this skinny NDAA.

Our chairman is not introducing it with haste or without great consideration. He first warned that this could happen well over a month ago. He said it would happen if our Democratic colleagues proved to be so incapable of setting aside their problems with President Trump that they could not advance the interests of our Nation's military. Ever the optimist, I thought they would. I thought they would.

Now, my Democratic colleagues are balking at any and all forward progress on the NDAA because of their opposition to President Trump and his priorities for border security. They want to limit his authority to transfer anymore funds in order to build physical barriers at our southern border.

So I want to be clear. The President would not need to use that authority to use any military construction funds to build a wall if our Democratic colleagues would simply provide the necessary funding through the normal appropriations process, as they always have and as we always have. I, for one, will not be so unreasonable in negotiating with them. For example, if—and I mean only if—my Democratic colleagues would fund the administration's border security request through the appropriations process, then count me in for limiting the President's transfer authority. I am willing to compromise, but you can't have it both ways. You can't say we are going to take away the President's constitutional authority on the one hand, and then, on the other hand, make sure you don't fund the priorities that he needs to fund, which is, again, the highest priority of our government.

To reiterate my earlier point, I applaud the chairman for his handling of this process. He has been vigilant and focused on completing the NDAA, and I don't blame him for where we are today. No, House Democrats have not been willing partners and have forced the chairman to devise a backup plan for their intransigence.

That is what I find so disappointing. Surely, our Democratic colleagues know the threat that our foreign adversaries pose. For crying out loud, we just came from a classified briefing. If it is not clear enough, I don't know when it will be.

Whether it is the crisis at the southern border or the critical missions that bring terrorists like al-Baghdadi to justice, I am sure my colleagues want to do whatever it takes to keep our coun-

try safe. Surely, they are capable of putting partisan politics aside in order to pass the 59th straight National Defense Authority Act. Anything to the contrary would be unprecedented.

Yet here we are. I find it astonishing that with all the wannabe Commanders in Chief right here in the Senate, they are playing politics with the funding and authorities of the troops they hope to lead.

Can you imagine one of these Presidential candidates becoming the Commander in Chief and the first talk they have with the troops is, “Yeah, I held up your funding and your pay raises.” It is not a great way to start.

If it were up to our committee, this bill would have already passed. If it were up to our conference, this NDAA would be on its way to the President's desk. But unfortunately, it is not. That is the unfortunate reality we face today.

The Democratic Party is continuing to put their hatred of President Trump and his agenda above the needs of our Nation's military, and, thus, our Nation's defense. It is a dereliction of duty. I find it sickening, and I find it embarrassing. We are better than this. This institution deserves better than this. The American people expect and deserve better than this.

I want to make one last plea before they block tomorrow's vote. Please put our military men and women, our highest priority, ahead of partisan politics.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

SOUTH SUDAN

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I will talk just for a very few minutes today about something that has been on my mind and on my heart. We so easily forget how fortunate we are to live in a country like America. I wish all of our world's neighbors were as fortunate as we are, but they are not. We can't lose sight of that fact. I don't know why bad things happen to good people, and I am not suggesting that I have a complete solution to it, but trying to understand it is at least a good first step.

I am talking about the ongoing crisis in South Sudan. As you know, South Sudan is a landlocked country in East-Central Africa, and it is a fairly new country. In the 7 years since South Sudan was plunged into a very bloody civil war, not only have millions of people been displaced from their homes, but over 400,000—think about that—men, women, and children have been killed in the crossfire—400,000.

I would like nothing more than for the recent negotiated ceasefire between the government and the rebels

to hold. We all would. But if we are being honest, we have to express our sincere doubts. I don't have any doubt that the people of South Sudan yearn for peace.

Unfortunately, there are some who are taking advantage of the sad situation in South Sudan. They are taking advantage of South Sudan's conflicts and widespread corruption within its government in order to steal the nation's and the people's natural resources. I am talking about kleptocrats. I am talking about war criminals. I am talking about corrupt multinational corporations that are pilfering South Sudan's natural resources, regardless of the chaos that they are causing and the extraordinary human cost.

Until good people in this world take a stand and say enough is enough, the people in South Sudan will continue to be at the mercy of the corrupt. The predatory extraction of South Sudan's resources not only directs vital capital outside of the war-torn nation, where it is desperately needed inside, but it makes meaningful investment in sustained peace simply impossible.

That is why I am respectfully calling on the U.S. Senate to stand with peace, to stand with right—not with might, with right—and to stand with the people of South Sudan. The people of South Sudan are a proud people. They are a resilient people. They are tired of being ruled by a government that is ripe with corruption. They are tired of seeing their nation torn apart by war. The U.S. Senate ought to condemn the marauding, the stealing of resources, and the widespread corruption within the South Sudanese Government. Furthermore, I also call on the United States to support sanctions against those companies and those individuals outside of South Sudan that continue to profit off of the ongoing conflicts and instability in the region.

