AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021

Mr. President, in so many ways, we know here that government is really about whose side you are on, whom you fight for, what you fight against. We know we passed—Senator CARDIN is here. He came to the Senate the same day I did, and we served in the House together. We both recognized what a big deal it was to pass that bill last Saturday. That is the biggest thing I have ever done in my career, and I heard other Senators say the same thing—shots in people's arms, money in people's pockets, kids back in school and workers in jobs.

But I think it is also important, just for a moment—I will be brief. This is a chart of the difference—the biggest issue that Senate Republicans and President Trump worked on in this Congress was the GOP tax bill, the tax bill in 2017. Senator CARDIN and I are on the same committee that fought against some of the overreach from Wall Street greed in that bill.

The purple, the blue is what our bill does. Just glance at this for a moment. The 20 percent lowest earners, we are increasing—we are increasing their after-tax revenue by 20 percent, essentially a 20-percent raise for people making $20,000 or $30,000 a year. There was no help in the Trump tax bill for that.

Then you work up to the second lowest 20 percent, to the people who are modest, working-class families, not quite middle class. They get a big bump in their incomes from our bill. Under the Trump plan, they got pennies.

Then you work your way up here to, essentially, the top 1 percent. All of the money went to them, essentially, overwhelmingly.

When you think about what we do with taxes and when you think about what this Congress did on Saturday when we put shots in people's arms and money in people's pockets and kids back in school, one of the most important things we did was to give working-class kids in Denver and in Santa Fe and in Albuquerque and in Baltimore and Salisbury, MD, and in Mansfield and Cleveland, OH—working-class people and poor kids—a chance, a shot, at the American dream.

This is the biggest thing. Senator TESTER and I came to the Senate on the same day. This is the biggest thing we have done in years. It will matter in people's lives. It is something to celebrate. More importantly, it is something we need to carry out and make sure that it matters in our constituents' lives.

I yield the floor.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I rise today to voice my support for the confirmation of my friend and colleague Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE to be the next Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. I know that she will bring strong leadership to HUD at a time when our Nation needs it most.

Across my State of Maryland and throughout the country, our fellow Americans are struggling to keep a roof over their heads. Families are living in fear of eviction or of missing their next mortgage payment. In this time of crisis, we need a leader at HUD who will prioritize tackling the ongoing housing crisis spurred by COVID–19. Congresswoman Fudge has expressed her determination to do just that. She is a dedicated and experienced public servant who has earned a reputation for swift action and firm leadership. Her accumulated experience spanning a lifetime of service will be invaluable in helping the Federal Government mount a robust and coordinated campaign to bring those hardest hit back from the brink and ensure an equitable recovery.

While addressing the urgent needs of renters and homeowners during this pandemic, we can't lose sight of the bigger picture. The pandemic has exacerbated our country's affordable housing crisis and shone a spotlight on how it disproportionately harms communities of color. We are seeing the result of decades of discriminatory practices like redlining that have targeted minority families and left an enduring stain on our communities that won't be easily wiped away. President Biden has put forth a bold plan to combat our Nation's housing crisis, and as HUD Secretary, Congresswoman FUDGE will be charged with implementing it, reversing the damage caused by the Trump administration, restoring and improving our fair housing protections, rebuilding our Nation's supply of affordable housing, and investing in our housing infrastructure. She has her work cut out for her.

There is no doubt in my mind that Congresswoman FUDGE will work overtime to tackle these challenges head-on. She has spent her career fighting on behalf of those most in need and those who have been historically barred from stable living and home ownership. She has seen these issues up close: first as the mayor of Warrensville Heights, OH, and then as a member of the House of Representatives and as chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, where she has helped forge compromises that brought real results. She is guided by the principle that each of us has a responsibility to respect and uplift those most in need. In her words, ''there is dignity and there is grace within every woman every man and every child in this nation—including those who live on the outskirts of hope.'' For MARCIA FUDGE, service isn't just a job, it is a calling. I know that, should she be confirmed, Congresswoman FUDGE will lead the Department of Housing and Urban Development with unwavering commitment. I look forward to partnering with her and the Biden administration to provide more Americans with the dignity of stable living as we work urgently to strengthen and grow our affordable housing programs across Maryland and throughout the country.

VOTE ON FUDGE NOMINATION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The question is, Shall the Senate advise and consent to the Fudge nomination?

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 66, nays 34, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 113 Ex.]

YEAS—66

Baldwin	Heinrich	Portman
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Romney
Blunt	Hoeven	Rosen
Booker	Kaine	Rounds
Brown	Kelly	Sanders
Cantwell	King	Schatz
Capito	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Leahy	Scott (SC)
Carper	Luján	Shaheen
Casey	Manchin	Sinema
Collins	Markey	Smith
Coons	McConnell	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Sullivan
Cramer	Merkley	Tester
Duckworth	Moran	Van Hollen
Durbin	Murkowski	Warner
Feinstein	Murphy	Warnock
Gillibrand	Murray	Warren
Graham	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Grassley	Padilla	Wyden
Hassan	Peters	Young

NAYS—34

Barrasso	Fischer	Risch
Blackburn	Hagerty	Rubio
Boozman	Hawley	Sasse
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Burr	Inhofe	Shelby
Cassidy	Johnson	Thune
Cornyn	Kennedy	Tillis
Cotton	Lankford	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	Tuberville
Cruz	Lummis	Wicker
Daines	Marshall	
Ernst	Paul	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to complete my remarks prior to the recess.

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

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that with respect to the Fudge nomination, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

NOMINATION OF MERRICK BRIAN GARLAND

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today to support the nomination of Merrick B. Garland to be the 86th Attorney General of the United States and urge the Senate to confirm this nomination without further delay.

Merrick Garland is a fellow Marylander, and I was proud to introduce him in a statement before the Judiciary Committee on February 22. I was