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No. 161

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, October 3, 2025, at 3:30 p.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2025

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

As the shutdown begins today, we turn our eyes to You, eternal God. You have been our help in ages past, our hope for the years to come. We borrow our heartbeats from You. Because of You, we live and move and breathe and have our being. Be merciful to us, O God, because of Your constant love, because of Your great mercy.

During this time of legislative stalemate, help our lawmakers to test all things by their own consciences, seeking to do right as You give them the ability to see it. In these best and worst of times, strengthen our weakness, replacing doubt with faith and fear with courage.

We pray in Your awesome Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MULLIN). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2296, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2296) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2026 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Wicker-Reed amendment modified No. 3748, in the nature of a substitute.

Wicker (for Ernst) amendment No. 3427 (to amendment No. 3748), to require the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study on casualty assistance and long-term care programs.

Thune amendment No. 3863 (to amendment No. 3427), relating to the enactment date.

Thune amendment No. 3864 (to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 3748), relating to the enactment date.

Thune amendment No. 3865 (to amendment No. 3864), relating to the enactment date.

Motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Armed Services, with instructions.

Thune amendment No. 3866, relating to the enactment date.

Thune amendment No. 3867 (to (the instructions) amendment No. 3866), relating to the enactment date.

Thune amendment No. 3868 (to amendment No. 3867), relating to the enactment date.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The great Senator from Iowa.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, 2 days ago, I spoke about the potential shutdown of government. I am going to repeat what I said then, but the shutdown of government is now a fact. I said it costs money to shut the government down; it costs money to open the government up.

The government is supposed to be a service to the American people, protect the American people, and you can't do either if the government is not functioning.

You heard the Chaplain speaking about prayer and the government shutdown. Prayer is in order for almost anything, but if common sense would prevail here in the U.S. Senate, 100 Senators would take care of this issue with or without prayer. On the other hand, if people want to pray for the opening of government and the serving of people, that is perfectly appropriate, and, hopefully, it works.

But all 100 of us Senators ought to be ashamed that the government is in shutdown. It affects the United States. Each of our staffs will not be paid during this period of time, and I will bet each Senator will expect their staffs to be on duty since the Senate is going to be in session. We should think about the people we are hurting.

Particularly, Democrats who want to speak, seem to speak more for Federal workers now on furlough, not being paid, ought to think about their support for them that is voiced almost

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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every day and the harm that will come because this is the Democrat shutting down the government.

Thirteen times during the Biden administration, they voted for a clean continuing resolution, and this is exactly what we are asking they vote for this time.

AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY

Mr. President, I come to the floor, once again, to speak about the agricultural economy and trade and tariffs in this particular instance today.

You have heard me talk about the high input costs that farmers are facing. I concluded my remarks 2 days ago by saying farmers need immediate relief. This is especially true if it is the Federal Government's action that has caused the economic hardships. I am going to speak about some of that Federal Government action.

It happens that fertilizer is one of the largest expenses in growing crops. Most fertilizers used in the United States are imported. The tariffs on fertilizers have sent shock waves throughout the supply chains. Most often, those waves come crashing down on the farmers who bear the brunt of the increased cost of fertilizers.

Tariffs not only cause farmers to pay more for their inputs, but they also have seen tariffs reduce markets for U.S. farm products.

Last week, when the Argentinians reduced export tariffs, they sold \$7 billion worth of soybeans in just a few days to China. It happens that China has not bought a single one of American soybeans this year, and that is why farmers are losing \$2 a bushel on soybeans.

Taking away tariffs on ag inputs and striking meaningful deals to open markets would send immediate signals to the ag economy, helping farmers' bottom lines.

Yesterday, former Senator David Perdue, now Ambassador to China, visited the U.S. Senate, and I had the opportunity to express my views about the situation with China not buying soybeans. He says he hears it; that it is the No. 1 issue when it comes to talking about trade negotiations with China.

He also mentioned something that I think I need to bring to our attention because it is something that China promised to do in 2019. It was something that Trump, in his first term, negotiated with China; that they had to buy a certain amount of agricultural products from the United States. During the period of time that Trump was President, they filled about two-thirds of that agreement. But the Biden administration came into power and didn't follow up on the enforcement of that 2019 Trump agreement with China to buy agricultural products.

So besides hoping that Trump makes a quick deal with China, settles our trade disputes so they will buy soybeans, I hope that maybe President Trump today can follow up on the shortcomings of the Biden administra-

tion not enforcing that 2019 agreement with China.

I yield the floor.

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.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, today is October 1, the first full day of Donald Trump's government shutdown. Donald Trump and Republicans have barreled us into a shutdown because they refuse to protect Americans' healthcare.

It is clear that the way out of this shutdown is to sit down and negotiate with Democrats, to address the looming healthcare crisis that faces tens of millions of American families. Democrats want to avert this crisis, but Republicans tried to bully us, and it is clear they can't. They don't have the votes. The way out of this is for Republicans to finally roll up their sleeves and get to work. Republicans need to get serious and start actually addressing the looming crisis and reopen the government.

Now, why has all of this happened? Why are we here on October 1? Because Republicans have tried to stick us with a partisan CR that fails to protect Americans' healthcare and does nothing—nothing—to fix the healthcare mess that they created. It has now failed twice to get enough votes in this Chamber. So Republicans need to negotiate with us, and Speaker Johnson has to get his people here. If anyone wanted evidence as to who wanted this shutdown, just look at the fact that Johnson does not even have the House in session.

When Democrats had the White House, the Senate, and the House, when Democrats had the majority in this Chamber, when I was majority leader, we never had one shutdown in 4 years—not one. Do you know why? Because we worked with our Republican colleagues to find a way to keep the government funded. We did this 13 times, as Leader Thune likes to remind everyone. That is a lot of bipartisan negotiation—but not this time, not so today. Republicans need to negotiate.

Today is October 1, and that means something else is happening today. Americans throughout the country are opening their mailboxes and finding letters in there telling them that their health insurance is about to go way, way, way up. The other day, we thought it was about \$400 a month that the average American family would pay more in insurance premiums, but it turns out it is even worse than that. The Kaiser report—the nonpartisan, well-respected Kaiser report—from yes-

terday, says it is an average of \$1,000 a month and, God forbid, even much more for so many Americans. Healthcare premiums, because of what the Republicans have done, are going up 114 percent a year, on average. The average premium is going to more than double.

What is the average American family supposed to do with that? What happens on Friday night when the family sits around the kitchen table and says, "How are we going to pay the bills?" when they see that their insurance could be \$1,000 more a month—health insurance, vital to the parents and to the children of the family. What are they going to do? The average American can't afford \$1,000 a month or even \$400 a month without cutting back on their healthcare or cutting back on something else that is vital.

You know, Americans are saying the No. 1 issue is cost. They now rate Donald Trump worse on costs than they rated Joe Biden, and he didn't have very good ratings. It is the tariffs. It is the change in electricity costs because of what they have done with the cheapest and cleanest source of energy putting electrons on the grid, which is solar. They got rid of it, in their fanatical hatred of clean energy. Now, they are putting money into coal. It is incredible—because of the costs of groceries, of meat.

But the No. 1 increase in cost now, on October 1, is healthcare costs. And the average American is going to say: What the heck happened here? And we Democrats are going to be there every day, every hour—Senate, House, groups that care about healthcare: hospital groups, healthcare groups, research groups—letting them know this didn't have to happen. It happened because our Republican colleagues wanted to give tax breaks to billionaires and cut their healthcare. It is incredible. It is incredible.

Three times we asked our Republican colleagues to extend the ACA tax credit. Three times they voted no. Well, it is not too late. They could change. When I met with the President, he seemed not to know the magnitude of the crisis. He said: Ooh, this is going to hurt me.

Well, it sure will. But it is going to hurt every American.

What is motivating Democrats—what is motivating me—is simply to take this burden off the shoulders of tens of millions of American families who struggle each week to pay the bills, and they don't need this huge increase in something as vital as health insurance.

And the Republicans sort of know this. So what do they do? They make up lies, absolute lies. They say, oh, what they are fighting to do is prevent—they say—illegal immigrants from getting Federal healthcare dollars.

That is a damn lie. Not one dollar of Medicare, Medicaid, or ACA is allowed to go to undocumented immigrants—not a dollar.

So why do they keep saying this? This seems to be their theme. Because they are afraid to talk about the real issues. Typical Republican response: Have a diversion; try to scare people emotionally.

But I will tell you, to the average American family, that \$1,000-a-month increase or that \$400-a-month increase on their healthcare bills means a lot more than political crap put in the air—lies—by our Republican colleagues.

So I was very glad this morning that some of the commentators on TV said that. When they say that undocumented immigrants are going to get this money, it is a lie, plain and simple. It is a lie so lazy and so outlandish that it is easy to rebut. But again, let me be clear: Undocumented people cannot and will not receive premium tax credit by law. The Federal Government does not fund Federal health insurance for undocumented immigrants in Medicaid or Medicare—period, full stop.

So they don't care. Why? Because they know the American people are on our side, and they know they are going to get angrier and angrier starting today, when they see these healthcare bills.

Listen to this poll. The Kaiser Family Foundation poll found a whopping 75 percent of Americans support extending the ACA premium tax credit, including 63 percent of Republicans. When our Republican Senate and House colleagues go around their communities—of course, the House isn't even here this week, as I mentioned—they are going to hear it in the barbershops and in the restaurants and at the diners and at the Little Leagues and at the veterans halls, because it is so shocking, and people are going to be talking about it. They will see.

And we Democrats are going to be there relentlessly, letting people know why it happened: because our Republican colleagues did not want to help us out of this crisis. Instead, they wanted to give the dollars to billionaires.

President Trump calls what the Democrats want radical.

President Trump, it is not radical to say Americans deserve lower healthcare premiums. It is not radical to say we want to prevent the average American family from getting these huge increases—those on ACA—\$1,000 a month.

When Democrats say we want to work with Republicans to lower premiums, to strengthen healthcare, all we are doing is reflecting what the American people already want—nothing more, nothing less. They want us to sit down and negotiate something real that takes this huge, huge burden off their shoulders.

And Donald Trump, instead of acting like an adult—he is the most immature President we have ever had—instead of doing something to stop the healthcare crisis, is threatening to hurt countless hard-working Americans.

Let me repeat the quote Donald Trump said yesterday:

We can do things during the shutdown that are irreversible, that are bad for them and irreversible. Like cutting vast numbers of people out, cutting things that they like, cutting programs that they like.

Donald Trump says it loud and clear; that is one thing about him. He is using the American people as pawns, threatening pain on the country as blackmail.

Well, that is not going to work. For the American people, it is so easy to see through those tactics. They know this is the Trump shutdown. They know Republicans control the Presidency, the Senate, and the House and what is done during a shutdown will fall squarely on Republicans' backs. Donald Trump even says it. He says he is going to close down all these things people want.

It is going to fall right on his back. The American people will know who is doing it, and he is going to have to recoil from it—just as they have done so many cuts already, even before October 1. And they had to back off on many of them, some because of the courts but some because of public outcry, such as the huge cutbacks they made in the VA.

Well, Democrats' position hasn't changed. We are willing, ready, and able to negotiate. We are ready to reopen the government today. We have made our position clear about how to move forward. Surely, we can come together and agree we need to fix healthcare, and that needs to happen now, as people are getting these incredible increases. Within a few weeks, they are going to have to say what new healthcare—if they will even keep their healthcare or have to cut it back or do something else that hurts them because they don't have the money.

If Republicans work with us and fix America's healthcare crisis, the shutdown could go away very quickly. That is what Democrats want—to end this now, fix healthcare now. It is the right thing to do for the American people.

We urge our Republican colleagues and we urge President Trump to take "yes" for an answer.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, here we are. Democrats have bowed to the far-left, and they have shut down the Federal Government. As of this morning, critical Federal employees, including members of the military, Border Patrol agents, and air traffic controllers, are working without pay, and a number of government services are unavailable or at risk.

Democrats are well aware of the damage of a government shutdown. We have heard it from them time and time again. But apparently none of that matters to Democrats today. All that seems to matter is that their far-left base sees them "fighting" against President Trump, and the American people just have to suffer the consequences.

