and related technologies that result in significant energy savings.'' Again, important.

And it also says ''that enhances the energy independence and security of the United States by enabling improved or expanded supply and production of domestic energy resources, including coal, oil, and natural gas.''

That is in the definition of advanced energy technologies, and that is the definition that was passed two Congresses ago, unanimously, and that is why it has not been defined here because it has already been defined in this.

Congress is very clear on what advanced energy technology means in the Endless Frontier Act. That is a huge comparative advantage, as I mentioned, oil, gas, renewables. And that is an important element of this legislation in our competition with China, and I am glad that is recognized.

One final area of what, again, the current administration's National Security Advisor called a situation of strength relative to China, and that, of course, is our military. To be honest, this is where I am worried.

The second term of the Obama-Biden administration cut defense spending by 25 percent. That is actually one of the reasons I ran for the Senate. I never ran for anything, but what I saw what was happening to the U.S. military—an institution I love and I served in for over 25 years—that was enough motivation for me to say I need to help do something. The readiness of our forces during that era, the second term of the Obama-Biden administration—the readiness of our forces plummeted—plummeted. And our adversaries in Moscow and Beijing watched this and were gleeful.

We can talk about AI and everything else that we are talking about in this bill, but if we are gutting our military, that is one of the worst things we can do with regard to sending a message to China about our seriousness. I worry.

Last year on this floor—last summer—we had a big debate in the NDAA over defense spending. The majority leader—who was then the minority leader—and the Senator from Vermont, Senator SANDERS, put forward an amendment they called—no kidding—''defund the Pentagon'' then. That was the name of their amendment, with 14 percent across-the-board cuts to the entire U.S. military. My response was: There they go again. There they go again.

Well, now that they regained power, it looks like this movie is coming to a theater near us again, and it is not going to be nice. Tomorrow, the Biden administration's budget is going to be coming out. The numbers that we are anticipating are about a 16-percent increase in domestic spending and a real decrease in military spending—inflation-adjusted decrease in military spending again. Beijing will be watching this and will be gleeful.

When Republicans were in the White House and the Senate majority just recently, we were respectful of our colleagues in the minority, and there was an agreement essentially about a one-for-one, domestic programs increasing and the military budget is going to increase by about the same amount. That is what we all agreed on here. That is what we worked on here. Now, it looks like it is going to be 16-for-1 or maybe even worse. This is something we really need to focus on.

Make no mistake, we can talk about supply chains, intellectual property, competitiveness, which is what we are talking about here with this legislation. These are all important topics. But all the policy changes that we are debating here right now are not going to amount to much in our overall competition with respect to China if we lose our military edge with respect to China.

Unfortunately, some of my colleagues just don't recognize that or don't want to recognize that. Soft power isn't much good without hard power to back it up. We learned that lesson before. It has been a painful lesson, if you look at our history.

But the Chinese Communist Party certainly appears to understand this. According to one watchdog, it has increased its military investments by 76 percent over the last decade, and we are going to put out a budget tomorrow with an inflation-adjusted decrease in our military spending, despite the runaway domestic spending proposed by this administration. That is worrisome, and that is not operating from a position of strength with regard to the Chinese Communist Party. We need to watch out for that one. I am very concerned.

Yes, there is a lot of bipartisan work going on in the Senate, but if the leadership on the Senate floor and the House leadership as well and the Biden administration work together to cut defense spending, that is going to be one of the worst things we can do for our long-term competition with regard to China.

As we are focused on these challenges with the rise of China, let me conclude by predicting that not only is this challenge going to be with us for decades, but how we need to address it. I have talked about some of these situations of strength. We must face this challenge with confidence and strategic resolve.

As I have noted and I just talked about a few, America has extraordinary advantages relative to China: our global network of alliances, our military power, and economic leadership, our innovative society, our abundant and innovative energy supplies, advanced energy technology as defined in this bill and other bills, the world's most productive workforce, and a democratic value system.

Yes, it can be messy, but that makes countries around the world, and particularly in the INDOPACOM region, far more comfortable as American partners and allies than as subservient members of a New Middle Kingdom led by China. As a result of the long twilight struggle with the Soviet Union, we also know what works: maintaining peace through strength, promoting free markets and free people at home, and having the confidence in George Kennan's insights when he set forth the strategy of containment in the late forties to deal with the Soviet Union—that the Chinese Communist Party, like the Soviet Communist Party, likely bears within it the seeds of its own decay. While democracies are resilient, adaptive, and self-renewing, there are many vulnerabilities embedded in Chinese's perceived strength.

