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No. 52

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 24, 2026, at 12 p.m.

Senate

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 2026

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the Honorable BERNIE MORENO, a Senator from the State of Ohio.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Mighty God, our shelter from life's storms, give to the Members of this body a faith strong enough to face the tempest of our time.

Lord, strengthen them to confront with courage the challenges that come, knowing that Your purposes, providence, and power will prevail. Give Your Senators a constancy of purpose that will motivate them to do Your will.

Rule as sovereign Lord in this Chamber, guiding the deliberations, debates, and decisions.

And, Lord, let there be peace on Earth. We pray in Your sublime Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication

to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 21, 2026.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BERNIE MORENO, a Senator from the State of Ohio, to perform the duties of the Chair.

CHUCK GRASSLEY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. MORENO thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

SAFEGUARD AMERICAN VOTER ELIGIBILITY ACT—Resumed

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the House message with respect to S. 1383, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

House message to accompany S. 1383, a bill to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Thune motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the bill.

Thune motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the bill, with Thune (for Schmitt) amendment No. 4420 (to the House amendment to the bill), in the nature of a substitute.

Thune (for Tuberville-Blackburn) amendment No. 4421 (to amendment No. 4420), to protect women and girls in athletics.

Thune motion to refer the message of the House on the bill to the Committee on Rules and Administration, with instructions, Thune amendment No. 4422, to change the enactment date.

Thune amendment No. 4423 (to the instructions (amendment No. 4422), of a perfecting nature.

Thune amendment No. 4424 (to amendment No. 4423), of a perfecting nature.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2026—Motion to Proceed—Resumed

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 311, H.R. 7147.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 311, H.R. 7147, a bill making further consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2026, and for other purposes.

SAVE AMERICA ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, the truth eventually will get out. Democrats

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



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S1461

have spent the last week or two attempting to hedge on photo ID, to suggest that, in fact, Democrats actually support photo ID, it is just the rest of the SAVE America Act they are concerned about.

So, on Thursday, the junior Republican Senator from Ohio decided to give them an opportunity to do something about it. Not interested in the rest of the SAVE America Act's commonsense proposals? OK, he said, and he offered a clean photo ID bill—no other provisions, just a measure to require showing photo ID at the polls, which could be a driver's license or State ID card, a passport, a military ID, a Tribal ID.

And Democrats—Democrats, the party that the Democrat leader said does not object to photo ID—well, Democrats blocked it.

So, as it turns out, Democrats support photo ID for voters, just as long as you don't actually ask them to support a photo ID bill. They want to have their cake and eat it, too; shield themselves from criticism, since polls show Americans overwhelmingly support photo ID for voters, but also save themselves from having to back up their words with actions.

I am still waiting for Democrats to come down to the floor and to call out requirements to show photo ID to board a plane. I am still waiting for them to attack doctor's offices and hotels and movie theaters and banks for requiring photo ID.

I am still waiting for Democrats to explain why it is perfectly logical for them to demand photo ID for their own rallies and yet oppose photo ID at the polls.

Is voting the one thing the Democrats don't think should be taken seriously? Do they think voting is so trivial that it really doesn't matter if those coming to vote are who they say they are? Well, I would like to know.

Democrats may have rejected a commonsense photo ID measure on Thursday, but they will have another chance to support common sense today when the Senate votes on an amendment to protect women's sports from being hijacked by men.

Over the past few years around the country we have seen men—biological men who identify as women—take up spaces and medals in athletics meant for actual women, and this is happening across a range of sports: swimming, softball, volleyball, basketball, tennis, and the list goes on.

Needless to say, men have inherent biological advantages when it comes to sports, things like greater muscle mass, greater aerobic power. That is just a simple scientific fact.

And those biological advantages mean that men are likely to dominate in women's sports, taking medals and opportunities that should belong to women.

One female runner had this to say:

Twenty-seven times during my high school career, all four years, I had to return to the

line and settle into blocks next to first one, then two biologically male athletes to run a race that everyone knew wasn't fair. I lost podium spots, awards, recognition, and four state championship titles during my junior year—the time when it was most crucial for college recruitment. . . . My teammates and I watched those two athletes dominate the girls' events. They won 15 women's state championship titles—titles that were held by nine different girls in 2016—set new . . . individual meet records, and eliminated girls from advancement opportunities more than 85 times.