We can end this today. There is a clean, nonpartisan continuing resolution at the desk that has no partisan policy riders, no new Republican policies. It just keeps the government running until November 21. The House passed it. The President is ready to sign it into law. The only thing standing in the way is Senate Democrats, who are demanding \$1.5 trillion in partisan spending to keep the government open for 7 weeks. That is right. They are demanding more than the defense budget in their resolution to keep the government open for 4 weeks. That is not how this works.

We were in the situation 13 times when Democrats had the majority under President Biden, and 13 times, Republicans provided more than enough votes to keep the government open, and that is what needs to happen here.

We are one—just one—Senate rollcall vote away from ending this shutdown. We need a handful of Democrats to join Republicans to reopen the government. Once we do that, then we can talk about the issues that Democrats are raising. We are not going to engage in bipartisan discussions while Democrats are holding the Federal Government hostage to their partisan demands.

This Democrat shutdown is actually delaying progress on the issues that Democrats claim to be interested in. It is also delaying important work on appropriations bills.

Now, I have said throughout this year that my goal is to do appropriations through regular order—regular order—which allows Members of both parties to give voice to their priorities and to help shape appropriations bills.

We have made good progress already this year. Thanks to the work of Chair COLLINS and the Appropriations Committee, we passed three bipartisan bills before the August recess for the first time since 2018, and there are a number of additional bills ready for floor consideration. But that work is now delayed because we have to deal with the Democrats' shutdown mess.

How long this shutdown lasts depends entirely on Democrats. Republicans are united around a clean, nonpartisan funding extension. A few Democrats joined us last night and voted to keep the government open. They will have another opportunity to vote today, and I hope more of our Democrat colleagues will agree to end this shutdown.

Real people are suffering right now because of Democrats' temper tantrum, and it needs to stop.

Mr. President, I want to close with this: In 2019, in the midst of another shutdown, the Democrat leader urged reopening the government before negotiating on the one point of disagreement. He said then:

Why must we hold millions of Americans who depend on the services of these Agencies that are closed—hundreds of thousands of workers who get paid by these Agencies—why must we hold them hostage? Why must

a temper tantrum determine how we vote and what happens in this government? Everyone can shut down the government on anything—any leader, any President. It is not the way to do things.

I hope that the Democrat leader will heed his own words. Democrats need to reopen the government, and we need to get back to work for the American people.

I yield the floor.

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.

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

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

The majority whip.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, Senate Democrats have now dragged us into the Schumer shutdown. When I say “us,” I mean all of us as Americans. It didn’t have to happen, and it certainly doesn’t need to continue. Americans are overwhelmingly against the shutdown of our government.

New polling from the New York Times and Siena just came out, and the polling proves it. Here is the key finding: Two out of three Americans believe that Democrats should not shut down the government, even if they don’t get their trillion-dollar ransom fee paid, which of course they won’t. Only 47 percent of Democrats support the shutdown. That is not even a majority of Democrats.

Senate Democrats are on the wrong side of Republicans, they are on the wrong side of Independents, and they are on the wrong side of their own party.

There is only one good option to reopen the government, and that option is a bipartisan, clean continuing resolution that we will vote on this morning.

The House already passed it with bipartisan support. President Trump is ready to sign it. Senate Republicans voted yesterday in an attempt to pass it. It failed yesterday, and we are going to offer it again today.

All it takes to reopen the government is cooperation from just five more Senate Democrats. We picked up three Democrats last night, so there are clearly cracks on their side of the aisle and movement toward our side. That will continue.

We are ready to vote for it again and again and again to make sure we can reopen the government for the American people. And there is bipartisan—broad bipartisan support to open the government. That is what the New York Times revealed, and that is what the vote revealed last evening. If five more Democrats join us today, the shutdown is over because, remember, it takes 60 votes in the Senate to get something like this passed and accomplished.

And all we are asking is to reopen the government for the next 7 weeks. Democrats supported these same funding levels before; now they claim the levels aren’t good enough. Democrats are now demanding \$1.5 trillion in new spending—new spending—for just reopening the government for 4 short weeks. That is \$48 billion of new spending each and every day of the 4 weeks in the Democrats’ proposal.

This is a direct attack on hard-working American taxpayers who voted against wasteful Washington spending in the elections in November.

Think back to previous continuing resolutions just like this one. I can think back to 13 of them during the time Joe Biden was in office at the White House. Thirteen of these passed. The minimum number of votes was 65. We voted to keep the government open, bipartisan. When Joe Biden and Barack Obama were President, Democrats said shutdowns were dangerous, destructive, and desperate. Those are the words of the Democrats: “dangerous,” “destructive,” “desperate.”

Listen to those words. Listen to what CHUCK SCHUMER said. He said:

Passing a clean CR . . . [would] avert a harmful and unnecessary government shutdown.

He also said:

If the government shuts down, it will be average Americans who suffer [the] most.

But yesterday he stood here in the well and then voted to shut down the government. Senator PATTY MURRAY of Washington is the top Democrat on the Senate Appropriations Committee. She has said that “a shutdown solves nothing.” She went on to say, and it “hurts everyone.”

Yesterday, she voted to shut down the government.

Senator ELIZABETH WARREN of Massachusetts has said that a shutdown “is the last resort for those who can’t otherwise win their fights through elections [and] can’t win their fights in Congress.” Well, yesterday, she voted to shut down the government.

Senator CHRIS MURPHY of Connecticut said:

There is a time and place to debate health care . . . but not when the funding of the federal government, and all the lives that are impacted by it, hang in the balance.

Well, yesterday he voted to shut down the government.

Senator AMY KLOBUCHAR of Minnesota is a Member of the Senate Democrat leadership. She said:

Shutdowns are not good for the economy.

Yesterday, she voted to shut down the government.

Senator BRIAN SCHATZ of Hawaii said:

I’ve seen the same thing over and over again.

He said:

Shutdowns don’t work. . . . No one wins, but Americans have a lot to lose.

Yesterday, he voted to shut down the government.

Those were Senate Democrats’ words when there was a Democrat in the

White House. Yet last night, when it mattered, Democrats ignored their own warnings. Either their memories are short or their principles are situational. The costs they described are now a reality.

Border Patrol agents are showing up to work; they are not getting paid. The Border Patrol union warns that shutdowns threaten their “capacity to maintain the most secure border in our Nation’s history.”

Veterans’ healthcare is going to be impacted. Low-income families will lose vital benefits to help buy groceries.

Republicans are committed to reopening the government with a clean continuing resolution. That will allow us to finish the appropriations process the right way.

When he was majority leader, Senator SCHUMER broke that process, the appropriations process. Last year, the Senate Appropriations Committee passed—the committee, not CHUCK SCHUMER, but that committee passed 11 of 12 appropriations bills, many of them unanimous, always bipartisan, and what happened? Senator SCHUMER let each and every one of them rot and die in his Senate desk drawer. He shut down the appropriations process, and now he wants to shut down the government.

Republicans have restored the appropriations process. For the first time in 4 years, the Senate passed appropriations bills in August, passed three of them. Senator SUSAN COLLINS of Maine deserves special praise and thanks for this achievement.

Passing a clean CR will allow the Senate to finish our bipartisan work. The American people want their government open. They want it reopened. They want it to remain open. They want it working. So today Democrats are facing a clear choice; they can govern in the best interest of the American people or they can continue to grandstand for their retweets and their likes from their liberal base.

Republicans are united in our commitment to reopen the government. How long it takes, how costly it is, that is entirely up to the Senate Democrats.

A bipartisan offer, a bipartisan bill that already passed the House is right here in the Senate for a vote today. The President is ready to sign it to reopen the government. It is time to pass the bill today and end this Schumer shutdown.

WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to consent to waive the mandatory quorum calls with respect to Calendar No. 167, S. 2882, Calendar No. 168, H.R. 5371.

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

Mr. BARRASSO. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, well, it is not even 1 day after Republicans

chose to shut down the government instead of making any sort of progress on stopping healthcare premiums from skyrocketing, and it is already painfully clear that Republican leadership is not taking any of this seriously.

Republican leadership doesn't care if millions of Americans lose their health insurance. Republican leadership does not care if your healthcare costs go through the roof. And despite a lot of showboating yesterday, Republican leadership obviously doesn't care how long this shutdown goes on.

Just consider, if Republican leadership and President Trump actually cared about reopening the government, Trump would not be tweeting AI deepfakes and mariachi music or bragging about how he can't wait to use a shutdown as an excuse to inflict more pain on the American people.

If they actually cared about reopening the government, Russ Vought wouldn't be saying he will fire everyone he can no matter if firing them is necessary or not and no matter how harmful it is or not.

If they actually cared about reopening the government, Republican leaders would not be pressing ahead with the same failed bill as yesterday and refusing to finally work with Democrats to finalize a solution.

If Republican leadership actually cared about reopening the government, House Republicans would actually be here. Let me say that again: House Republicans are not even here. Are we supposed to believe they are taking this seriously? I guess not.

And if Republican leadership actually cared about reopening the government, they would be talking with us about how the actual issues we want to address, how to stop skyrocketing health prices, hospital closures, and millions of patients from losing their health insurance. Instead, they are screaming "illegal immigration" and telling bold-faced lies about Democrats' proposal to try and talk about anything but healthcare. That really gives away the game Republican leaders are playing with the American people, doesn't it?

Democrats want Republicans to sit down at the table for a serious negotiation about really serious issues. But Republican leadership is off playing make-believe in la-la land. How are we supposed to negotiate with President Trump when he is busy frying his mind in an AI fantasy world of mariachi bands and science fiction medbeds and who knows what next? And how are we supposed to negotiate with Republican leaders when they are refusing to work on a bipartisan path out and just making lies up about our Democratic proposals?

For everyone who has only heard the Republican nonsense, let me make our agenda clear. Here is what Democrats actually want to do: We want to stop your healthcare premiums from doubling next year. We want to stop millions of people from getting priced out of their insurance and getting sick or going without care.

We want to stop hospitals from closing. I wonder why Republicans have such a hard time being honest about that? Well, maybe because they caused this healthcare crisis in the first place. And let's be crystal clear, it is not honest for Republicans to try and just say: Oh, well, we can just talk about healthcare later. We pinkie promise.

Rate hikes are being finalized right now. Notices for massive price increases will land in our families' mailboxes this month. Open enrollment starts in a matter of a few weeks. That means families are going to start seeing their premiums double. People are going to get priced out of coverage; that is, unless we act now.

There is no waiting; we have been waiting. There is no later; that is too late. Are Republicans saying they will not talk about solutions until the damage is done? Are they saying they want to lock in the high healthcare rates first?

You know, the best time to put out a fire is before it burns down the house. Surely, Republicans don't need me to tell them that. But if Republicans insist on asking why we can't address healthcare later, I have got a few questions for them.

First off, why the heck couldn't we talk about healthcare sooner, huh? Where in the world have you been? You moved Heaven and Earth to pass new tax breaks for billionaires by cutting over \$1 trillion from Americans' healthcare. Why won't you move a muscle to save healthcare for our working families?

I mean, my goodness, why is it not until there is a shutdown that Republican leaders will even say we can at least talk about healthcare? Oh, but not yet.

If a shutdown is the first time Republican leaders will even acknowledge in the slightest whisper the looming healthcare crisis, why should we trust for one second you will keep your word later?

Republicans have been choosing to ignore this healthcare crisis for months, and now they face another choice: How much longer are they going to insist on this partisan path? How much longer are they going to stick their heads in the sand? Because I will warn them: The American people cannot wait.

One family in my State of Washington is about to see their premiums jump from \$283 a month to as high as \$1,800 a month if Republicans insist on inaction, and I know they are not the only ones.

To my Republican colleagues who don't think this is a crisis, to anyone who thinks healthcare can wait: Go out and talk to people, talk to insurance companies in your State or doctors or hospitals or patients, and then come to the table and talk with us. We are here. We are ready to work on real solutions to address this healthcare crisis and reopen the government. I have been at the table the whole time. I am here. I

am ready. I am willing to work out a real solution to get this done.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 167, S. 2882, a bill making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2026, and for other purposes.

Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Tim Kaine, Richard J. Durbin, Tina Smith, Jack Reed, Alex Padilla, Mazie K. Hirono, Jeanne Shaheen, Tammy Baldwin, Richard Blumenthal, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Ben Ray Luján, Brian Schatz, Sheldon Whitehouse, Michael F. Bennet, Christopher Murphy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to S. 2882, a bill making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2026, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 47, nays 53, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 536 Leg.]

YEAS—47

Alsobrooks	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Baldwin	Hirono	Sanders
Bennet	Kaine	Schatz
Blumenthal	Kelly	Schiff
Blunt Rochester	Kim	Schumer
Booker	King	Shaheen
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Slotkin
Coons	Lujan	Smith
Cortez Masto	Markey	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warnock
Fetterman	Murray	Warren
Gallego	Ossoff	Welch
Gillibrand	Padilla	Whitehouse
Hassan	Peters	Wyden
Heinrich	Reed	

NAYS—53

Banks	Graham	Moreno
Barrasso	Grassley	Mullin
Blackburn	Hagerty	Murkowski
Boozman	Hawley	Paul
Britt	Hoover	Ricketts
Budd	Husted	Risch
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Cassidy	Johnson	Schmitt
Collins	Justice	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Sheehy
Cramer	Lee	Sullivan
Crapo	Lummis	Thune
Cruz	Marshall	Tillis
Curtis	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	Mccormick	Wicker
Ernst	Moody	Young
Fischer	Moran	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 47, the nays are 53.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order for the two leaders to enter motions to reconsider without being on the prevailing side with respect to the cloture votes on the motions to proceed to S. 2882 and H.R. 5371; further, that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Cao nomination in S. Res. 412 be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The minority leader.

MOTION TO RECONSIDER

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I enter a motion to reconsider the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 2882.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is entered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 168, H.R. 5371, a bill making continuing appropriations and extensions for fiscal year 2026, and for other purposes.

John Thune, Bernie Moreno, Mike Crapo, Chuck Grassley, Ashley B. Moody, Markwayne Mullin, John Barrasso, Tim Sheehy, Pete Ricketts, Ted Budd, Bill Hagerty, John R. Curtis, David McCormick, Tim Scott of South Carolina, John Cornyn, Steve Daines, Eric Schmitt.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the mandatory quorum call under rule XXII has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to H.R. 5371, a bill making continuing appropriations and extensions for fiscal year 2026, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 537 Leg.]

YEAS—55

Banks	Collins	Daines
Barrasso	Cornyn	Ernst
Blackburn	Cortez Masto	Fetterman
Boozman	Cotton	Fischer
Britt	Cramer	Graham
Budd	Crapo	Grassley
Capito	Cruz	Hagerty
Cassidy	Curtis	Hawley

Hoeven	McConnell	Scott (FL)
Husted	McCormick	Scott (SC)
Hyde-Smith	Moody	Sheehy
Johnson	Moran	Sullivan
Justice	Moreno	Thune
Kennedy	Mullin	Tillis
King	Murkowski	Tuberville
Lankford	Ricketts	Wicker
Lee	Risch	Young
Lummis	Rounds	
Marshall	Schmitt	

NAYS—45

Alsobrooks	Hirono	Rosen
Baldwin	Kaine	Sanders
Bennet	Kelly	Schatz
Blumenthal	Kim	Schiff
Blunt Rochester	Klobuchar	Schumer
Booker	Luján	Shaheen
Cantwell	Markley	Slotkin
Coons	Merkley	Smith
Duckworth	Murphy	Van Hollen
Durbin	Murray	Warner
Gallego	Ossoff	Warnock
Gillibrand	Padilla	Warren
Hassan	Paul	Weich
Heinrich	Peters	Whitehouse
Hickenlooper	Reed	Wyden

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RICKETTS). On this vote, the yeas are 55, the nays are 45. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

MOTION TO RECONSIDER

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I enter a motion to reconsider.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is entered.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that if any nominations are confirmed during today's session of the Senate, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 275, Hung Cao, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of the Navy.

John Thune, Bernie Moreno, Bill Cassidy, Jon Husted, John Cornyn, John R. Curtis, Marsha Blackburn, Deb Fischer, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Joni Ernst, Shelley Moore Capito, Ashley B. Moody, Rick Scott of Florida, John Barrasso, Steve Daines, Tim Sheehy, James Lankford.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the mandatory quorum call under rule XXII has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Hung Cao, of Virginia, to be Under

Secretary of the Navy, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 538 Leg.]

YEAS—52

Banks	Graham	Moreno
Barrasso	Grassley	Mullin
Blackburn	Hagerty	Paul
Boozman	Hawley	Ricketts
Britt	Hoeven	Risch
Budd	Husted	Rounds
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Collins	Justice	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sheehy
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Tillis
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Curtis	McConnell	Wicker
Daines	McCormick	Young
Ernst	Moody	
Fischer	Moran	

NAYS—47

Alsobrooks	Hickenlooper	Reed
Baldwin	Hirono	Rosen
Bennet	Kaine	Schatz
Blumenthal	Kelly	Schiff
Blunt Rochester	Kim	Schumer
Booker	King	Shaheen
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Slotkin
Coons	Luján	Smith
Cortez Masto	Markey	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murkowski	Warnock
Fetterman	Murphy	Warren
Gallego	Murray	Welch
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Hassan	Padilla	Wyden
Heinrich	Peters	

NOT VOTING—1

Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 47. The motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Cloture having been invoked, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Hung Cao, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of the Navy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

ANNIVERSARY OF HURRICANE HELENE

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, on Saturday, I was in Western North Carolina for the day because that marked the 1-year anniversary of the landfall of Hurricane in a place that a hurricane has never really been before, about 200 miles inland in the Smoky Mountain Range.

In North Carolina alone, it had an impact landwise equivalent to the

State of Massachusetts. About a dozen river basins were at historic, 100-year flood levels, and the damage was tremendous. The loss of life: 108 people in North Carolina alone, more than 250 people by the storm, and \$59.6 billion in damages.

It is actually the most expensive storm in North Carolina's history, breaking the previous record of \$30 billion by Hurricane Florence back in 2018: 74,000 homes damaged or destroyed; 5,000 miles of roads damaged or destroyed, including major portions of I-40, which are still only one lane in each direction for about a 20-mile stretch between North Carolina and Tennessee; I-26 was damaged; Blue Ridge Parkway has just opened up; 848 bridges damaged and destroyed; 20,000 farms and 800,000 acres of timber damaged; 163 water systems damaged, with Asheville not having drinkable water for almost 2 months after the storm.

When I was in Western North Carolina, I heard someone say that the one community I was in was back on its feet. But for every community that is back on its feet, there are still several communities that are on their knees or flat on their back. In fact, there are some communities that we wonder whether or not they ever will come back.

And the reason I talk about it, in addition to being the 1-year anniversary, we have got real problems in the FEMA Disaster Relief Fund and resources available.

The President, rightfully, acknowledged that there was a release of money about a month ago, but all of that is money that is already—those are reimbursements. Those are costs that have already been incurred. We haven't even gotten to a point where we are trying to become more resilient or to prepare for the next storm.

When I was riding from Old Fort to Chimney Rock, I was going down a stretch of highway—not a stretch of highway, a stretch of State road. There are still cars in the creekbeds. There are roads that are in the creekbed because they are trying to figure out where they are ultimately going to put it, back on a hillside, when they can get stabilization there and actually have the funding to build the roads.

I know a lot of people have moved on, but in Western North Carolina, we haven't moved on. We are suffering as much today as we were the day or 3 or 4 days after the storm last year.

According to the latest FEMA Disaster Relief Fund monthly report, the major disasters account balance right now is at \$1.4 billion. That is dangerously low.

Last month, FEMA approved 7.5 billion from the major disasters account.

In 2024, there were 90 FEMA-declared major disasters, nearly double the 30-year average of 55 declarations per year.

Already this year—and we are really ramping up in the hurricane season right now—we have had 40 major dis-

aster declarations in 22 States. FEMA simply doesn't have the funding needed to respond to a major disaster.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are in a shutdown posture right now. We have storms in the Atlantic and more storms forming off the coast of Africa, and we are not prepared for another major disaster should it hit this weekend, nor do we have the money that we need to help communities across this country, especially in Western North Carolina, recover from Helene.

The House-passed continuing resolution that we tried to vote on this week had \$22½ billion for the FEMA Disaster Relief Fund. But that money is not here today because we are in a shutdown posture. We are not funding any area of government, but we are especially hurting the Disaster Relief Fund and FEMA. And the only thing standing in our way is a simple vote to continue funding at levels that my Democratic colleagues have agreed to before.

Ladies and gentlemen, we don't have a CR that the President or that the majority leader has decorated with ornaments. We call it decorating some of these spending bills like a Christmas tree. This is a simple continuing resolution to spend at the level we were spending yesterday. There is nothing more to it. There is money in here to help with disaster relief, but there is nothing more.

This shutdown is hurting people in North Carolina. This shutdown will hurt more people. We lost the season last year—the tourist season—in the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Great Smoky Mountain parks. That was a hurricane. That was an inland hurricane disaster. This year, it is the disastrous vote of the Democrats, not allowing us to continue to fund at the levels that we did yesterday.

We are not asking for anything more than that. We are asking for time to negotiate the premium tax credits, the ACA credits. I am on record saying we do need to find a good place for that. It is not about canceling them. But, folks, we can't even get to that if we can't agree to something as basic as this: Can we spend today what we did yesterday?

And I know that there are several Members on that side of the aisle that would like to move with a clean CR and get to that negotiation. I am just speaking on behalf of people in North Carolina, particularly in Western North Carolina, who are struggling mightily. I hope that we can get back to funding the government where we can plus-up the Disaster Relief Fund and that I won't have to come to the floor next week to see who is going to be against this unanimous consent for doing just that.

Let's do our job. Let's get back in business. Let's get the government funded. Let's help the people in North Carolina and in dozens of disaster-declared places all across this country.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, in July, when Republicans voted on the first spending bill for 2026, with cuts that would knock 15 million people off healthcare, I stood right here, and I asked my Republican colleagues in the Senate to grow a spine and stand up for Americans.

We are here today because the Republicans refused. Instead, Republicans bowed down to Trump, and, now, people all across this country will suffer.

Let's be clear: Republicans shut down the government because they would rather make healthcare more expensive than keep the government running. That is literally where we are right now.

Republicans control the House. Republicans control the Senate. Republicans control the White House. They are in power. It is their job to keep the government running for the American people, and they have failed. Donald Trump and the Republicans own this shutdown.

Don't take it from me. Listen to Donald J. Trump. In 2013, Trump himself said about a potential government shutdown:

If there is a shutdown, I think it would be a tremendously negative mark on the President of the United States. He's the one that has to get people together.

That is Donald J. Trump.

Now, at the same time, Trump said:

The President has to lead. You have to get people in a room, and you have to just make deals for the good of the country.

Donald Trump today should listen to Donald Trump from yesterday. Instead, Trump, Mr. "Art of the Deal," hasn't been able to cut a deal for the most basic government functions. Wow.

As Trump said, that is "a tremendously negative mark on the President of the United States."

Let me say it again. Democrats are fighting to roll back the Republican cuts that would take away healthcare from millions of people and raise health insurance premiums for millions more. That is it. That is what we are asking for. We have been asking for months to negotiate over this, and the Republicans have said no.

What are they doing right now? Are they making counteroffers? Are they saying, "We could go this far, not this far"? Nope. They are simply saying no.

So now, when a family is forced to the brink of bankruptcy from one bad medical diagnosis, Trump and the Republicans own it. Republicans insist that those healthcare cuts go through. When community hospitals have to shut down, Trump and Republicans own it. When kids with cancer can't get treatment because potentially life-saving research grants come to a screeching halt, Trump and Republicans own it. When insurance premiums skyrocket, Trump and Republicans own it.

Healthcare in America was already broken, but Trump and Republicans are making it much, much worse. They ripped away money that covers mamas

giving birth and neighbors who need wheelchairs and home health aides, and they handed it over to giant corporations and billionaire CEOs.

Democrats believe that no one should go bankrupt because they got sick and needed to see a doctor. So Democrats are here to say we are willing to fight for families who need healthcare. If Congress is going to pass a budget for the U.S. Government, then Democrats want saving healthcare for millions of Americans just to be part of that deal. Democrats have made that clear, and Republicans have refused even to talk about it.