One-man rule creates acute political risks. Historical grievance can bring violent nationalism. State-directed economic growth can produce massive overcapacity and mountains of debt, and the gradual snuffing out of freedom that we are literally seeing daily in places like Hong Kong sends fear throughout the entire region.

China's budding military power and historical view of itself as a natural and cultural superior to many others is beginning to alarm neighboring states, inspiring them to want to step up security cooperation with the United States, not with China. Nearly half of wealthy Chinese want to emigrate. Remember, these are the winners from China's four decades of heady economic growth.

As we have in the past, we can prevail in this geopolitical and ideological contest, but doing so will require a new level of strategic initiative, organization, and confidence in who we are as a people and what we stand for. This also means that we must redouble our efforts in making this strategic case to others around the world, particularly our allies. This kind of work here—although it can be messy, although it can be difficult, although it can be challenging—is part of the process we need to put together to compete.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

S. 1260

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, in a bipartisan vote, the Senate advanced important legislation to increase our Nation's competitiveness with China. The United States Innovation and Competition Act, USICA, of 2021 is significant legislation and an example of what process and debate can yield in the U.S. Senate.

This legislative package is the end result of the bipartisan work of from

multiple Senate committees and reflects the urgency of addressing the challenges faced by domestic manufacturers and American researchers in our global competition with China. This includes an emergency appropriation of $54 billion in funding for grants to make semiconductor chips here in America and for the continuation of chip production in Essex, VT. The package also allocates $1.5 billion in funding for implementation and domestic research and development, R&D of 5G technology to ensure that the United States drives the modernization of its own communications infrastructure.

The bill significantly raises authorization levels by almost $120 billion over 5 years for the National Science Foundation, NSF, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, NASA, the Department of Commerce, and the Department of Energy, DOE. These historic investments in American ingenuity will help strengthen our country's R&D capabilities, regional economic development opportunities, manufacturing capacity, and supply chain resiliency.

Through the creation of a new Directorate of Technology and Innovation at the NSF, the Federal Government will be able to better support research and technology development in key focus areas, such as the growing artificial intelligence space and quantum science. Among other activities, the Directorate will help fund R&D at collaborative institutes, establish technology testbeds, and award scholarships and fellowships to build a workforce equipped to lead us through the 21st century and beyond.

Throughout the process, I was encouraged to see a strong focus on the need to continue to increase education, research, and workforce opportunities in rural and underserved areas throughout the country. The regional technology hub program at the Commerce Department established in this bill will benefit rural communities in Vermont and across the country. These hubs, of which there will be three per EDA region, will carry out workforce development activities and business and entrepreneur development activities, among other important activities. I appreciate the work done by fellow Members in the Senate to ensure that these hubs truly and accurately represent the significant economic needs of rural areas in this country.

The inclusion of increased supplementary funding for research at universities that participate in the Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, EPSCoR, takes important steps to build our Nation's capacity in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, STEM, field. This funding will also help reduce the geographic concentration of research and development and education opportunities across the country. For far too long, Americans have had to leave their hometowns and even their home States to get an education and find work. This bill will give rural residents more reasons to stay close to home and help their communities grow from the ground up. I have seen the incredible work that has already been done by the University of Vermont's participation in EPSCoR and am excited to see what is to come from this substantial investment.

This serious legislative package shows what can be done when we all work together in the Senate. Thanks to these efforts, we will be able to secure America's role as a global leader in technology, R&D, and manufacturing. I hope the House of Representatives will soon consider this legislation so President Biden can sign this historic initiative into law.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as the Senate prepares to vote on the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act, I wanted to take moment to highlight the support this bill provides to the U.S. semiconductor industry. I want to commend the leadership that Senators WARNER, CORNYN, and SCHUMER have shown in highlighting the need for our country to ensure that we maintain leading edge manufacture capabilities in the United States. I strongly support the over $50 billion provided in this bill for the Department of Commerce to join in partnerships with U.S. semiconductor companies.

My history with microelectronics spans my career in the Senate, and I can remember when Tom Watson selected Essex Junction as the location for an IBM fab to produce some of the first generations of mass produced integrated circuit memory and processing chips. Of course, it revolutionized computing. Over the years, Vermonters working out of Essex led the way in inventing new kinds of chips and new ways to make chips, at the same time making Vermont the State with the most patents per capita.

