

amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over the period of the total of fiscal years 2025 through 2034.

#### AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I have eight requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

##### COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at 10 a.m., to conduct an executive session.

##### COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at 10:15 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

##### COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at 10:15 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

##### COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on a nomination.

##### COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at 10:15 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

##### COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing on a nomination.

##### SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed business meeting immediately followed by a closed briefing.

##### SUBCOMMITTEE ON AIRLAND

The Subcommittee on Airland of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at 4:15 p.m., to conduct a closed session.

#### ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2025

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Thursday, February 20; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, morning business be closed, and the Senate resume consideration of Calendar No. 13, S. Con. Res. 7; further, that all time during adjournment count equally towards Calendar No. 13, S. Con. Res. 7; and that if any nominations are confirmed during Thursday's session, the motions 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.

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, Senators should expect a cloture vote on the Patel nomination at 11 a.m. tomorrow, followed by a confirmation vote at approximately 1:45 p.m.

#### ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order following the remarks of my colleagues.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

#### BUDGET RECONCILIATION

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to our Republican colleagues' budget proposal. This plan is all about giving tax cuts to billionaires and then finding the money to pay for it. Let's make that really clear.

This week, they are moving forward in both the House and the Senate with their plans. While the plans are different, the destination is the same. The results of this—when you look at the details of the House bill, of the Senate bill; when you look at the undermining of the Affordable Care Act, which has given healthcare to so many people, and you look at the undermining in the House proposal of the prescription drug negotiations for Medicare, which is so key; when you look at what would happen to rural hospitals, what would happen with nutrition for kids and veterans; infrastructure projects, our subject right now—all to find this over \$2 trillion for tax cuts for the wealthy.

It is no wonder that two-thirds of Americans—and this is in a number of public polls—think the President isn't focused enough on lowering costs, and

no wonder they believe by a 13-point margin that these policies will actually increase inflation.

Costs are high. Americans are struggling to make ends meet. They actually thought that this administration would come in and do something about it. And my concern, which you will hear from me and from many of my colleagues, is that this budget proposal will only make things worse.

Over the last few years, our workers and businesses have created millions of good-paying jobs. Just a few years ago, we came together to pass the bipartisan infrastructure law, which has made historic investments in our roads, ports, bridges, high-speed internet, and more. I remember how proud we were, those of us who worked on this legislation, that we had such strong bipartisan support for this bill.

But, unfortunately, these proposals from the Senate and the House would undo this progress, particularly when it comes to broadband. In 2025, we can't talk about infrastructure without talking about broadband. High-speed internet is necessary for everything from education to healthcare, to finding jobs, not to mention keeping in touch with family members.

I have a number of small businesses that, when they don't have high-speed broadband, they actually have to go into town to a McDonald's parking lot to contact their customers because, in this modern day, you cannot do business even in the smallest of towns without having high-speed internet. Right now, more than 20 million Americans are left out because they still don't have a reliable internet connection at home.

As cochair of the bipartisan Senate Broadband Caucus and the author of the original bill that got included in the bipartisan infrastructure law, I have always believed that if they can have high-speed internet in a country like Iceland, a country with active volcanoes that are spewing lava, maybe—just maybe—we can get it in every corner in our own country.

That is why we fought to make sure the bipartisan infrastructure law included historic funding to deliver high-speed internet. That funding is there. It is going out. It has been going out. It will go out in the future. I would love if it had just all happened in 1 year, but that funding is going out. But that progress is going to be ground to a halt if this money instead goes to tax cuts for the wealthy.

Slashing funding for infrastructure and high-speed internet is only the beginning. The budget also threatens healthcare for over 8 million seniors and more than 31 million kids. On top of that, it would force rural hospitals to shut their doors, and it would threaten the future of Medicare drug price negotiations, which I noted earlier.

Even the first 10 drugs under our bill, the first 10 drugs alone—and no one has disputed this—because of the 60-percent decrease after the negotiations