Trump is already doing his best to shut down government or at least to shut down the parts of government that he doesn't like. Since day one, Trump has been trying to illegally wipe away millions of dollars for programs that Congress already agreed to fund. Trump and his buddy Elon Musk have fired tens of thousands of Federal workers. Trump is declaring American cities as "war zones" and sending troops to invade communities.

Trump is playing King time and time again, and Republicans in Congress are bowing down and letting him do it.

While all of that is going on, Republicans in Congress want Democrats just to sign a blank check and hand it over to Trump and let him continue to shut down whatever he doesn't like and to destroy our democracy. They want us to agree to a budget, knowing full well that Trump will then turn around tomorrow and delete this part or that part or whatever he doesn't like, just like he has already done.

Why would we play along with that farce? Why would we throw our support behind a deal that, any time, any day, Trump could just decide he doesn't feel like honoring it? And why would we do that without getting anything in return to help American families who are struggling with high costs, particularly the healthcare costs that Republicans are driving up? To do that would be a betrayal of the American people.

Senate Democrats are holding the line for families. Senate Republicans decided they would rather take orders from a wannabe King and shut down the entire government instead of helping out families who are getting squeezed on healthcare costs. It really is that simple.

Make no mistake, this Trump shutdown will hurt people. Because of Republicans, children across this country could lose access to childcare through Head Start. Because of Republicans, the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center will now stop enrolling patients in clinical trials that could be their only shot at treatment. Because of Republicans, air traffic controller hiring will stop, at a time when we are already dealing with a dangerous shortage. Because of Republicans, park rangers and thousands of other civil servants won't get paid. Because of Republicans, Donald Trump's corruption and chaos will continue.

So what is next? Well, Democrats want to keep the government open, and we want rollbacks of the Republican cuts that will cost 15 million Americans their healthcare coverage and drive up insurance costs for everyone else.

This isn't partisan. This is a righteous fight on behalf of everyone who needs healthcare, everyone who might need to go to the hospital, everyone who counts on a community clinic or a home health aide, whether they are a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent, or a "none of the above."

We are in this fight for Americans and for American healthcare, and it is only the Senate Republicans, led by Donald Trump, who stand in the way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, as I was sitting and listening, I feel like I am living in an alternative universe here sometimes. I am sure the American people feel this way.

Are people being hurt today? You are doggone right they are. They are being hurt because Senator SCHUMER and his following will not, quite simply, reopen the government so we can begin negotiations on some of the issues that are a part of this disagreement.

I am a senior member of the Appropriations Committee. One of my most important responsibilities is to make sure that the government stays open and working for the people that we represent. That is why I am so deeply disappointed to be standing here today in the midst of a totally avoidable government shutdown, all because the Senate Democrats refused to join us, as Republicans, in supporting a common-sense, short-term, nonpartisan continuing resolution.

We have seen Leader THUNE pick it up in his hands. It is very simple. Let's just keep the government open until November 21, discuss key issues, finish the appropriations process, and move on.

Let me be clear on what that short-term continuing resolution was designed to do. It is not a gimmick. It is not a gimmick. It is the same legislation that the Senate Democrat leader brought before this body 13 times and had it passed. It is not a partisan maneuver. It is a straightforward measure to keep critical services in operation, while giving Congress the time that we need to finish our work on appropriations through regular order, the way that we used to do it. Some of our Democratic colleagues have agreed with us in the last several votes.

So the bottom line: We don't have to be where we are, and we really shouldn't be here because this position is untenable. We have a path forward. It is so easy. It is so easy.

When people are watching this, they are hearing us try to blame one person or the other. The easy thing is to turn around and vote to reopen up the government, and we can begin to have

other conversations. We have a path forward. It requires the Democrats to come to their senses, quite frankly, and vote for this reasonable measure.

The Senate has already passed three appropriations bills, which is three more than we passed under their leadership last year. And we have five more that have received heavy bipartisan support in committee and are ready for a full Senate vote. That would be CJS, Defense, Interior, Labor, which I chair, and T-HUD, which is the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development bill.

That is progress. That is responsibility. That is what we are here for. That is us doing our job. But in order to complete the process, we need time. The continuing resolution is that bridge of time to keep the government open while we finish our work.

So, unfortunately, the Democrats have chosen a different path. They have chosen to shut down the government. That is where we are today. The government is shut down. They made a political calculation all based on politics, appeasing their far-left base instead of doing the right thing for the American people.

Unfortunately, hard-working families all across this country who rely on critical government services are the ones who are suffering. Government shutdowns have real consequences. In West Virginia, our businesses and our Federal workers face uncertainty about their pay. Families who rely on essential benefits are put in limbo. It is scary for people. Some people with children with disabilities or folks that rely on services daily are concerned about where this is going to lead. Small businesses are waiting on Federal permits or loans. They are going to have to wait longer.

And so many others are told, yet again, as we see, that the politics of Washington come before the people.

My State of West Virginia has the third largest number of Federal employees, and we are situated quite close to the District of Columbia.

So, to all of those public servants who are bearing the brunt of this nonsense, please know how much I value your contribution every day and that I will work tirelessly to get you back to work, to get you back to that certainty that you need.

You know, this shutdown is just so avoidable, and it is so unacceptable. But do you know what? As Republicans, we are not giving up because we never do. As Leader THUNE has indicated, we will continue bringing forward opportunities for the Democrats to join us in reopening the government. We will keep voting to do the right thing and giving them a chance to do the same.

The American people expect Congress to be responsible stewards of their tax dollars. I know that is what my constituents in my home State of West Virginia want me to do. They expect us to keep the government functioning. I

can't even believe I am having to say this because it is just such a given: They want the government open while we debate our differences. That is what we are supposed to be doing. We are supposed to be debating, not shutting down the government, and that is what the Republican CR would have allowed us to do.

So I urge my colleagues across the aisle to quit playing the political games, to end the shutdown, and join us in funding the government. Let's finish our work on the appropriations process, and let's return to the regular order process that we had begun at the beginning of the summer because it brings transparency, accountability, and bipartisanship back to the appropriations process. We have it in committee. We need to have it on this floor. That is what West Virginians deserve. That is what the American people deserve. It is what they expect, quite frankly. That is what they expect every day.

These young people on the floor are getting to hear a debate. I am sure it is one that they will remember, and I am sure they are thinking to themselves: It is a simple thing. Reopen the government. Reopen the government. Why was it closed in the first place? For a political stunt that is not working. They are boxed in.

Let's just say: OK. Let's open. Let's begin our discussions, and let's solve the problems that we have in front of us.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAS VEGAS MASS SHOOTING

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I rise today to mark the eighth anniversary of the worst mass shooting in modern American history.

Today, as I give this speech, far too many Americans across the country are reeling from the pain of shootings in their own communities. This country is seeing a horrifying increase in mass violence that doesn't just destroy the lives of the victims; it tears apart families; it leaves loved ones with an unfillable hole in their hearts; and it brings communities to the breaking point. I have seen it firsthand.

Eight years ago today, a man gunned down 58 people at the Route 91 Harvest Music Festival in Las Vegas, NV. More than 800 people were wounded in that chaos, and 2 people later succumbed to their injuries. That day and those that followed were some of the toughest for all of us. For me, personally, my niece was attending that festival, and I remember the overwhelming relief that I felt to learn that she was safe and OK.

I also remember spending time at the reunification center with the families of the missing festival attendees, praying with those families, crying with those families, watching them as they were hoping and praying that their loved ones would return to them. Some were lucky but many were not.

Our city—our entire State of Nevada—felt lost, but I will tell you, out of this horror came something miraculous. In the aftermath of 1 October, Nevadans came together to support each other. People came out in droves to give blood. There were lines around the block. They donated money, food, clothing, and they lent a helping hand to those who had lost so much.

I will tell you that businesses, community organizations, and law enforcement did what they could to ease the burdens of the families who had been impacted, and I worked across the aisle with my colleague the Republican Senator, at the time, Dean Heller, to get financial relief for the victims. Our city united in the face of this tragedy, and we came out of it Vegas Strong. I am forever touched by those incredible efforts to shine a light in the darkness.

But even all that good cannot erase the scars left behind by this massacre. Its victims were innocent people who went to a music festival to enjoy themselves. It didn't matter what they did for work or what they believed or whom they loved. They were actually gunned down indiscriminately. In the 8 years since that tragedy that shook my State to its core, we have, sadly, seen more violence erupting across the country. We have seen it in places of worship, in schools, and in grocery stores.

As Americans, as Members of Congress, we have to continue speaking out against it. Violence is never the answer. We cannot survive in a country where this is the norm. We have to do better in our rhetoric and our actions. For me, that means coming together to work on commonsense solutions, like finally banning bump stocks, passing comprehensive background checks to make sure that criminals can't exploit loopholes to buy deadly weapons, and delivering more support for, yes, mental health in this country.

It also means always remembering the victims of the Route 91 Harvest Festival massacre. Grieving the lives that they never got to live and the families they never got to come home to or to create serves as a stark reminder of the horrors violence like this can cause. We owe it to them and to their loved ones to keep working together to end it.

In the aftermath of this tragedy, Las Vegas has rebuilt. We have risen from the ashes stronger than ever. We will never forget the trauma inflicted on us that day. That pain must fuel us to work together toward a better future for our children, for our families, and for our country.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HONORING SERGEANT SCOTT HEIMANN

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, it has been a sad day—a set of sad days—in my hometown of Kansas. I rise today to mourn the loss and honor the sacrifice of Hays Police Officer Sergeant Scott Heimann, who was shot and killed in the line of duty while responding to a domestic violence call. He passed away in the early morning hours of Sunday, September 28.

My hometown of Hays, with a population of about 21,000, is a tight-knit community, where people look out for their neighbors; they care for those in need; and they protect the vulnerable. Sergeant Heimann embodied the best of smalltown Kansas values in living a life of integrity and devotion and courage despite the dangers he faced each and every day.

He, too, from a young age, called Hays his home. He grew up there, and he graduated from Thomas More Prep-Marian High School, which is our hometown Catholic school. He attended the University of Kansas before returning home to the place he was raised. Sergeant Heimann first began his service with the Hays Police Department in 2016, and after 9 years with the department, his watch ended way too soon. He was an Eagle Scout and a member of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church. He was a son, a father, a husband. He was devoted to his wife, Beth, and was a loving dad to his children Patrick and Victoria.

My prayers—our prayers—are with his family and his parents Bill and Teresa Heimann.

It is such a difficult time. Every day, law enforcement officers risk their safety, putting their lives on the line to protect and serve both their neighbors and strangers. Kansas is a home to so many brave men and women who have answered the call to serve, and too many have given their lives to fulfill this mission.

In small towns across Kansas, law enforcement officers, as they are in Hays, are well-known in their communities, and they are well-loved by their communities. We see them in the grocery stores, at the football games on Friday nights, and in church on Sundays. They are members of our communities, and they are familiar faces.

This courageous young man died with honor while protecting his community and the people he had sworn to serve. In Hays and across Kansas, the sacrifice he made will not be forgotten, and we resolve to forever honor his service to the community he loved.

I ask the U.S. Senate to join me and my family and my hometown in expressing our sympathy and gratitude—our respect—for this officer, for a life served in service to others, and to a community that mourns his loss.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, preventing people from losing their

healthcare should not be a partisan issue because outside of the four corners of this Capitol, it should not matter if you are a Democrat or a Republican or an Independent—we should all not want people to have spikes in their health insurance costs.

In a matter of days, tens of millions of people all across the country are going to get letters in the mail, saying: Your monthly premium, starting January 1, is going to be more than double what you pay now—more than double.

That is not my speculating. That is not my allegation. That is not a political talking point that was cooked up in some Democratic lab. That is what the Kaiser Family Foundation analysis shows, that premiums will increase on average by 114 percent per person—not 14 percent; 114 percent.

That is just the average. Some people's rates will be changed based on their income level. Say you make \$35,000 a year. You are now going to be paying almost \$1,600 more per year for coverage. And if you are a family of four making 75 grand, you are going to be paying more than 3,000 extra dollars.