Over that time, I heard again and again from national security leaders from both political parties that one of the biggest threats facing the United States was that our revolutionary technology was threatened by the production of chips increasingly moving to foreign countries. While some of those countries closely cooperate with the United States, being offshore provides an inherent risk of the chips being compromised by malicious actors or even facilities themselves being rendered inoperable, one way or another.

I helped create a program called Trusted Foundry within the Department of Defense to provide critical chips for national security needs that we knew were untampered with from start to finish and were made right in the United States. Because the national security needs alone could never be produced at an economically practical scale, we located Trusted Foundry in commercial fabs, including the one in Essex. Today that factory still produces both commercial and national security chips, particularly chips used for radio frequency or RF functions.

With this bill, we continue the endeavor to produce chips in the United States at a commercially viable level. We hope that the production can supply our national security needs, by geographically keeping production domestic, thereby increasing our confidence that the chips have not been tampered with.

Through the Appropriations Committee, I will continue oversight of this important area. We will ensure that these grants are administered well and build toward a better future. And we will ensure they are part of a whole-of-government effort, including contributions from the Department of Defense and other Agencies from their own authorizations and budgets. Thanks to this bill, I look forward to a brighter, and more technologically capable future.

AMENDMENT NO. 1813

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I am disappointed that my bipartisan amendment with Senators MORAN and MURKOWSKI is not receiving a vote today.

Our amendment has a simple purpose—to protect taxpayers. It seeks to do so by providing the administration the discretionary authority to negotiate for warrants, which are like stock options, as part of the $50 billion we are appropriating in this bill for the CHIPS for America Fund.

A warrant is the right to purchase one share of common stock at a preestablished price, known as the strike price. Warrants, just like stock options, are exercised when the stock price is greater than the strike price. The idea is that if taxpayer dollars are necessary to invest in a company, then taxpayers should also benefit from some of the upside when the company grows.

I worked on a bipartisan basis to secure warrants when Federal funds were needed for private companies as part of the Troubled Asset Relief Program, TARP, and in the CARES Act. As a result of the warrants provision in TARP, nearly $10 billion in profit was generated for taxpayers. And according to new Department of Treasury estimates, taxpayers stand to gain more than $1 billion for the CARES Act warrants.

Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, who also has prior private sector experience as a venture capital investor and as a former treasurer of Rhode Island, said this week at a CJS Appropriations Subcommittee hearing that she would ''support'' having this authority as a ''good way to stick up for American taxpayers.''

So if companies are receiving taxpayer funds to make investments in semiconductors, U.S. taxpayers should also be able to get some of the upside when these investments pay off. We should be striving to ensure that we get the best possible deal for our constituents' money.

I appreciate Leader SCHUMER's commitment to get this concept included in the bill as it moves forward in the

process, and I will continue working with him and all of our colleagues to make that commitment a reality.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Budget Control Act of 2011 expires this year, and that is a good thing.

This law led to a decade of underfunding our domestic priorities, from which it will take years to recover. Right now, in communities across the country, our infrastructure is crumbling, millions of Americans cannot access Federal programs for which they qualify, and we are falling behind in investing in science, research, and development on the global economic stage—all of this because the Budget Control Act set artificial and unrealistically low caps on discretionary spending, and it inflicted arbitrary, across-the-board spending cuts known as sequestration.

President Biden understands the real consequences of this decade-old decision. That is why tomorrow, President Biden will propose a 16-percent increase for nondefense investments in his budget. We cannot build back better until we recover the ground we have already lost.

I want to give a few examples of what I mean. For many low-income families with young children, the beginning of summer means the end of school breakfast and lunch programs and waking up every morning dreading how you will be able to put food on the table for your children. Basic nutrition is a basic requirement for child health, development, and education.

The Summer EBT program is meant to help these families bridge to this gap, with an extra $30 or $60 per child every month. This is a program that has proven itself successful, reducing the number of households with food-insecure children from 43 percent to just under 35 percent. But because of the Budget Control Act, this program has been flat-funded. We could not expand upon its success. And today, only 16 percent of children who need access to USDA food programs have that access.

This problem of underinvestment in successful, worthwhile programs is true across our appropriations bills.

Our country, which has led in some of the greatest scientific discoveries of the last century, ranks 24th out of 36 developed nations for investments in university research and development as a share of GDP.

We once accounted for 69 percent of global research and development expenditures but have fallen to just under 30 percent. China now accounts for 23.9 percent of global research and development spending, and growing.