Now, we are a powerful nation. I just listened to your very eloquent talk about the men and women in our military who protect our country. Not only do we have the world's most powerful military, but let me put it another way. We have the most powerful military in all of human history. We also have the strongest economy the world has ever seen, and for that, we were blessed.

It is the latter that we have to wield against the internal and the external bad actors taking advantage of the people of South Sudan. Much like our sanctions against the largest state sponsor of terrorism in the world—I am, of course, talking about Iran—and much like those sanctions have resulted in a successful economic pressure campaign, I hope the same can be done, targeting crooked government officials and the unethical multinational corporations that target vulnerable nations like South Sudan.

It has been well documented that there are a number of multinational corporations with ties to nations like

China and nations like Malaysia that have taken advantage of widespread corruption in the region, in South Sudan and the surrounding region, to spur their own economic and political gain. It has been reported and it has been independently verified that one of South Sudan's largest multinational petroleum consortiums from outside the country operating in the country, a company called Dar Petroleum Operating Company, has actively funded militia and paramilitary groups within the region.

In fact, when Dar Petroleum isn't funding militia or brokering weapons deals, it keeps busy polluting local communities in South Sudan and water supplies with its industrial waste. The petroleum company has dumped "high levels of heavy metals and dangerous chemical compounds" into the surrounding countryside with no regard—none, zero, no regard—for local populations.

In fact, the contamination from the joint Chinese-Malaysian-owned corporation has extended well beyond merely the soil surrounding Dar Petroleum's production and processing plants. The soil contamination is found to be so widespread and so extensive that over 600,000 of the good people in South Sudan are expected to be affected by it.

From bribery to pollution and even murder, these unsavory actors have found a home in South Sudan, ruining the environment and raping the natural resources of the country, and they are going to continue to find a safe haven and continue business unless we act.

Unless sanctions against countries and individuals that are known to have long taken advantage of South Sudan's weak or almost nonexistent rule of law are implemented, stability in the region is going to be nothing but a dream and nothing but happy talk.

The United States should not remain silent as untold billions are stolen. The monies are being stolen, and the natural resources are being stolen from the people in South Sudan. The people of South Sudan are also being murdered in the process.

We should not stand by. By empowering the U.S. Government to target the illicit financial activity that serves as the root cause for many of the atrocities that I have talked about, the South Sudanese can begin rebuilding their nation without fear of violence and without fear of corruption. The United States is far from the only government on the world stage that has the ability to do this. Now, we both know that, but as is so often the case, we might be the only government with the will and the moral conviction to do what is right.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

APPROPRIATIONS

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the importance of the Senate providing the resources needed by our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines.

We are seeing increasing threats to the homeland from around the world. We need look no further than the recent elimination of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi by U.S. Special Operations forces to show us that there are evil people out there who continue to devote their lives to killing American citizens and glorifying the fall of our Nation. The rise of ISIS proved that radical terrorist ideologies remain dangerous. Despite the elimination of its leader, groups like ISIS will continue to remain a serious challenge across the globe.

We have also seen the emergence of a great power competition with China and Russia. They are investing massive amounts of resources to erode the international order that the United States and our allies have worked so hard to create and protect. Leaders of these nations don't want societies based on liberty and free enterprise; instead, they are focused on promoting the iron precepts of authoritarianism and autocracy. Without American engagement and a strong investment in the Nation's military, our children could live in a world transformed by these malign forces. We cannot allow that to happen.

Clearly, the threats we face abroad are increasing. On that fact, we have bipartisan support. These past few weeks, many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have spoken about the situation in Syria and the danger that an expansionist Russia poses to nations like Ukraine. We agree about the need for the United States to address these challenges, but I am not convinced that my Democratic colleagues are truly serious about sustaining American leadership and retaining our position in the world. If they are, it is time to show it by advancing the defense funding legislation.

Funding the military in a timely, predictable fashion is one of the most important things we can do in Congress. A failure to do so awards China and Russia with an advantage at a time when we can least afford it. We need to work together to pass our Defense appropriations bill for the coming fiscal year and to focus on implementing the National Defense Strategy to effectively confront these threats.

It is also worth highlighting how many provisions contained in this bill are absolutely critical to our military. This legislation provides significant investments in both basic research and future technologies to allow for continued innovation within DOD. It includes

areas pivotal to implementing the goals of the NDS, including hypersonics, 5G, artificial intelligence, missile defense, and cyber security.

Importantly, it provides robust funding for all three legs of the triad and appropriates funding to enable the modernization of our Nation's nuclear deterrent. There is no question that this is a top priority of mine as chairman of the Strategic Forces Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

In addition, we cannot forget that the Department of Defense still has not recovered from the impacts of several natural disasters that affected multiple installations across the country. This includes Offutt Air Force Base and Camp Ashland in my own State of Nebraska, as well as several others. Without the relief funding in the Defense appropriations bill, these bases and their tenant units will not be able to fully recover from these disasters. That poses a major threat not just to the bases themselves but to all of the missions we rely upon them to support. For that reason, it is critical that we move forward with the defense funding process to allow full recovery to take place at these bases.