I just encourage everybody who is watching—all of my colleagues, all of the staff, all of the members of the media—to talk to anyone in your hometown. Most people just don't have that kind of money lying around. If you are a family living paycheck to paycheck, if you are a young couple saving up to buy a home, if you are a small business owner already cutting back on costs because everything is more expensive now, what are you supposed to do?

This is not a crisis the Democrats have cooked up to score political points. The reason for the urgency is that October 1 is the day that people are going to get letters from their insurance carriers telling them that this is happening. Open enrollment begins in exactly a month.

People are scared about how they are going to pay for their healthcare or if they are going to have it at all. There are a lot of people who just can't absorb this extra cost. It is not like you can buy a little less of something. When you are at the grocery store—for instance, vegetables are now 39 percent more expensive. Well, you still have some money in your pocket. You are going to buy fewer vegetables and more of the cheap stuff, which is why, by the way, Hamburger Helper purchases have spiked.

So people are making these adjustments to the fact that everything has gotten more expensive, but with health insurance, you can't turn the dial like that. You can't buy a little less health insurance. You either can absorb the cost or you cannot, and if you cannot, you will go without health insurance.

Here is the thing that people need to understand: This directly impacts about 24 million people, OK? That is enough for us to, like, pay enough attention and try to come up with a bipartisan solution. But the truth is that

we already know what happens when people lose their health insurance, right? They end up getting sicker and sicker, and at some point, they present themselves to emergency rooms.

Everybody understands—kind of intuitively, but there is plenty of data to back this up—that when you present yourself at an emergency room when you are already supersick, you require a bunch of very expensive interventions, and that cost is distributed among the rest of us who still have insurance.

So it is not just the 24 million Americans who are going to pay more for health insurance and some number of millions of those Americans who are just not going to have insurance at all, it is also a mathematical certainty that the increased stupidity of the system, the increased extent to which the system now makes even less sense than it does already—we are all going to eat the cost, whether you are on the so-called exchange or not.

Look, Republicans are in charge of Washington. We lost the election. Elections—consequences. I get it. When we had the trifecta, we did a bunch of things to reduce the price of prescription medicine, to build infrastructure, to fix the post office, to do the Respect for Marriage Act, to pass the Inflation Reduction Act. We did a bunch of stuff, and Republicans are doing a bunch of stuff, but we are trying to hand our Republican colleagues a lifeline because prices are going to spike everywhere.

I said this yesterday, and I mean this: If we were a little more cynical, we might just say "This is your problem; why don't you guys just stew in it?" because this is, frankly, electorally, a very powerful issue. People are going to be really pissed when they get these letters in the mail. They really are. So the supercynical, election-oriented thing for us to do would be simply to say "Good luck with all that."

But maybe it is the strength of the Democratic caucus, maybe it is the weakness of the Democratic caucus, but we just care too much about people to let that happen. So we are simply asking, in the context of this shutdown, to jump-start a negotiation about how to prevent a 114-percent increase in the cost of healthcare for 24 million Americans.

Look, the cost of electricity is not just up; it is double the inflation rate. The cost of groceries is spiking. The cost of raw materials to build a house—spiking. The cost of basically anything you want to buy at a Walmart or a Costco or a Target or a Safeway or a Food Lion or wherever you go is spiking. All of that is a consequence of both inflation and tariffs. But this thing is a public policy. This is intentional to spike these rates.

We are saying: Are you guys sure you want to do this?

We are about to find out whether they are sure that they want to impose a doubling of insurance costs on 24 million Americans.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1377

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, yesterday, I came to the floor to warn that a critical cyber security protection that has been in place for a decade was set to run out and expire at the end of the fiscal year. I urged my colleagues to pass a bipartisan, clean, 10-year extension to keep these important national security protections in place.

Unfortunately, one of my colleagues—just one of my colleagues—objected, and as of midnight, they have now expired. As a result, we are without this critical line of defense. Our economy, our infrastructure, and our government are exposed.

It is now going to be a more challenging effort to protect businesses and critical infrastructure against cyber attacks at a time, Mr. President, when you know that our adversaries' attacks continue to grow more aggressive and more sophisticated.

This law was passed with strong bipartisan support, and the support remains strong in both Chambers. Even the Trump administration agrees. The White House and the Department of Homeland Security support a 10-year extension and want to see this bill passed.

For months, my colleagues and I have heard from a broad coalition of industry leaders who need the long-term certainty that a 10-year reauthorization provides so we can protect our systems and they can protect their systems and customers. That is why Senator ROUNDS and I introduced a clean, bipartisan, 10-year extension all the way back in April.

Every hour—every hour—we delay is an open invitation to cyber criminals and hostile actors to attack our economy and our critical infrastructure.

I would urge my colleagues to put our national and economic security first and pass this clean, long-term extension.

Mr. President, as if in legislative session and notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 1377 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, as you know, the CISA reauthorization is also included in the clean CR that we are also trying to be able to pass, this continuing resolution.

On behalf of Chairman PAUL, he has asked me to be able to come and object, so I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, the CR has not passed. We are now vulnerable—right now. As my colleague from Oklahoma knows, we are now vulnerable.

I do not know when that continuing resolution will pass. Every day that goes by, we are susceptible to a cyber attack. Who is going to answer for that when it occurs because we did not act here?

We also know that even if the CR were to pass, it is a couple of months. We need to have long-term certainty. That is what we have been hearing from all of the folks in the cyber security industry. That is why the Trump administration is saying we need to pass a 10-year extension, and we need to do it now. It is why Members in the House, both Democrats and Republicans—there is overwhelming support there. There is overwhelming support in this Chamber right now. I assume that if we had a vote today, it would be overwhelmingly passed.

Why do we risk the security of our country from cyber attacks? Why don't we pass commonsense legislation? That is what this Senate should do.

I know we have issues that we debate all the time, but when there is overwhelming support and the threats to our country are imminent, we should act. And when we don't act, we fail the American people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

VOTE ON CAO NOMINATION

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Cao nomination?

Mr. LANKFORD. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 539 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Banks	Cruz	Justice
Barrasso	Curtis	Kennedy
Blackburn	Daines	Lankford
Boozman	Ernst	Lee
Britt	Fischer	Lummis
Budd	Graham	Marshall
Capito	Grassley	McConnell
Cassidy	Hagerty	McCormick
Collins	Hawley	Moody
Cornyn	Hoeven	Moran
Cotton	Husted	Moreno
Cramer	Hyde-Smith	Mullin
Crapo	Johnson	Paul

Ricketts	Scott (SC)	Tuberville	Cornyn	Hyde-Smith	Paul
Risch	Sheehy	Wicker	Cotton	Johnson	Ricketts
Rounds	Sullivan	Young	Cramer	Justice	Risch
Schmitt	Thune		Crapo	Kennedy	Rounds
Scott (FL)	Tillis		Cruz	Lankford	Schmitt

NAYS—45

Alsobrooks	Hickenlooper	Peters	Daines	Lummis	Paul
Baldwin	Hirono	Reed	Ernst	Marshall	Ricketts
Bennet	Kaine	Rosen	Fischer	Sheehy	Schmitt
Blumenthal	Kelly	Sanders	Graham	McCormick	Scott (SC)
Blunt Rochester	Kim	Schiff	Grassley	Moody	Scott (FL)
Booker	King	Shah	Hagerty	Moran	Young
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Slotkin	Hawley	Moreno	Tuberville
Coons	Luján	Smith	Hoeven	Mullin	Wicker
Cortez Masto	Markey	Van Hollen	Husted	Murkowski	Young
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner			
Durbin	Murkowski	Warnock			
Fetterman	Murphy	Warren			
Gallego	Murray	Welch			
Hassan	Ossoff	Whitehouse			
Heinrich	Padilla	Wyden			

NOT VOTING—3

Gillibrand	Schatz	Schumer
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BANKS). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Executive Calendar No. 2, S. Res. 412, an executive resolution authorizing the en bloc consideration in Executive Session of certain nominations on the Executive Calendar.

John Thune, Bernie Moreno, Mike Crapo, Chuck Grassley, Ashley Moody, Markwayne Mullin, John Barrasso, Pete Ricketts, Ted Budd, Bill Hagerty, John R. Curtis, David McCormick, Tim Scott of South Carolina, John Cornyn, Steve Daines, Eric Schmitt, Jon A. Husted.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on Executive Calendar No. 2, S. Res. 412, an executive resolution authorizing the en bloc consideration in executive session of certain nominations on the Executive Calendar, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 53, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 540 Ex.]

YEAS—53

Banks	Boozman	Capito
Barrasso	Blackburn	Cassidy
Blackburn	Britt	Collins
Boozman	Budd	
Britt		
Budd		
Capito		
Cassidy		
Collins		
Cornyn		
Cotton		
Cramer		
Crapo		

Ricketts	Scott (SC)	Tuberville	Cornyn	Hyde-Smith	Paul
Risch	Sheehy	Wicker	Cotton	Johnson	Ricketts
Rounds	Sullivan	Young	Cramer	Justice	Risch
Schmitt	Thune		Crapo	Kennedy	Rounds
Scott (FL)	Tillis		Cruz	Lankford	Schmitt

NAYS—46

Alsobrooks	Hickenlooper	Peters	Daines	Lummis	Paul
Baldwin	Hirono	Reed	Ernst	Marshall	Ricketts
Bennet	Kaine	Rosen	Fischer	Sheehy	Schmitt
Blumenthal	Kelly	Sanders	Graham	McCormick	Scott (SC)
Blunt Rochester	Kim	Schiff	Grassley	Moody	Scott (FL)
Booker	King	Shah	Hagerty	Moran	Young
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Slotkin	Hawley	Moreno	Tuberville
Coons	Luján	Smith	Hoeven	Mullin	Wicker
Cortez Masto	Markey	Van Hollen	Husted	Murkowski	Young
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner			
Durbin	Murkowski	Warnock			
Fetterman	Murphy	Warren			
Gallego	Murray	Welch			
Hassan	Ossoff	Whitehouse			
Heinrich	Padilla	Wyden			

NOT VOTING—1

Schumer

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 53, the nays are 46.

The motion was agreed to.

EN BLOC NOMINATIONS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

An executive resolution (S. Res. 412) authorizing the en bloc consideration in Executive Session of certain nominations on the Executive Calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. KAINA. Mr. President, I rise to talk about the reality of the shutdown that we are in and the efforts underway to find a path out, which I am optimistic we can, particularly after discussions among so many colleagues of both parties today on the floor of the Senate.

This is the third time during my nearly 13 years in the Senate that I have been involved in a shutdown. The first occurred in the fall of 2013. I had been in the Senate for less than a year. Senator CRUZ sort of forced us into a shutdown mode over the Affordable Care Act. Interestingly enough, many years later, that Affordable Care Act is still central to this discussion. In late 2018 and 2019, President Trump forced us into a shutdown of part of the government—the part of government dealing with the Department of Justice and other justice-related Agencies—over border wall funding.

The first shutdown lasted for about 2 weeks. The second shutdown—again, of part of government, not all of government—lasted for about a month. And they are horrible. The consequences for those affected, whether they be Federal workers or the citizens who need services, are horrible.

No one relishes that in this body, and I am completely confident that all 100 Senators feel the same way in that this is not a good thing and that there needs to be a path forward. In Virginia, we feel it pretty strongly. We have the second-most Federal employees of any State in the country, and we have an awful lot of Federal contractors whose livelihoods are affected as well.

We have also seen in the first nearly 9 months of this calendar year other actions taken, whether it is the cancellation of research grants or the backtracking on economic development proposals or the withdrawal of \$400 million from the Virginia Department of Health that was critical to our agency's ability to do contact tracing and help stop the spread of infectious disease.

So we have seen since the beginning of January a whole series of actions that have already affected Virginians pretty significantly. We had an unemployment rate that was low by national standards but went up every month for 6, 7 months in a row, largely because of these Federal layoffs. As we reach this moment, it is not a clean break or something new from what was seen earlier in the year; it is sort of a continuation of something that has been a pretty painful chapter in Virginia.

So what are we hoping for or, rather, maybe, not to put words in anybody's mouth, what am I hoping for out of this?

The House prepared a short-term continuing resolution under instructions from the President: Do not deal with Democrats. And the House, with a simple Republican majority, was able to do that and pass a bill that then came to the Senate.