How did this happen? One analysis by the American Association for the Advancement of Science directly attributes $200 billion in lost Federal research and development investments to the Budget Control Act. The National Science Foundation alone has lost $2 billion a year, which could support more than 5,500 grants and 65,000 scientists, technicians, and students.

We cannot lead in a rapidly evolving technological landscape unless we are investing in science and our scientists.

Failing to do so only cedes the next great discovery to China at the cost of innovation here in the United States. As chair of the Appropriations Committee, I am committed to fighting for the investments in American science, research, medical progress, and technological development that our great Nation needs and deserves.

There has been a lot of talk in this Chamber about the need for a major infrastructure package to repair our Nation's crumbling bridges and roads, and I support addressing that need. But there is a reason why our roads are in disrepair, forcing the American people to spend nearly $130 billion each year on vehicle repairs and operating costs. There is a reason why our drinking water systems lose the equivalent of 9,000 Olympic-size swimming pools of water every day. And there is a reason why one in five children lacks the high-speed internet connections they need to learn and participate in school.

That reason is a decade of budget caps that artificially constrained our ability to address these issues before they became the national limitation and embarrassment that they are today.

Now there is a $44 billion backlog in airport improvement projects, $35 billion in deferred maintenance for public housing, and $472.6 billion in urgently needed funds to maintain and improve the Nation's drinking water infrastructure.

Over the last decade, we have lost ground in education, childcare, environmental protections, and affordable housing. The Budget Control Act did not constrain our national debt; it left us as a nation in disrepair.

Joe Biden understands this, and I commend him for taking the bold action to address this in the budget he will release tomorrow. As chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I look forward to working with the President, his administration, and my dear friend Vice Chairman SHELBY on passing responsible appropriations bills that address the damage caused by the Budget Control Act.

The end of the Budget Control Act gives us the opportunity to invest in our communities. Tomorrow, Congress will receive the President's budget. The full Appropriations Committee has already held hearings on the need to invest in our infrastructure and on the threat of domestic violent extremism, and in June, we will hold hearings on global leadership and national security. In June, our subcommittees will hold numerous hearings to scrutinize the President's budget.

When Congress returns in early June, it is essential that Congress, on a bipartisan and bicameral basis, work with the President to negotiate budget toplines so that we can commence the appropriations process for the fiscal year that begins October 1. As President Biden has said, we can, should, and need to build back better.

TRIBUTE TO THERESA ALBERGHINI DIPALMA

• Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, there is no State in America more beautiful than Vermont, but along with its jaw-dropping beauty, Vermont is home to some of the finest, most active and engaged citizens who make it such a special place.

Theresa Alberghini DiPalma is one of those people. Theresa recently let it be known that she will be leaving her senior position at the University of Vermont Health Network.

I have known Theresa and her late parents for more than 30 years. Theresa's parents were both public school teachers. They raised five children in Burlington, including Theresa. Her father Roy saw Active Duty as a lead navigator on bombers in the European theater in World War II. Her mother Connie was also a pillar of the community. She taught Spanish, and she was an accomplished musician and extraordinary cook.

Theresa grew up in Burlington, the youngest of those five kids and the only girl. After college, she started in my Washington office answering phones. She steadily climbed the professional ladder to be both my top healthcare adviser and then my legislative director.

For as long as I have been in the Senate, I have talked about the challenge of keeping, maintaining, and attracting young Vermonters to our State. More than 20 years ago, Theresa did just that. In the mid-nineties, Theresa returned to Vermont to be closer to family and to serve as Vermont's chief healthcare regulator.

After leaving government service, Theresa joined the University of Vermont College of Medicine in 2000, serving as assistant dean for external relations. In 2002, she was called to serve—first on a temporary basis and then permanently—at then-Fletcher Allen Health Care during a time of great challenge.

Theresa joined a dedicated team, led by Ed Colodny, which worked tirelessly to restore public trust in our State's academic medical center.

Theresa is a now a senior vice president for external relations at the University of Vermont Health Network, where she and her colleagues support and lead an integrated healthcare delivery system in Vermont and New York, dedicated to ensuring that the more than 1 million people in the region have access to the care they need, close to home.

Theresa's commitment to the well-being of our communities is boundless. She has served on several boards, including Mercy Connections, the United Way of Northwest Vermont, the Lake Champlain Chamber, the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, VELCO, VGS, Vermont Business Roundtable, the