All of us here also recognize that our military is about more than hardware; it is our men and women in uniform and their families who make our Armed Forces strong. That is why it is so essential that we provide the pay and benefits that are critical for our servicemembers and their families. The Defense appropriations bill delivers a military pay increase of 3.1 percent. That is the largest in a decade.

If we are truly serious about supporting our warfighters, if we mean what we say when we talk about supporting the troops, then step up. We must move forward with the Defense appropriations bill. Now is the not the time to put political grandstanding ahead of serious legislating.

I hope we can look back at the Senate's bipartisan tradition of uniting behind the common defense as inspiration. Let's take up and pass the Defense appropriations bill. In doing so, we honor our commitment to America's warfighters.

We have seen over the past week how the bravery and commitment of our servicemembers can deliver the world's most-wanted terrorist to justice. We must honor their service and the service of all our men and women in uniform by moving this process forward.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise to sound the alarm on the Trump administration's expected announcement of its withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions in an effort to limit global temperature increase in

this century to 2 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels, while pursuing means to limit it even further to 1.5 degrees.

Article 28 of the Paris Agreement that was entered into in COP 21 2015 specifies that after joining, no country can withdraw for 3 years, after which a 1-year waiting period must occur before the withdrawal takes effect. The United States entered into this historic agreement on November 4, 2016; thus, the earliest date the United States can initiate withdrawal is November 4, 2019. After the U.S. files withdrawal documents, the 1-year waiting period begins, making November 4, 2020, the earliest possible date the United States can fully—and I might add, recklessly—get out of this agreement.

I urge my colleagues to support a Senate resolution that I certainly will be filing expressing our need for U.S. climate diplomacy. Withdrawal is terrible. The cost of inaction is high.

For example, in my State of Maryland, by the year 2100, climate change could force the Navy to relocate the U.S. Naval Academy from where it has made its home in Annapolis, MD, since 1845.

Surrounded by water on three sides, the Naval Academy is especially vulnerable to sea rise. The Severn River runs along the east, Spa Creek extends to the south, and College Creek runs along the north. Parts of the academy adjacent to the water stand 3 feet above the waterline. Sea levels around Annapolis have risen about 1 foot over the past 100 years. The Naval Academy is only one of scores of U.S. military bases that may be inundated by rising seas.

Unlike this administration, the academy is taking action. In 2015, the Sea Level Rise Advisory Council formed to create an adaptation plan and make decisions about flood-related matters. Staff are installing door dams and flood barriers on doorways, repairing seawalls, and installing backflow preventers in storm drain systems to reduce flooding. Newly constructed buildings will have elevated entrances and limited first-floor openings to keep rising water out. But these actions have high costs that are compounded by inaction.

On October 12 of this year, a combination of seasonal high tides, a full Moon, and a tropical storm stalled off the eastern seaboard caused a "nuisance flood" in downtown Annapolis, disrupting the festivities at the annual Annapolis Boat Show, flooding booths at the city dock and closing streets.

One week later, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation—the key nonprofit partner in the restoration effort—announced that it will close the Fox Island Education Center due to subsidence and rising sea levels—a casualty of our failure to address climate change. For the past 40 years, the Fox Center has helped educate students on the importance of a healthy Chesapeake Bay watershed. Environmental literacy is an

essential goal of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, and institutions like the Fox Island Center serve a key role.

The marshes and wetlands the foundation is dedicated to protecting are among Maryland's best natural defenses in mitigating the effects of climate-related impacts like more frequent storms and rising sea levels. The untimely closure is a reminder of the very real presence of changes to the bay in our communities and the urgent need to prepare.

On October 17, the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco released a report. The collection of 18 papers by outside experts amounts to one of the most specific and dire accountings of the dangers posed to businesses and communities in the United States—a threat so significant that the Nation's central banks are increasingly compelled to act.

Climate change has begun to affect the real estate market, according to a paper by Asaf Bernstein, an economist at the University of Colorado in Boulder. His research shows that properties likely to be underwater if the seas rise 1 foot now sell for 15 percent less than comparable properties with no flood threat.

Our failure to act on climate change has a real economic impact on American families. Coastal cities are already unable to pay for the types of projects that could prevent them from the growing effects of climate change.

On October 23, in a briefing for the Maryland Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, NOAA oceanographer Will Sweet said that Annapolis is on pace for another record-breaking year in 2019, with 10 high-tide flood days so far.

By 2030, there could be between 15 and 25 high-tide flood days a year. By 2050, that number could rise to between 50 and 170. That compares to how it was at the turn of the century when we only had two such events in a year.