They won 15 women's state championship titles . . . and eliminated girls from advancement opportunities more than 85 times.

And that was the effect of just two male athletes in women's track in just one State, and this is happening across the country and in a wide range of women's sports.

I want to know: Are my Democrat colleagues OK with this? Are they OK with two biological males eliminating girls from advancement opportunities more than 85 times?

Are they OK with the fact that, as the U.N. reported in 2024, "The replacement of the female sports category with a mixed-sex category has resulted in an increasing number of female athletes losing opportunities, including medals, when competing against males. According to information received by 30 March 2024, over 600 female athletes in more than 400 competitions have lost more than 890 medals in 29 different sports"?

Are Democrats OK with that? They think that is fair? They think women's opportunities to excel should be taken from them by biological males? I want to know.

Are Democrats willing to abandon decades of progress in women's sports the minute the transgender lobby comes calling? Well, I guess we will see today. Do Democrats stand with women or will they continue to sacrifice fairness and equality at the altar of radical transgender ideology?

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. President, the situation at U.S. airports continues to worsen thanks to Democrat's refusal to fund the Department of Homeland Security. Thousands of Homeland Security employees have been working without pay for more than a month.

The problems of having an unfunded Homeland Security Department continue to multiply. And Democrats, well, they just seem to shrug. I guess the Democrats' 43-day full government shutdown from earlier this fiscal year ought to have made it clear that Democrats are happy to deprive government workers of their salaries if it serves their political ends.

But I still marvel at the fact that Democrats have been willing to deprive some government employees of pay for almost—almost—80 days now over the course of less than 6 months, to say nothing of their willingness to defund law enforcement and jeopardize national security.

Thirty-six days, the Department of Homeland Security has been shut down

now. The White House has offered a substantial number of reforms to Democrats, but Democrats have yet to move a step off their original list of demands, and I hope that will change. So far, the concept of negotiation—which involves compromise and give-and-take—seems utterly lost to them.

Or perhaps it is simply that Democrats don't want a solution here. After all, if they get reforms, like many of the reforms the White House has offered, Democrats might not be able to use this as a campaign issue, and I strongly suspect that Democrats are less interested in fixing problems than they are at having issues that they can use in the November election.

Of course, I would caution them that their renewed commitment to defunding law enforcement may not play as well as they think it will. Democrats had to dial back on their hostility to law enforcement once before for political reasons. It turns out that defunding the police and defunding law enforcement isn't such a popular issue after all. So, perhaps, they ought to think twice before making defunding law enforcement and Homeland Security their signature issue this November.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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 ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

S. 1383

Mr. SCHUMER. Well, Mr. President, today, every Senator must answer a very simple question: Senator, do you want chaos at our airports to come down—yes or no, Senator?

Let me repeat the question: Republican Senator, do you want the chaos at our airports to come down—yes or no? If you have had enough of long lines, if you want TSA workers to get paid, then vote yes on the motion I am bringing before the Senate today.

It is unacceptable for workers and travelers and entire airports to get taken hostage in political games, but that is what the Republicans are doing. It is unacceptable to say we will only pay TSA workers if it is attached to a bill that funds ICE with no reforms, but that is what the Republicans have been doing.

Democrats want to pay TSA workers ASAP, with no strings attached. A "yes" vote will do that. That is the first time in this Chamber that we will have an opportunity to vote yes or no on whether you want to pay TSA workers ASAP, with no strings attached.

Every bill they have brought before the Senate says: Oh, yes, we want to

pay the TSA workers, we want to reduce the lines at airports, but only if you pass ICE funding with no reform.

And the American people want reform. They know that, but you have got Stephen Miller up there in the White House and so many others who don't want any reform of ICE, and our Republican Senate friends are willingly going along with that and holding airports, travelers, and TSA workers hostage.

We Democrats want to bring down the long lines at the airport, and a "yes" vote—plain and simple—would do just that. I urge Republicans to support my motion.