Once we saw that instruction—do not deal with Democrats—Senate Democrats, under the leadership of Senator MURRAY, the lead Democratic appropriator, said: Well, let's prepare an alternative, not a nonnegotiable demand but an alternative.

We put that alternative on the table on September 18. We didn't wait until the 29th of September or the 30th. We felt like, to be fair to the public, to be fair to our colleagues, let's put an alternative on the table with enough time for us to kick the tires on it and have a negotiation before the deadline that we reached at midnight last night.

What is the Democratic alternative compared to the Republican alternative? Actually, much of it is the same. But I would say the two elements in the Democratic alternative that are different are two: One, protecting people's healthcare; and, second, protecting the simple notion that everybody understands that a deal is a deal.

Let me explain both of these.

On the healthcare side, the reconciliation bill that was passed in June, together with some other actions of the administration—particularly unilateral actions of Secretary Kennedy and

the President in withdrawing healthcare funds from Virginia and unilateral actions thrusting uncertainty into areas like vaccines—they have created a huge healthcare challenge for Virginians and for Americans.

Again, not to speak for anybody other than Virginians, but I did a lot of travel around the State in April as some of these proposals were on the table. I did a lot of travel in July, a lot of travel in August, and I just did a good bit of travel last week around Virginia. And on the healthcare side, here is what my constituents are saying to me about what is now happening:

The effect of the reconciliation bill in Virginia is estimated to cause about 330,000 Virginians to lose their health insurance. Our population is about 8.8 million; 330,000 people losing health insurance is not a small number. This is a big—big—deal. That number of people who lose their health insurance is essentially what I call the top layer of a five-layer cake of consequences to these healthcare bills. That is consequence one, people lose insurance.

Consequence two is people who have insurance see their premiums go up dramatically. Premium notices are coming out from insurance companies in Virginia, and they are suggesting that premiums this year in Virginia will go up by at least 20 percent.

Why does that happen? There are two reasons: The reconciliation bill that was passed by the Republicans in June phased out premium support for low- and middle-income people buying health insurance on the exchanges. The Republican bill extended tax cuts for the wealthiest but phased out premium support for low- and middle-income people buying health insurance. So that causes premiums to go up.

The second thing that causes premiums to go up is when you increase the number of people with no insurance, they go to the emergency room, and they are not able to pay. So providers provide treatment, but then they have to charge that off to somebody, and it tends to get charged off to people who have health insurance.

So the combined effect of ACA premium support going away and a whole lot of free care that has to be paid for by somebody causes insurance rates to increase. This is happening in Virginia, and it is happening around the country.

That is the second layer of the five-layer cake of consequences of what happens when the reconciliation bill passes.

The third layer is this, and this is a really, really troubling one: Providers close down. Hospitals and clinics close down when Medicaid is affected; particularly hospitals, for whom Medicaid is a huge portion of the revenue stream coming into the hospital, find that they can't make it work.

A national organization that looks at hospital fiscal soundness has put about 300 hospitals in the United States on a list of hospitals that are in danger be-

cause of the Medicaid cuts. Six of those hospitals are in Virginia, and they are all in rural Virginia. Rural Virginia tends to be a little bit older than the rest of Virginia and tends to have a little bit higher Medicaid population than the rest of Virginia. So the hospitals that are in danger by the reconciliation bill are rural hospitals.

It is not just hospitals that are on the list of potential closure. Within the last month, a prominent health provider in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia—a rural part of our State—announced that they were closing three primary care clinics in small Virginia communities because of the reconciliation bill. The cuts made to Medicaid in the reconciliation bill made them realize that they could no longer keep these clinics open.

So the third consequence of this reconciliation bill is, we have got people losing insurance; we have got premiums going up; and now we have providers closing.

The fourth consequence is pretty obvious: When providers close, people get fired, so people lose their jobs. Front-line healthcare workers who are doing good work in the communities and having people rely on them, they lose their jobs. That is consequence four.

Then, consequence five is one that I know well as a former mayor and Governor. I kind of call it the loss of your future. It is one thing to lose your health insurance; it is one thing to pay more; it is one thing to lose your provider; it is one thing to lose your job, but if you are a mayor or a chairman of a county board of supervisors or a Governor, for that matter, and you are trying to encourage economic development, a new business to move into a part of the State or a business that is in a part of the State to expand, a question you are going to get asked is: Tell me about the healthcare network in this community. I may be moving executives here. I may be trying to hire people here.

And if you have to look them in the eye and say: We used to have a hospital, but we don't now or we had primary clinics that have closed down and now you have to drive farther to get primary medical care, I can tell you, I have been in economic development discussions with businesses over the course of my 31 years in public life and seen the lights just go out in their eyes: You know, you have just told me something that has convinced me I may not know where I am going, but I know where I am not going.

One the quickest things you can do to turn that light off is to make a prospect worried about whether the employees and executives and their families will have access to good healthcare.

So on the healthcare piece of this, what Democrats are asking for by way of an alternative—not a nonnegotiable but by way of an alternative—is let's go into the changes that were made in the reconciliation bill and fix them.

I have Republican colleagues who say: We don't want to completely reverse them because there are some things about the ACA premium tax subsidy we don't like. We would like to design them differently. We would like to negotiate.

I am completely open to that, but I do think we ought to try to fix them.

I am heartened that a number of Republican colleagues have said: You are right. We should do that.

I have said to my Republican colleagues: Coming up with a fix, even if both sides want a fix, I know this is not going to be a snap decision. There are details. You have to dot the i's. You have to cross the t's. You have to analyze what the downstream consequences of any changes in the fix are. I know that that is a substantive discussion where the details matter. I am not expecting that we would all reach an agreement immediately.

So on the first point, where the Democratic proposal is different than the Republican proposal, I fully expect that this would be a negotiation that would take some time. We needn't wait to open the government until that negotiation is completely done. We should commit to the negotiation and get in the middle of it and sit around the table and figure it out. But we needn't wait, in my view—again, this is me, not the caucus, not anybody else. This is me. We needn't solve the entire problem in order to reach a position where we fund the government and reopen it. We can do it over the course of a time period that I think is being discussed in this body.

The second feature of the Democratic proposal that is important to reach an accord on, I believe, is a simple notion that a deal is a deal. A deal is a deal. If we reach a funding agreement—and some have characterized the Republican proposal as a clean CR, but I would actually say it is not a clean CR unless you are guaranteed that the parties will honor it.

Whatever we do—if we do something for 30 days or if we do something for 45 days—I think it is only fair to ask that a deal be a deal; that Congress fully live up to it but the White House fully live up to it as well.

We have seen, throughout this year already, congressional deals undone by the President unilaterally: tens of thousands of people fired, economic development projects that had been announced and celebrated canceled, funds to public health Agencies taken back. Again and again and again, we have seen, in Virginia, unilateral actions taken by the President that, in our view, undo what Congress and the White House had agreed to in previous budget resolutions. So it is not unreasonable for us to say: Well, if we are going to do a short-term CR to try to find the path for a full-year appropriations bill, we would just want an agreement during that 30 or 45 days—whatever it is—that a deal is a deal; that we not write it, agree to it, celebrate re-

opening the government, and then have President Trump on day two start to fire a whole lot of people or claw back more money from the Virginia Department of Health or cancel more economic development projects in Virginia. Let's just say a deal is a deal. Congress will live by our piece of it, and the White House would live by its piece of it.

Virginians get this. I was traveling around this weekend, and Virginians do not want the government to be closed. They want it open. They said to me: Keep the government open.

I said: We want to get that deal just like you do. We want to get a deal.

But if I said to Virginians: And on that deal, Congress should live up to it, right?

Right.

And on that deal, the President should live up to it, right?

Right.

People get that a deal is a deal. It is not a complicated theory of government or an argument about democracy; it is just basic fairness that when parties reach an agreement and shake hands, that both parties have to honor it.

So what I am looking for very significantly in these discussions is an agreement from the White House that whatever the short-term period is, they will not take punitive actions against my State, against the State of Indiana, against the city of New York, or against anyone, or against any particular program that is part of a congressional appropriations bill that is already in process; that they will not selectively pick out programs to attack or individuals to fire during the course of that agreement.

I think we have to have that longer discussion about an alternate yearlong appropriations bill, about a deal is a deal, but all I am looking for here and all Virginians are looking for here is that we would reach that agreement during the pendency of some short-term CR as we try to negotiate a full-year agreement.

We can do this. We can do this. We ought to do it.

For a reason of fiscal conservatism, during the last shutdown in 2018–2019, I was able to sort of strategically put a bill on the floor on a day much like today, a Thursday during the shutdown, and get colleagues to unanimously agree with the principle that in the event of any shutdown, Federal employees would get backpay.

It used to be, in the old days, if there was a shutdown, you had to fight about backpay after, but now there is a backpay guarantee. When there is a shutdown, people are guaranteed backpay. So that makes shutdowns really foolish, like, you are going to shut down; you are going to lock people out of their office; you are going to tell them they can't do the work; and then you are going to write them a paycheck anyway.

The fiscally conservative answer, when there is a backpay guarantee, is

to end this quickly so people can go back in their office and serve their fellow Americans.

The fact that we, I believe, have narrowed the point of division down to can we find a path forward to negotiate healthcare fixes, even if we don't agree on all the details right now, and can we reach an agreement that a deal is a deal, which is a reasonable request—I believe those are the two issues that are on the table. And they are issues that we are eminently capable of solving and solving very soon. And I am going to do everything I can with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to make sure we do.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

HEALTHCARE

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I believe every Senator knows and agrees that our constituents are concerned about the cost of healthcare. Just this morning, I heard some of my Republican colleagues also talking about healthcare affordability. The difference is, I think our Democratic side of the aisle wants to do something about it now. We want to fix one of the biggest health insurance spikes that we are going to see locked-in in 2026 in just a few weeks. We want to do everything we can to stop that.

We know that when you kick Americans off of their health insurance, it hurts all Americans. Democrats know that a vague promise to fix it in the future doesn't help us solve the problems of healthcare delivery today. And we know that the problem is worse than we even imagined just a few weeks ago.

Yesterday, the Kaiser Family Foundation released a new report on how expensive the premiums which the ACA expiration—the Affordable Care Act expiration of those premiums—may cost American families. The answer is, it is going to hurt a lot. The new report found that out-of-pocket premiums for a single person would more than double on average next year if the enhanced premium tax credits expire.

That is, we have had insurance commissioners and various offices across various States trying to make guesses about this, but increasing from \$880 a year to \$1,900 a year in 2026 just shows you how dramatic that situation could be for American families. These are families who will have to shoulder these unnecessary increases. They will be on top of all the other inflationary issues that they are dealing with now, issues like household goods, gas prices, electricity, housing, groceries, and now we want to throw at them healthcare costs.

We are very clear on our side of the aisle: We want the maximum amount of people to get health insurance, drive down uncompensated care, drive down everybody's cost, and deliver good healthcare for our citizens. Since the passage of the Affordable Care Act, the uninsured rate was cut in half from almost 16 percent—roughly 15.7 percent

in 2010—down to an alltime low of 7.7 percent in 2023. So the result is not just healthy Americans having their cost decreased by taking uncompensated care out of the system. It is remarkable progress towards getting everyone covered and having net savings for everybody.

We know that the current majority on the other side of the aisle, they are no fan of the Affordable Care Act. They are no fan even of universal coverage. If you can imagine, we are not even being prescriptive. We just say, “We want to see universal coverage.” We want everybody to have health insurance. Not only do they not agree with that, they have tried to repeal or weaken the Affordable Care Act 50 times in the past decade—50 times they have gone after the Affordable Care Act, and they have failed.

One time, thanks to the courage of the late Senator John McCain and two of my other colleagues on the other side of the aisle, the last significant threat to our healthcare system was defeated in 2017. Maybe some people here still working on the floor remember that dramatic moment.

But now, with the passage of this budget reconciliation act in July, Republicans are trying to reverse the progress of the Affordable Care Act. Congratulations, you are having an effect. You are taking that act and healthcare out of the system. You may be trying to do it in a sneak attack. You may be trying to do it in a vague way, but we are on to the fact that you are trying to get rid of the Affordable Care Act, and you are trying to get rid of the ability for Americans to get affordable insurance coverage.

