purely political motives is to only strengthen Putin's hand. The majority—vast majority—of Democrats and Republicans want to see this legislation done, and get it done we will, as soon as tomorrow.

Off the floor, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will mark up the nomination of Bridget Brink to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine. Ms. Brink's nomination is terrific news at a critical moment for Ukraine and the United States. She is deeply experienced. She has already won bipartisan support in this Chamber, and she is very much needed as the United States seeks to strengthen our democratic ties to the war-torn nation. Ms. Brink's nomination will be a top priority to the Senate when she comes before the Chamber.

RESTAURANTS

Mr. President, on a different matter—the restaurants bill—tomorrow, the Senate is going to hold a vote on legislation to help our restaurants, gyms, minor league teams, and other small businesses that have been utterly devastated by the COVID pandemic.

This bill, championed by my colleagues Senator CARDIN, a Democrat, and Senator WICKER, a Republican—which I very strongly support—will help restaurants and other small businesses like gyms that were left out in earlier rounds of emergency aid. Every proposal included in this package is bipartisan.

Some have said: Well, COVID is over, and the restaurants are back. I see them sort of full.

That may be true for some restaurants, but for just about every restaurant, there is a shortage of labor, and many are only opening at limited times. Most of the restaurants I speak to are either closed certain days, don't serve lunches, or whatever, because they can't find labor.

Let's not forget that many of the restaurants, particularly the smaller ones, the nonchain ones, had to borrow during COVID, borrow large amounts of money. They need to repay that money, and they can't do it based on their limited incomes that are occurring right now. If they don't get the money to pay it back, the lenders are going to foreclose and close restaurants that are already back on the road to prospering and recovering. That makes no sense.

We must pass this legislation. I hope we will get a good number of our Republican colleagues to join Senator WICKER in supporting this. Two years into this crisis, the idea that restaurant owners have all recovered could not be further from the truth.

Restaurants are part of the fabric of every Main Street and every tight-knit neighborhood. It is where friends run into each other on the weekends, grab a drink after work, have lunch after church. The same can be applied to minor league teams and local gyms and businesses that support theaters. These are places where Americans have always come together.

I was proud to champion the $28 billion restaurant relief in the American Rescue Plan, but these establishments, as I mentioned, still need our help. Tomorrow, there should be a strong bipartisan show of support to help these businesses.

VETERANS

Finally, there is another area that we will be voting on. There is an important announcement this morning for our Nation's veterans. Chairman TESTER and Ranking Member JERRY MORAN of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee will announce a bipartisan proposal on comprehensive legislation to help millions of our Nation's veterans who struggle with sickness because of exposure to toxins during their military service, including exposure to toxic burn pits and Agent Orange.

This has for years—for years—been a top priority of mine. I have worked closely with advocates like VSOs and Jon Stewart and John Feal to get this Senate to act on this long-neglected problem. I am happy to see burn pit legislation has taken an important step closer to passage.

I thank Senators TESTER and MORAN for their good work. I strongly support the agreement reached by TESTER and MORAN, and it is my intention to have this on the floor of the Senate the week that we return from the Memorial Day work period.

Our veterans—we will see them on Memorial Day—are very eager for this bill. I hope veterans throughout the country will let their Senators know how important this legislation is. Our veterans need it, they deserve it, and we have a moral obligation to take care of those who have sacrificed so much for us.

TRIBUTE TO SUZIE ORLOVE

Finally, Mr. President, today I want to bring special attention and praise to Suzie Orlove, my beloved and talented and deeply dedicated director of constituent service, who is retiring today after 37 amazing years in my office. Imagine that. She has worked in my office—first as a Congressman, then as Senator—for 37 years.

Suzie and I first met in the second grade in P.S. 19, Miss Ruth Moore's second grade class, and we have been friends ever since. Suzie stood out even in second grade for her compassion and her intellect.

Soon after I was elected to the House, Suzie came to work in my office and dedicated herself to making government work for everyday New Yorkers. She became a healthcare policy expert, navigating Medicaid, Medicare, and facing down often intransigent health insurance companies for constituents who often face life-and-death challenges. She became a maven navigating the bureaucracy of Social Security for our seniors and disabled. Year after year, Suzie oversaw the process of interviewing and nominating extraordinary young New Yorkers to our military academies.

The list of people she has helped is practically endless. All across New York, there are so many people who are grateful to Suzie Orlove for helping them in ways when they really needed help. She is amazing, as is the number of staffers she helped train to serve New Yorkers with diligence. She trained my staff—everyone who came in—but she also gave lots of advice to the staff of other of my colleagues, first in Congress and now in the Senate.

She is amazing—amazing.

Suzie Orlove, every day you came into work, you were dedicated to helping people—something that has always been a part of you. You were the strong glue in the office, teaching so many others who came and went how to help people, do casework, and do it with fierce dedication but a friendly smile as well.

All our office staff—past, present, and future—are grateful to Suzie for who she is and what she has done.

Suzie, thank you for your service. To quote the old song, ''We're gonna miss you when you're gone.''

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the majority leader reminds us of the tragedy that occurred in Buffalo over the weekend and how the shooter was somehow captivated by the notion of replacement theory—a theory which is so insane and so mean-spirited that it ignores what this country is all about.

A few minutes ago, over at what they call the House swamp, we held a press conference. Senator ALEX PADILLA of California, myself, Congresswoman ROSS, and Congressman BERA met with a group of young people. There were about 50 of them. Some were high school age; some were in college. They are the sons and daughters of people who came to the United States on H–1B visas. These are visas where people are allowed to come here for a period of years and work, and the visas can be renewed.

Children and families who accompany them are growing up in America, living in America, while the breadwinner goes off to work each day, but the clock is ticking. When the kids of these visa holders reach the age of 21, they are subject to self-deportation. In other words, they have no legal rights in America to remain.

The reason that they are in suspense for so long is that the green card backlog can be decades while the parents are waiting for permission to become legal in the United States on a permanent basis. So these young people live in uncertainty.

Senator PADILLA's bill is an effort—and I join with him in that bill—an effort to give them the opportunity to earn their way to citizenship, to become legal in America. Why would we give up this talent? These young people have grown up in America. They have