This is not only a coastal issue. In addition to an update from NOAA, the committee heard from officials in Howard County—Howard County, I would state, is a landlocked county in Maryland—about their plan to mitigate flooding in Ellicott City, 35 miles inland from Annapolis, where flash-flooding has claimed the lives of three people since 2016. Officials discussed their \$140 million plan, which includes demolishing some buildings and constructing a tunnel 15 feet in diameter, 80 to 100 feet deep, and 1,600 feet long on the north side of the city's Main Street. The tunnel would divert about two-thirds of the floodwaters.

It is an expensive project. Will it keep Ellicott City safe? It will keep it safer, but the threat will still be there because of our inaction as far as dealing with climate change. That is \$140 million we would not need to find as fast if we were slowing the rate of sea level rise; that is, if we were reducing the use of carbon emissions in accordance with the Paris Agreement.

Many small business owners took out loans in 2016 and 2018 from the Department of Housing and Community Development and are struggling to repay them. These are not international competitors with an agenda being hurt by inaction on climate change; these are local residents, constituents, Americans.

We need to act.

I am proud to lead bipartisan legislation to help critical water infrastructure adapt to natural hazards. We need to do adaptation. I am for that, and it is bipartisan in this Chamber, but adaptation mitigation must go hand in hand, from the local to the international level.

I led the congressional delegation to COP 21 with nine of our colleagues in the U.S. Senate. We had a delegation 10-strong in Paris at COP 21 in 2015 when the United States agreed to lower its gas emissions 26 to 28 percent below the 2005 levels by 2025. Entering the 25th conference of the parties, U.S. carbon dioxide emissions rose an estimated 3.4 percent in 2018—a spike that comes as reports like the Fourth National Climate Assessment and the IPCC special report tell us the world needs to be aggressively cutting its emissions to avoid the most devastating effects of climate change. The findings, published by the independent economic research firm Rhodium Group, mean that our Nation now has a diminishing chance of meeting the pledge it made in Paris. This is a horrible embarrassment for our country, which was once a global leader on climate change. When the United States doesn't lead, other countries are going to step in and take over that leadership, as we have seen with regard to China stepping forward in regard to climate issues. China should be the United States.

I urge this administration to reassert strong leadership in implementing the Paris Agreement. I urge the Senate to act to return America's leadership to this critical global challenge.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 20 minutes as in morning business.

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am thrilled and delighted to follow my outstanding colleague from Maryland coming here to talk about climate change. That is the topic that brings me to the floor today as well. Those of us who are from coastal States not only have the experience of worse flooding in our coastal communities and those coastal communities getting new conversations with their municipal bond folks about what the flooding risk means for their bond ratings, but we are also looking at projections like Maryland is of what happens if we don't act, and the very maps of our State will change.

When historians look back at why the United States failed so badly to take on climate change, they will, of course, focus on the political efforts of the world's largest oil companies: Exxon, Chevron, BP, and Shell. They will note the obstructive role of leading trade associations like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, and the American Petroleum Institute. They will chronicle the network of phony front groups set up by Big Oil, Big Coal, and the Koch brothers to sow doubt of the science and fear of climate action. Big Oil, the Kochs, the trade associations, the front groups all will deserve plenty of blame. Their climate denial apparatus and their capture of the modern Republican Party is a direct and deliberate cause of America's failure.

There are other less heralded but equally bad actors. I come to the floor today to discuss one of them. Future historians of "anii Trumpi," take note of Marathon Petroleum. Marathon Petroleum is the largest oil refiner in the United States. It refines oil into gasoline, other fuels, and lubricants. It owns pipelines and gas stations. Its 4,000 Speedway locations and almost 8,000 independent gas stations selling Marathon-branded fuels reach across the country. It is No. 31 on the Fortune 500 list of U.S. companies, and it has almost \$100 billion in annual revenue. This is a big company with a big stake in blocking climate action.

What does Marathon want? Well, its annual report filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission makes one thing very clear: Marathon sees laws and regulations that reduce carbon pollution as a threat. One threat Marathon specifically cites in its annual report is fuel economy or CAFE standards. Why? Marathon's 2018 annual report reads: "Higher CAFE standards for cars and light trucks have the potential to reduce demand for our transportation fuels." It is as simple as that. Fuel-efficient cars burn less gas, and that is bad for a big refiner.

Well, in 2012, automakers and the State of California and the previous administration got together, and they agreed to significantly better fuel economy standards. That was a good deal for almost everyone. Consumers were estimated to save more than \$1.7 trillion in reduced fuel costs—up to \$8,000 per vehicle for vehicles purchased in 2025. The air would be cleaner. Carbon emissions from cars and light trucks would be cut in half by 2025, and automakers would have a competitive spur to keep pace with new vehicle technologies being developed in Europe and China—win, win, win, win.

Well, in 2017, these automakers came back into the Trump administration and asked the Trump administration to revisit the fuel economy standards. It looks, from everything I have seen, like the auto industry primarily wanted technical changes to make the standards easier to meet. I have found

no evidence that the auto industry asked the administration to totally freeze the standards or that they asked the administration then to revoke California's authority to set its own standards under the Clean Air Act.