So what now? What are we going to do to prevent rural hospitals from closing? Everyone knows that \$50 billion in your slush fund that was part of the reconciliation bill is not enough to save rural hospitals, even if he uses it, even if the President would use it just on so-called red States, it is not enough. And now, you are going to say that 15 million Americans who no longer have the Affordable Care Act marketplace plans or the Medicaid coverage that was stripped out of the healthcare system, we are not going to have that.

So you have no ideas on how you are going to help keep people insured or keep these hospitals operating. So, instead of meaningful negotiations, my colleagues have decided they don't want to tell us what their ideas are to deal with the current crisis. It is not a next year problem; it is a today problem. So instead of using jurisdictional powers like the Finance Committee—they could have come up with a solution. They could have come up with a meeting today. Instead, they were having a hearing on cryptocurrency.

If you thought this issue was so important, why didn't you have a hearing today on how to make health insurance more affordable for the American people? Even if you didn't want to address

this particular idea, how is it that you want to have a meeting on cryptocurrency or give tax breaks to oil companies, but you don't want to deal with the health insurance problems of the American people? So instead of working with their counterparts or the House of Representatives—oh, wait, the House of Representatives, they are not even here, and yet we are in this situation.

So who are you neglecting? You are neglecting your constituents. You are neglecting 5 million Americans, including 80,000 Washingtonians, who are not going to be able to have affordable insurance by the end of this year. They will have to make a decision in November and December, but we already know from projections, 80,000 of them will make a decision because they just simply can't afford it.

Back to those numbers that were on the chart earlier: When you look at households and incomes, somebody might say, “Oh, well, somebody might be able to afford \$840.” Well, not if you are a family of four on \$40,000. You are not going to afford that if you are on \$75,000 of income, and now, you are going to pay \$3,368 more—or even \$90,000 of income. I got news for people: Seattle is one of the most expensive places in the country to live, and coming up with now, all of a sudden, \$3,000 more for health insurance that you didn't think you were going to have to pay? People are going to make the wrong decisions.

God forbid that these people get sick or have a condition that is really life-threatening, and who is going to be responsible for taking this out of the system because people don't want to come up with a solution today? It is not that hard. We can extend these tax credits. We can have affordable health insurance in the market. We can talk as an organization of people who—by the way, Finance Committee is charged with looking at this issue and discussing it. That is why we fought so hard in the Affordable Care Act for something called the Basic Health Program, which covered people under the 200 percent of the Federal poverty line and provided more important health insurance.

But right now, we need to act. We need to say to families who are going to be threatened by this that we can work together and we have a plan. And our plan is going to be able to be implemented immediately.

What is more important than having millions of Americans lose their health insurance? And then basically say, “We don't really care about this, when we already are teetering on so much inflation, so many affordability issues, so much of people struggling.” And if people think we really recovered from a post-Covid era, we haven't. People are still struggling with the aftermath and the effects of that, and now, we are basically saying we are going to add to your insurance.

So, as I did a few days ago here on the Senate floor, I came and talked

about how States are now putting these numbers out, a lot of States. When I found this out this summer, I did many events across the State of Washington trying to bring awareness to the public about this, and I found out that some States were really trying to hide the ball—like they literally didn't want to tell people these costs were going up. Maybe they thought they were going to wait until after the enrollment period opened, when there was nothing you can do much past that. But these States are seeing astronomical costs for health insurance—the State of Texas, a 39-percent increase; Arizona, a 48.95-percent increase.

So, somehow, these numbers were not available to the broader public, and we published a report last week making sure that the biggest insurers in that State—and we were projecting what the State's insurance commissioner or other groups and organizations were saying that this increase is. And now, the Kaiser Foundation is putting an even brighter light on what those numbers are, saying that probably that most people will just see an actual doubling of their premiums.

So how can it be okay to—and even if you thought, “Well, okay, 5 million Americans, they are just going to be short changed. No problem.” It is not that. It is when those people don't have health insurance, it affects the whole system. It takes that progress we made in the uninsured rate, driving it down from 16 or so—15 percent to 16 percent, down to 7 percent, and it means that you are not raising the cost on the entire system by seeing a bunch of people with uncompensated care.

We did this to cover citizens because it was the smart thing to do, and my colleagues should just come to the table and say, “We agree. We need to fix this now. We agree that an open enrollment period that starts as early as October 15 in one or two States and starts for everybody November 1 is on us now. And if we don't send the right signal, this is the catastrophe that is going to happen for people, and that we really do care about affordable health insurance.”

At a time when we already have price increases in, as I said, a lot of household items, now is not the time to put healthcare on the list and crush families with this extra burden. Let's sit down and get this done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, well, I am coming to the floor today as we find ourselves in the middle of the Schumer shutdown, and this is a time where, indeed, instead of being in the Schumer shutdown and having these shenanigans taking place, we should be in the middle of working hard for the American people. If we were not in this shutdown and our attention focused on that, we could be working our way

through the NDAA, our National Defense Authorization Act, and we could be passing our appropriations bills through regular order.

But what we know is this is something that the minority leader has been working on for weeks. It is what he wanted. He thinks that it is going to benefit the Democratic Members of this Chamber.

I just really think he is sorely mistaken on this because the measure—the continuing resolution in front of us—is a clean CR, which means it is funding that is going to continue at levels where they were, for a period of about 7 weeks, while we finish exercising our due diligence and passing the appropriations bills.

Now, this is something that—this shutdown didn't have to happen, but as I said, it is something that appears to have been in the works and something that was really desired by those on the left.

We have heard, of course, that the minority leader is not wanting to face opposition from the left there in New York, and because of that, of course, what we are seeing is that our Nation's business has come to a halt.

Last night and then again today, all but three of the Members of the Democratic conference voted against a stopgap funding measure, our clean CR, that would have kept this government running through November 21. Keeping the spending at current levels, this measure would have given us the time we need to be working on these appropriations bills. It would have kept us moving forward and kept us from wasting time.

One of the things I think is so important is that shutdowns are expensive, and this is something that ends up costing us money every time we do it. And, of course, we have quite a bit of national debt.

Now, when we talk about completing our appropriations bills and setting our spending limits for the year and fulfilling that budget document, that portion—we have our budget document. Then we move to our appropriations bills.

Well, Senator COLLINS of Maine, who has led the Appropriations Committee, has done an outstanding job working with Republicans and Democrats on that committee, building out this appropriations process, making certain that bills moved out of the Appropriations Committee and that they are making their way to the floor.

One of the things that is so interesting is that 8 of the 12 bills that came out of the Appropriations Committee came out with broad bipartisan support. So if you have got measures that are coming out with broad bipartisan support, why would you not move them to the floor? Why would you not want to finish out this appropriations process?

And, of course, it should have been finished by September 30. It was not finished by then. So we are hopeful

that by November 21, this process can be complete and that we will be moving from a Biden budget to a Trump and Republican budget, which, by the way, is what the American people voted for when they gave a mandate to President Donald Trump on November 5.

Now, I mentioned the 12 bills, and 8 of the 12 have come out with bipartisan support. Three of those bills—our Agriculture, our Leg Branch, and our MILCON-VA—have already passed off the floor, and they did so with wide bipartisan votes. This is something that, yes, indeed—yes, indeed—we need to make certain that we continue to push these bills. Now, by passing these approps bills, we are ensuring that we get onto the budget the American people voted for.

Well, this is not what our colleagues across the aisle are saying they wanted. They don't want the clean CR. They are not wanting to move forward on these bills. Instead, their measure for keeping the government open and running is holding government basically hostage, if you will, for \$1.5 trillion in additional spending—\$1.5 trillion.

Our national debt is north of \$37 trillion. It is climbing. And, of course, adding another \$1.5 trillion for a few weeks is really irresponsible. In this, they are basically trying to undo what we did—the steps and the progress that we made when we did the Big Beautiful Bill, which is truly—truly—a bill for hard-working Americans.

So I would encourage my colleagues across the aisle: It is time to come to the table. It is time to pass the stopgap measure, the clean CR. And I would remind my friends that since last year, they have voted for these funding levels five times.

So let's come together. Let's get this passed. Let's get back on track to pass these appropriations bills. Let's keep the Federal Government open and working.

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.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session and 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.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, last night, the Republicans—despite controlling the White House and Congress—shut the government down to avoid addressing their self-inflicted healthcare crisis.

It is another blow to ordinary Americans across this country. In July, Republicans used their majority to jam through Congress the President's so-called "Big, Beautiful Bill." That cruel bill cuts nearly \$1 trillion from Medicaid and will rip health insurance away from 10 million Americans. And for what? So the wealthiest Americans can continue to line their pockets.

Now, Republicans seem poised to allow premiums and out-of-pocket costs to skyrocket. That is the Republican agenda: Billionaires win. You lose. If Republicans allow the Affordable Care Act enhanced tax credits to expire, more than 20 million Americans will see their premiums go up and 4 million more will lose coverage altogether. Republicans seem to be fine with ballooning the national debt for tax cuts for the rich, but they draw the line at extending healthcare to millions of American families.

And already, the President is playing the blame game. In the Oval Office yesterday, the President said, "Well, Democrats want to shut it down."

We don't. And the American people see right through this. They know Republicans control government and refuse to negotiate. When lines are longer at the airport, when farmers cannot receive their loans, or service-members miss a paycheck, that is the fault of Republicans entirely.

Yesterday, too, the President said, "A lot of good can come from government shutdowns, we can get rid of a lot of things." The President is wrong. No good can come from a shutdown. That is why Democrats continue to ask Republicans to negotiate and save healthcare for the American people.

Yesterday, the Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing entitled: "Blue City Chaos and Tragedy: How the Trump Administration is Addressing the Human Cost of Soft On Crime Policies." Unfortunately, as the title makes clear, this hearing was a partisan attempt to politicize what should be a bipartisan issue: how best to protect the safety of all American communities.

Every American deserves to feel safe, no matter where they live. We must reject these acts of political theater and look at the facts. Over the last two decades, the murder rate in my home State of Illinois has been lower than the murder rates in Missouri, Louisiana, and Alabama—all States led by Republicans. Ignoring these facts and the tangible success of the crime prevention programs working in cities like Chicago does nothing to make our Nation safer.

Unfortunately, President Trump has done everything he can to undermine efforts that have been effective at

fighting crime, like canceling hundreds of millions of dollars in Federal grants. These critical programs, which have long been supported by members on both sides of the aisle, include: \$72 million in funding for State and local law enforcement; \$158 million in gun violence prevention grants to cities like New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington, DC, and Baltimore; and \$169 million of community safety funding authorized by the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act.

If President Trump were serious about combating crime, he would restore these funds for ongoing joint Federal, State, and local law enforcement operations and crime prevention efforts. Instead, President Trump is deploying and threatening to deploy the National Guard to stroke his ego while falsely claiming he is restoring so-called order in Chicago, Portland, Memphis, and elsewhere. For months now, President Trump has been looking for any excuse to send troops into American communities to flex his power over cities and States he doesn't like.

Just this week, after months of threatening to deploy the Guard to Chicago, the Department of Homeland Security announced that 100 National Guard troops would be deployed there, despite the objections of Governor Pritzker and Mayor Johnson. Let's be clear: This deployment is a dangerous, illegal, and unconstitutional abuse of power by this President.

If anyone has any doubts about just how dangerous this is, they should listen to the speech Trump delivered yesterday to our most senior military leaders. He told them that, "America is under invasion from within," and he joked that he told Secretary Hegseth they "should use some of these dangerous cities as training grounds for our military." Trump went on to say that this "invasion from within" is "more difficult in many ways because they don't wear uniforms."

This is not about reducing crime or fixing our immigration system. This is about targeting those the President deems enemies—including those who exercise their First Amendment right to protest, question his authority when he flouts the law, or come to this country seeking a better life.

Instead of keeping our communities safe, Federal agents in camouflage are masquerading as military in the streets of Chicago, targeting immigrants with no criminal convictions. They are arresting families at Millenium Park. They are reportedly locking families with toddlers in rooms at O'Hare Airport. My constituents do not feel safer. They are afraid to take their children to school, to report crimes, or to go to church.