When automakers asked the administration for these changes, someone else was watching. The oil industry sensed opportunity. The standards may have been good for consumers, the auto industry, States, our global climate, but that \$1.7 trillion in reduced fuel costs that consumers would save would come directly out of oil industry revenues. So the oil industry sprang into action to hijack the rulemaking process.

The oil industry demanded weakening of the standards to the max; i.e., a freeze, and it even demanded revocation of California's longstanding authority to set its own standards, leading more than a dozen other States, including my home State of Rhode Island. We follow the California standard. An administration marbled through with fossil fuel lobbyists and attorneys heard the oil industry call. It must have been a strange experience for the automakers. One minute they are asking for technical changes to a regulation they had agreed to; the next minute the whole process has been run off with by a completely other industry.

Marathon was the ring leader. I obtained an electronic draft of a letter to the Deputy Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration urging her to weaken the fuel economy standards. The metadata of the letter was still in the letter because I got it electronically. According to the metadata in this document, it was written by a Marathon Petroleum inhouse lobbyist. Marathon then shopped this letter around to Members of the House of Representatives to convince them to send letters backing the weakened standards that they wanted.

We got those House letters, and we ran them through plagiarism software against the Marathon lobbyists' draft. Here is what we got. When we compared the Marathon letter with the letter sent by Members of Pennsylvania's congressional delegation, it was an 80-percent match. The red here is all the language that is identical. Members from Indiana and West Virginia sent similar letters also with text lifted directly from the Marathon lobbyists' draft. If you want to give this political stunt a name, you could call it a Pruitt, after Scott Pruitt, who distinguished himself for the Trump EPA Administrator's position by copying a Devon Energy text onto his own official letterhead as attorney general of his State and sending it on as if it were his letter.

Back to Marathon. Pulling a Pruitt with these Congressmen was not enough. We know from Marathon's own reports that it directly lobbied on the standards, and we know that its trade association, the American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers, AFPM,

also lobbied on the standards. We know AFPM also launched a campaign on social media urging people to support a freeze.

Marathon is a member of a front group that is called the American Legislative Exchange Council, also known as ALEC. This front group pushes the agenda of the Koch brothers' apparatus in State legislatures. It is the tool for the Koch brothers to try to work their will in State legislatures. ALEC passed a resolution in favor of weakening the standards and revoking California's State authority. We know that senior executives from Marathon met personally with EPA leadership and with senior officials in the White House to push for weakening the standards and revoking California's authority.

There is a lot we don't know. We don't know which front groups Marathon and other oil companies fund because neither of them disclose their donations or their donors. We don't know how many other groups were deployed in this effort. We don't know the extent to which Marathon coordinated its campaign with the trade association and the front groups, so we can't assess whether this lobbying effort violated the front groups' 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. We don't know what role Marathon or its front groups had in the mysterious antitrust letter that came popping out of DOJ shortly after the automakers negotiated separately with California.

When the automakers realized that their negotiations—the process they were involved with—had been hijacked by Marathon and that they were just passengers on the Marathon train at this point, they bailed. When they knew the conversation was bogus, they bailed. They negotiated directly with California, and they came up with their own deal with California. That, obviously, really ticked off the oil guys who thought they had this thing all scoped. Apparently, it even ticked off the President—all the way up to President Trump.

The next thing you know comes this truly bizarre letter out of DOJ that appears to ignore basic tenets of antitrust law, like when you are negotiating with a State government, it is not an antitrust violation. It appears also to violate DOJ's own very elaborate antitrust investigation procedures.

So who pulled those strings? We don't know. More broadly, if Marathon and other fossil fuel companies are purposefully paying a web of phony front groups and trade associations to spread deliberate, known disinformation about climate change in order to obstruct climate action in Congress, does that not warrant congressional investigation? Might it not, in fact, be fraud? It was fraud when the tobacco industry did it.

Over the past 2 weeks, two different subcommittees of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform held hearings that examined how the fossil

fuel industry deploys front groups and trade associations to spread disinformation about climate change and block legislative action.

Yesterday the Senate Democrats' Special Committee on the Climate Crisis held our hearing on how dark money front groups hide the industry's role in climate denial and legislative obstruction. Fat chance we will have Senate committees investigate this masquerade in a Chamber under Republican control, but for our friends in the House, the time is ripe for congressional oversight. Follow the money and the facts wherever they lead. Let the subpoenas fly.

Congressmen Henry Waxman led a successful investigation of lies and deceit from a corrupting industry, Big Tobacco, and that precedent served our country well. It served the American public well. It ended up likely saving lives.

So we go back to Marathon again. Marathon's shareholders are interesting, too, in all of this.

Last month, 200 major investors who had \$6.5 trillion in assets under management, sent a letter to 47 U.S. companies, including Marathon, urging that the companies' lobbying align with the Paris Agreement's goal of global average temperature increase below 2 degrees Celsius and warning the companies that lobbying against that goal is an investment risk.