In Illinois, we have always known that immigrants are our neighbors. And as our neighbors, they deserve better from us than the terror and chaos of this administration. I hope that moving forward, we can come together

to discuss and support bipartisan solutions to keep all American communities safe.

REMEMBERING H. EDWARD QUICK

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I rise to recognize the life and career of H. Edward Quick. Ed was a proud Kansan who served our Nation so well that in the 1970s and '80s, he was often referred to as "Missouri's third senator." Throughout his life and his work, Ed demonstrated a deep, unabashed love of our democratic process. He was the embodiment of humility, generosity, and hard work. Ed passed away in August after a life well-lived and in the company of his loving family. I offer this remembrance so that the official RECORD of our body may reflect his many contributions to the public good and to the best traditions of the Senate.

Ed's Senate tenure spanned 11 Congresses—the 91st through 101st—and five administrations. He helped Tom Eagleton win his first Senatorial campaign and followed him to DC in 1969, leaving behind a near-finished PhD to join the Eagleton Senate staff.

In his new job, Ed reported to my father Doug Bennet, who served as Senator Eagleton's first chief of staff, a role then known as administrative assistant. Ed generously credited my father as a mentor and as an example that served him well when he held that same position for Senator Eagleton in the late 1970s and 1980s.

Ed was a resolute Democrat and intensely loyal to Senator Eagleton, but he was also respected and trusted across the aisle. Jack Danforth was Missouri's Republican Senator during most of Ed's tenure, and both he and his staff felt comfortable seeking Ed's counsel. Perhaps it is indicative of how closely the two offices worked together that, during Ed's tenure, Senators Eagleton and Danforth started a bipartisan summer softball team called the "Missouri Compromise."

Ed was an insightful student of politics and a gifted practitioner of the art of the possible. He had a keen sense of the political winds and a feel for finding the common ground that drove agreements and produced results. He honed his skills relentlessly. Senate coworkers soon grew accustomed to seeing Ed loping through the halls of Dirksen in the early morning hours, a 6-inch stack of Missouri newspapers under his arm. When Tom Eagleton walked into Ed's office and asked, "What's going on in Dunklin County?", Ed knew. He then would reduce that pile of newsprint to clippings he sent by mail to his network of contacts across Washington and Missouri.

When Senator Eagleton retired in 1987, Ed joined the staff of Arkansas Senator David Pryor, where he worked with chief of staff Don Harrell to expand Senator Pryor's committee chairmanships and responsibilities as Senate Democratic Caucus chair. In 1990,

Ed was nominated by President Bush, with Senator Pryor's support, to serve as a Commissioner of the U.S. Postal Rate Commission. To no one's surprise, the Senate unanimously approved his appointment to the Commission, where Ed served until his retirement in 2005.

Upon retiring, Ed returned to his Kansas roots: the city of Lawrence and the University of Kansas, where he maintained a full calendar of classes, community service, and charitable work. He continued to be a voracious reader of newspapers, and his wide network of friends, family, and former colleagues would regularly find the resulting clips in their inboxes.

This institution and this country owe much to Ed Quick and public servants like him, who freely give their time, friendship, and loyalty to causes greater than themselves. We extend our deepest condolences to the entire Quick family and to all those who knew and loved Bob, as we did.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE INDUCTION OF WILLIAM "POPEYE" WRIGHT INTO THE NATIONAL GUARD HALL OF FAME

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of an extraordinary Arkansan—William "Popeye" Wright of Paris—who will be posthumously inducted into the Arkansas National Guard Hall of Fame this October.

Known to many simply as "Popeye," Wright was the epitome of American service and sacrifice. His military career spanned nearly five decades and three major conflicts: World War II, the Korean war and Operation Desert Storm. His determination and bravery were evident from the moment he left school in 1944 to enlist in the Army. Serving in the European theater he was captured behind enemy lines during what is believed to be the Battle of the Bulge. In a remarkable act of courage, he escaped under gunfire despite sustaining shrapnel wounds—a testament to his grit and resilience.

For his valor, Wright received three Bronze Stars, three Purple Hearts, and France's Croix de Guerre. After the war, he returned to Arkansas and completed his education at Arkansas Tech University and continued his service as commander of the Paris National Guard Armory. His unit was activated for Korea in 1951, and decades later, he returned to Active Duty, deploying to the Persian Gulf in 1992.

Beyond uniform, Mr. Wright remained deeply devoted to his community. He served with Paris's fire department, mentored generations of young Arkansans, and was a familiar face at local football games. His quiet leadership and steadfast character left a lasting imprint on the lives he touched and the community he served.

In recognition of his service, the street outside the Paris National

Guard Armory will bear his name as a lasting tribute to a man whose legacy will be a tremendous source of pride for his hometown, State, and country for generations to come.

Arkansas is proud to call Popeye Wright one of our own. His story is a reminder of the values we hold dear: duty, honor and service. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring a life well lived and celebrating his well-deserved place in the Arkansas National Guard Hall of Fame.●

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-1914. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of firearms, parts, and components controlled under Category I of the U.S. Munitions List to Jamaica in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 25-082) received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1915. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to the Philippines, Taiwan, and Malaysia in the amount of \$14,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 25-074) received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1916. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to the United Kingdom in the amount of \$50,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 24-109) received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1917. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of firearms, parts, and components controlled under Category I of the U.S. Munitions List to Canada in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 25-084) received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1918. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report to advise that he is exercising his authority to designate an Acting Inspector General of the Department of Justice; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1919. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Employment and Training Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Adverse Effect Wage Rate Methodology for the Temporary Employment of H-2A Nonimmigrants in Non-Range Occupations in the United States" (RIN1205-AC24) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 30, 2025; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1920. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to Denmark in the amount of \$50,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 25-100) received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1921. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of firearms, parts, and components controlled under Category I of the U.S. Munitions List to Ukraine in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 25-093) received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1922. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to Belgium, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom in the amount of \$50,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 25-091) received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1923. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) and (d) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the manufacture of significant military equipment abroad and the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom in the amount of \$50,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 25-066) received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1924. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to section 1705(e)(6) of the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, as amended by Section 102(g) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996, a semi-annual report relative to telecommunications-related payments made to Cuba during the period from January 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1925. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13694 with respect to significant malicious cyber-enabled activities; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1926. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Secretary of State's intent to designate Barrio 18 as a Foreign Terrorist Organization; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1927. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a final report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13338 with respect to Syria; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1928. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13413 with respect to the Democratic Republic of the Congo; to the

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1929. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13067 with respect to Sudan; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1930. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13894 with respect to the situation in and in relation to Syria; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. GRASSLEY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

David Courcelle, of Louisiana, to be United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Louisiana for the term of four years.

Edmund G. LaCour, Jr., of Alabama, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama.

Bill Lewis, of Alabama, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Alabama.

Jennifer Lee Mascott, of Delaware, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit.

Harold D. Mooty III, of Alabama, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. MARSHALL (for himself, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. RICKETTS, and Mrs. MOODY):

S. 2959. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of State from issuing a passport, passport card, or Consular Report of Birth Abroad that includes the unspecified "X" gender designation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. RISCH:

S. 2960. A bill to develop economic tools to deter aggression by the People's Republic of China against Taiwan; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BANKS (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. MULLIN, and Mr. HICKENLOOPER):

S. 2961. A bill to direct the United States Postal Service to designate single, unique ZIP Codes for certain communities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. BANKS:

S. 2962. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the deduction under section 199A to apply to qualified BDC interest dividends in the same manner as qualified REIT dividends; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. SMITH (for herself, Mr. Kaine, Mr. WARNER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. ALSO BROOKS, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr.

BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. FETTERMAN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. GALLEGUO, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. LUJAN, Mr. KING, Mr. KIM, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. KELLY):

S. 2963. A bill to provide back pay to Federal contractors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself, Mr. KAYNE, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. ALSOBOOKS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. PADILLA, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 2964. A bill to allow penalty-free distributions from retirement accounts in the case of certain Federal contractors impacted by Federal Government shutdowns; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. KAYNE, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. SMITH, and Mr. GALLEGUO):

S. 2965. A bill to prohibit the use of the Exchange Stabilization Fund of the Department of the Treasury to bail out Argentina's financial markets; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. KAYNE (for himself, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. WARNER, Ms. ALSOBOOKS, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. BOOKER, and Ms. ROSEN):

S. 2966. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to waive certain penalties for affected Federal employees receiving a distribution from the Thrift Savings Plan during a lapse in appropriations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE:

S.J. Res. 85. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to "Commercial and Industrial Solid Waste Incineration Units: Temporary-Use Incinerators and Air Curtain Incinerators Used in Disaster Recovery"; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE:

S.J. Res. 86. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to "Air Plan Approval; South Dakota; Regional Haze Plan for the Second Implementation Period"; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE:

S.J. Res. 87. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management relating to "Restoring Names That Honor American Greatness: Gulf of America"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 88

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of Florida, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. HUSTED) was added as a cosponsor

of S. 88, a bill to provide that Members of Congress may not receive pay after October 1 of any fiscal year in which Congress has not approved a concurrent resolution on the budget and passed the regular appropriations bills.

S. 142

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGUO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 142, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to wildland firefighters in recognition of their strength, resiliency, sacrifice, and service to protect the forests, grasslands, and communities of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 494

At the request of Mr. SCHMITT, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 494, a bill to establish a national plan to coordinate research on epilepsy, and for other purposes.

S. 599

At the request of Mr. WELCH, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. ALSOBOOKS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 599, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase the mileage rate offered by the Department of Veterans Affairs through their Beneficiary Travel program for health related travel, and for other purposes.

S. 1173

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1173, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to clarify and preserve the breadth of the protections under the Medicare Secondary Payer Act.

S. 1404

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. ALSOBOOKS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1404, a bill to combat organized crime involving the illegal acquisition of retail goods and cargo for the purpose of selling those illegally obtained goods through physical and online retail marketplaces.

S. 1677

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1677, a bill to provide health insurance benefits for outpatient and inpatient items and services related to the diagnosis and treatment of a congenital anomaly or birth defect.

S. 2229

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2229, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint a coin in recognition of the Foreign Service of the United States and its contribution to United States diplomacy.

S. 2628

At the request of Mr. WARNOCK, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2628, a bill to amend title

XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish new payment rules for certain catastrophic specialty hospitals under the Medicare program.

S. 2706

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. SHEEHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2706, a bill to prohibit cashless bail in the District of Columbia.

S. 2873

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. SCHMITT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2873, a bill to amend the National Marine Sanctuaries Act to prohibit requiring an authorization for the installation, continued presence, operation, maintenance, repair, or recovery of undersea fiber optic cables in a national marine sanctuary if such activities have previously been authorized by a Federal or State agency.

S. 2903

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 2903, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to require a group health plan or health insurance coverage offered in connection with such a plan to provide an exceptions process for any medication step therapy protocol, and for other purposes.

S. 2955

At the request of Mr. BANKS, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2955, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to establish Federal penalties for the knowing and intentional administration of any abortion-inducing drug to a woman without her informed consent, if the abortion-inducing drug has been shipped or transported in interstate commerce, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 77

At the request of Mr. KAYNE, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 77, a joint resolution terminating the national emergency declared to impose duties on articles imported from Canada.

S.J. RES. 81

At the request of Mr. KAYNE, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 81, a joint resolution terminating the national emergency declared to impose duties on articles imported from Brazil.

S.J. RES. 82

At the request of Mr. KING, the names of the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 82, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Office of the Secretary of

the Department of Health and Human Services relating to “Policy on Adhering to the Text of the Administrative Procedure Act”.

S. RES. 426

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 426, a resolution designating the week of October 5, 2025, through October 11, 2025, as “Religious Education Week” to celebrate religious education in the United States.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I have three 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 FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 1, 2025, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEES 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, October 1, 2025, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 1, 2025, at 10:15 a.m., to conduct an executive business meeting.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2025

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 12 noon on Thursday, October 2; 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 proceed to executive session and resume consideration of S. Res. 412, postclosure; finally, that all time during adjournment and leader remarks count postclosure on the resolution.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL TOMORROW

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.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 4:25 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, October 2, 2025, at 12 noon.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate: October 1, 2025:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

HUNG CAO, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.