The letter went to Marathon, but, interestingly, none of Marathon's biggest investors—BlackRock, Vanguard, State Street, and J.P. Morgan Asset Management—signed the letter. Collectively, these four investors own, roughly, 25 percent of Marathon. BlackRock lists climate risk as one of its engagement priorities in 2019, so it says. BlackRock published a report this year that by 2060, 58 percent of U.S. metro areas will see annual average climate-related losses of at least 1 percent of GDP, with some projected to lose a staggering 15 percent of GDP.

JPMorgan's CEO, Jamie Dimon, has said: "Business must play a leadership role in creating solutions that protect the environment and grow the economy."

So it was interesting yesterday, in our Senate select committee hearing, to have a witness put up this slide. This slide shows the positions on climate change, regulation, and the legislation of a number of companies. It is a spectrum. Green is supporting climate regulation and legislation. Opposition is red.

We were talking about the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which has been identified as one of the two worst climate obstructors in America as a trade association. The U.S. Chamber and the National Association of Manufacturers take the prize. We were looking at how strange that is because their memberships don't have the positions they take. So we are going to continue to explore why it is that the board members of the National Association of

Manufacturers and the board members of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce appear to have let their organizations be run away with by the fossil fuel industry as well.

Here is what was notable. On this graph, this is where the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is—one of the worst climate obstructors. Yet look who is worse. In fact, look at who is the worst of all of them—Marathon. What do you know? You have these four investors who own 25 percent of this company that is on the worst side of this spectrum. They claim to care about solving the climate problem. Yet they are 25-percent owners in the most opposed of all of these entities to the solution to the climate crisis they claim to seek.

They have to get their act together. It is not fair to be JPMorgan CEO Jamie Dimon and say that business must play a leadership role in creating solutions that protect the environment and grow the economy and then to be part of the 25-percent largest shareholders of the company that is the worst of this.

You have to line this up, guys. You can't say one thing to the public and then do the opposite through the companies you own.

The stakes here are high. There are credible warnings of a carbon asset bubble and of crashes in coastal property values, but BlackRock hasn't introduced a single climate-related shareholder resolution since 2001. In 2018, BlackRock and Vanguard—two of these big Marathon owners—voted in favor of only 10 and 12 percent of climate-related shareholder resolutions. They say they are good at this—BlackRock 10 percent, Vanguard 12 percent. The other ones, they didn't support. In 2017, at Marathon—the worst—BlackRock voted against a shareholder proposal for Marathon to test its business operations against the 2-degree Celsius threshold that BlackRock claimed to target and support. By the way, if BlackRock had voted its shares for this proposal, it would have passed.

Just this month, Marathon finally published a report that examines its own prospects in a carbon-contained world. In one scenario, demand for petroleum-based liquids plummets 26 percent by 2040. With the demand for vehicle fuels—Marathon's primary market—it falls even more steeply. If Marathon estimates the market for its main product could shrink by one-third or more, first, you can understand why it got in there to manipulate the auto fuel efficiency standard process. You can also understand why it is that economists and sovereign banks are issuing these warnings about a carbon bubble.

We will get serious about climate change. We must. We have no choice. The costs of inaction are, as Donald Trump once said, catastrophic.

Eventually, all of the fossil fuel money and bullying in the world will not stave off action in the face of mounting climate calamities. This

should be obvious to everyone and certainly to sophisticated investors with supposedly good climate policies like BlackRock and JPMorgan. So why aren't they pushing Marathon to adapt to a low-carbon economy? Why are they happy to own 25 percent of that—of the worst? That is what they want to own?

It doesn't have to be this way. Look at DSM, a Dutch multinational, with roughly \$10 billion in revenues and over 23,000 employees around the world, including many here in the United States. DSM began as a coal mining company over a century ago. Its leaders realized coal mining in the Netherlands would someday end, so they reinvented the company. When the last mine closed in the 1970s, DSM had diversified. It is, today, a vibrant producer of nutritional additives for food, of pharmaceuticals, and of high-tech materials for electronics, automobiles, and construction. By contrast, Murray Coal, which is an American coal mining company that did not diversify, filed for bankruptcy this week.

To the fossil fuel industry, I say that you ought to begin adapting now. You can't ignore what is coming at you. You owe it to your shareholders, and you owe it to your employees. By God, you owe it to your children.

To BlackRock and the other big investors, this means you have to pay attention too. You say you are for climate action. Show that you mean it. Demand change at Marathon and at other fossil fuel companies that you own. Start with mandating that these companies disclose their climate obstruction funding. There is no excuse for that to be secret.

If they will not do it, Congress, let's investigate. We have slept through this mess long enough—in a state of induced narcolepsy. We have sleepwalked for far too long. It is time we woke up.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded and I be permitted to speak as in morning business.

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

REMEMBERING KAY HAGAN

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, the passing of former Senator Kay Hagan was sad news to all of us who were privileged to serve with her and counted her as a friend.

In her final address to the Senate 5 years ago, Senator Kay Hagan reminded us of our obligation to work together on behalf of the American people with these words: "To whom much is given, much is expected."

Kay Hagan was given much. She had the energy, intelligence, dedication, and compassion, and she gave back to her home State over many years of

public service. As a person of deep faith, she fully understood the New Testament "Parable of the Talents." Its message that gifts must be put to use in service of others guided her life.

In this time of sorrow, I offer my deep condolences to Kay's family. I hope that they will find comfort in knowing that Kay left an inspiring legacy. She left the world a better place for her service. The loss felt by the people of North Carolina and by her family, in particular, is felt by people throughout America.

I was privileged to serve with Kay for 6 years. We served together on the Senate Armed Services Committee, and I always appreciated her focus on solutions rather than partisan advantage. She was passionate about many issues, particularly those affecting children.

In 2011, Kay and I introduced legislation to commemorate the work at the March of Dimes by minting a coin to celebrate the 75th anniversary of this organization and directing the proceeds to the March of Dimes Prematurity Campaign. As the author of the Newborn Screening Saves Lives Reauthorization Act, Kay reaffirmed her belief that we in Congress must always remember whom we are advocating for.

When Kay took office in 2009, she was very proud to be one of 17 Senators who were female. It is significant that her very first speech on the Senate floor that January was in support of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act to strengthen protections for women against wage discrimination.

It was so refreshing to hear her assert that neither party had a monopoly on good ideas. Throughout her time in this Chamber, she proved the truth of that maxim.

In the "Parable of the Talents," the master leaves on a journey and entrusts a servant with a portion of his treasure. Upon his return, the master is delighted to find that his wealth has been wisely invested and multiplied.

Kay Hagan was entrusted with the great treasure of principles, determination, and spirit. She invested that treasure wisely and multiplied its benefits for all. Like the master in the Parable, to Kay Hagan we say: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

May God bless her and her family and may we all keep her memory in our hearts.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am about to offer the managers' package for the four appropriations bills currently before us: Commerce, Justice, Science, Agriculture, Interior and the Transportation, Housing, and Urban

Development bill. This managers' package includes 45 amendments, many of which—indeed, most of which—have been offered on a bipartisan basis. They have been cleared by both sides.

The Appropriations Committee has worked very hard with Members to accommodate as many amendments as possible. For the T-HUD appropriations bill, for example, both Senator JACK REED and I worked to review, approve, and clear managers' amendments in our part of the bill.

This package reflects a positive step forward as we move toward final passage of this appropriations bill. It is imperative that we move these bills and go to conference with the House. Therefore, I urge all Members to support this managers' package.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order to offer the following amendments: Lee amendment No. 1209 and Jones amendment No. 1141, as modified. I further ask unanimous consent that no second-degree amendments be in order to these amendments prior to the votes, and that at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, October 31, the Senate vote in relation to these amendments in the order listed.

Finally, I ask unanimous consent that upon resumption of the bill on Thursday, October 31, the following amendments be called up and agreed to en bloc, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table: Tester amendment No. 953; Smith amendment No. 1023; Hirono amendment No. 1037; Brown amendment No. 1088, as modified; Baldwin amendment No. 1099; Whitehouse amendment No. 1121; Thune amendment No. 1133; Jones amendment No. 1143; Smith amendment No. 1149; Rosen amendment No. 1161; McSally amendment No. 1163; Reed amendment No. 1217; Stabenow amendment No. 1223; Cornyn amendment No. 1224; Warner amendment No. 951; Capito amendment No. 1077; Cantwell amendment No. 1094; Toomey amendment No. 1129; Durbin amendment No. 1146; Gardner amendment No. 1150; McSally amendment No. 1234; Sinema amendment No. 1025; Ernst amendment No. 1079; Ernst amendment No. 1081; Cornyn amendment No. 1151; Cardin amendment No. 1159; Rosen amendment No. 1160; Thune amendment No. 1162; Peters amendment No. 1182; Cornyn amendment No. 1193; Menendez amendment No. 1199; Blunt amendment No. 1211; McSally amendment No. 1215; Collins amendment No. 1220; Schumer amendment No. 1227; Hassan amendment No. 956; Collins amendment No. 1002; Shaheen amendment No. 1005; Kaine amendment No. 1010; Cortez Masto amendment No. 1061; Cortez Masto amendment No. 1062; Heinrich amendment No. 1114; Shaheen amendment No. 1130; Hoeven amendment No. 1214; and Portman amendment No. 1235.

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

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, following the disposition of the Jones amendment, the postclosure time on amendment No. 948 expire, the pending McConnell amendment be withdrawn, and amendment No. 948, as amended, be agreed to; further, that the cloture motion on H.R. 3055 be withdrawn, the bill be read a third time, and there be 2 minutes of debate equally divided; and that following the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote on passage of the bill, as amended, with a 60-affirmative-vote threshold required for passage. Finally, I ask that the cloture vote on the motion to proceed to H.R. 2740 occur at 1:45 p.m. on Thursday.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF MOUNT SINAI HOSPITAL

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, Mount Sinai Hospital opened its doors in 1919 as a place where Jewish physicians could train and treat the immigrant community of Chicago's West Side. Founded by Lithuanian Jewish immigrant Morris Kurtzon, Mount Sinai kept its mission as a community hospital even as it evolved into a regional medical trauma center. This month, Sinai celebrates a century of helping everyone who come through its doors.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, German and Eastern European Jews immigrated to Chicago by the thousands, fleeing religious persecution. Chicago lacked quality healthcare for these immigrants, especially in Chicago's South and West Sides.

Maimonides Kosher Hospital of Chicago opened in 1912 to fill the healthcare gap, particularly the lack of kosher hospitals, and to serve this immigrant community. However, Maimonides struggled financially and closed after only four years.

Morris Kurtzon, a board member of Maimonides, was determined to keep the dream alive. Kurtzon was born in Lithuania in the 1870s and came to Chicago as a child. Before the end of the century, he established the Garden City Plating and Manufacturing Company. He was a pillar of the community, and with his \$50,000 contribution, Maimonides Kosher Hospital reopened as Mount Sinai in 1919.

Within 5 years under Kurtzon's leadership, Mount Sinai had five floors, a nursing school, and had grown from 60 to 220 beds.

Kurtzon retired in 1950, but the hospital continued its growth. Mount

Sinai established what is now the oldest home healthcare program in the State of Illinois in 1953. It became a major community anchor as the largest employer in Lawndale.

Mount Sinai established the Midwest's first in-vitro fertilization clinic in 1983. The following year, the Midwest's first rehabilitation hospital, Schwab Rehabilitation Hospital, became part of Mount Sinai. Today, it is among the Nation's top programs for physical medicine and rehabilitation.

In 2012, Mount Sinai found an unlikely partner in Holy Cross Hospital. When Mount Sinai merged with Holy Cross, they found a way to preserve their different faith traditions while committing to the same goal of serving the community.

In 1990, Mount Sinai was designated as a Level 1 Trauma Center, the highest level of surgical care for trauma patients. Today, Sinai is one of the unsung heroes in treating and working to prevent the gun violence epidemic plaguing Chicago. From supporting the Gun Violence Research Collaborative and community engagement programs to providing world-class emergency treatment and trauma care, Sinai is working tirelessly to treat both the physical and emotional wounds that violence causes, and survivors are putting their lives back together at the Schwab Rehabilitation Hospital.

I am proud to work with Mount Sinai on the Chicago HEAL Initiative, which is another example of Sinai's continued commitment to serving the community. Under the HEAL Initiative, 10 major hospitals that are normally competitors are collaborating to use their economic footprint and community engagement to reduce violence and improve health in their neighborhoods.

Mount Sinai has embodied the Jewish values of "tikkun olam," meaning repairing the world, and "hachnasat orchim," meaning the welcoming and caring for a stranger, for a century now. The names and the community have changed, but the values have never changed. Mount Sinai is still repairing the world and caring for strangers every day.

Congratulations on a century of helping people, and here is to another century.

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

- Ms. HARRIS. I was absent from the United States Senate vote on May 9, 2019, for vote No. 106, the confirmation of Michael Park to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. Had I been present I would have voted no.

I was absent from the United States Senate vote on May 16, 2019, for vote No. 114, the confirmation of Wendy Vitter to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana. Had I been present I would have voted no.

I was absent from the United States Senate vote on May 16, 2019, for vote

No. 205, the confirmation of Peter Phipps to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. Had I been present I would have voted no.

I was absent from the United States Senate vote on July 24, 2019, for vote No. 228, the confirmation of Wendy Williams Berger to the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida. Had I been present I would have voted no.

I was absent from the United States Senate vote on July 24, 2019, for vote No. 229, the confirmation of Brian Buescher to the U.S. District Court for the District of Nebraska. Had I been present I would have voted no.

I was absent from the United States Senate vote on July 30, 2019, for vote No. 236, confirmation of Michael Liburdi to the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona. Had I been present I would have voted no.

I was absent from the United States Senate vote on July 30, 2019, for vote No. 241, the confirmation of Sean Jordan to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas. Had I been present I would have voted no.

I was absent from the United States Senate vote on July 31, 2019, for vote No. 254, the confirmation of Jeffrey Vincent Brown to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas. Had I been present I would have voted no.

I was absent from the United States Senate vote on July 31, 2019, for vote No. 255, the confirmation of Brantley Starr to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas. Had I been present I would have voted no.

I was absent from the United States Senate vote on July 31, 2019, for vote No. 258, the confirmation of William Shaw Stickman IV to the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania. Had I been present I would have voted no.

I was absent from the United States Senate vote on September 25, 2019, for vote No. 305, the Schatz motion to instruct to include the Federal Employees Paid Leave Act in the National Defense Authorization Act. Had I been present I would have voted yes.●

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in