The chaos at airports has reached a boiling point. People have been waiting for 2 hours, 3 hours—sometimes more—just to get through security. One couple in Austin said the lines stretched right out the door and into the grass outside the airport.

Meanwhile, TSA workers are about to go a full month without pay. That is unacceptable. It means they cannot pay the rent or the mortgage, they cannot buy groceries, and they are digging into their savings just to get by—these hard-working, good people. And at the same time, they are being asked to work brutal hours.

It is no surprise many of them have been calling in sick. It is not even a surprise that many are looking for other jobs. They have to support their families and themselves. We need to bring this to an end today—today—and that is what we can start doing with a "yes vote" on our motion.

As I have said, we have seen a lot of rollcall votes over the past few weeks on the floor related to DHS funding, and they say they want to get up and fund TSA. But they want to fund all of DHS—even ICE, even Border Patrol—with no reform.

This vote today is different from what our colleagues on the other side have offered. It is a breakthrough because it says: Fund TSA only. Vote "fund TSA with no strings attached."

Republicans, in essence, say they want to reopen all of DHS but only if there are no changes to ICE and Border Patrol when they vote. That is not acceptable, not just to us, not just to Democrats but to the American people.

The American people feel very strongly that ICE's conduct needs to be reined in. Trump himself, the originator of these horrible ICE goon squads, has said they have gone too far.

We can't just give ICE a blank check to keep operating without guardrails, as Republicans have proposed in their previous votes. So, today, Democrats offer to pay TSA without the anchor of demanding funding of ICE and CBP without any guardrails, which is what the Republicans are doing.

We want to open TSA with no strings attached.

Let me repeat: no strings attached.

There is not one bill the Republicans have brought forward that doesn't have strings attached—strings that don't let it have a majority vote.

Now, we are having productive conversations on reforming ICE and CBP, and Democrats remain committed to securing reforms. But that is an ongoing process. We are meeting today again, but we must fund TSA now.

Let us keep negotiating the outstanding issues with ICE, but let us start sending paychecks to TSA workers now. Let us bring the long lines at the airports—let us end the long lines at the airport now. This is the logical, expedient, correct thing to do.

So in conclusion, I urge my Republican colleagues: Vote yes if you want to pay TSA. Vote yes if you want to bring down the long lines at airports. Vote yes today.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SAVE AMERICA ACT

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, we are having quite a debate, and I do believe that the American people are learning quite a bit about the Democratic Members of the Senate and the Republican Members of the Senate as we go through this debate on the SAVE America Act.

Now, what we have heard from some of our Democratic colleagues is showing a voter ID is common sense. I am glad that they have come to that recognition and that they realize it does make sense that you would show an ID when you go to vote, that they show an ID many times a day, whether it is to pick up a prescription at the pharmacy or to register for Federal benefits or to go to a child's school. Voter ID is something that makes sense because the American people are accustomed to verifying to individuals that they are indeed who they claim to be. But our friends across the aisle, only here in this Chamber, are saying: Oh, we can't vote for that. Now, 71 percent of all Democrats, 85 percent of all Independents, and over 90 percent of all Republicans agree voter ID is a good idea.

We also see the same type of numbers when it comes to the other common-sense provision that if you are going to vote in a U.S. election, you really ought to be a U.S. citizen. That makes sense to people. They know that when they travel to other countries they don't vote in those elections, even if they are there on an election day. But because our friends across the aisle want to make it easy to cheat, they want to allow individuals that are illegally in the country or people that are here on a visa or people that are here as permanent residents or people that are touring our country to show up at a poll, grab a ballot, give an address, and cast that ballot because in 12

States in this country you can vote without showing anything when you go to the polls—just give them your name and cast that ballot.

Well, quite frankly, the American people think that the right to vote is precious and that we should defend "one person, one vote." They look at casting that vote as their duty and their honor. And they are fully aware that if someone illegally in the country, someone not entitled to vote, casts a ballot, then it negates their ballot.

So the American people are watching and observing and learning, and we see that not only are they blaming the Democrats for this latest shutdown of Homeland Security; they think they have lost their ever-loving minds that they will not support voter ID and being a citizen of the Nation in order to cast a vote.

Now, there is another provision that I want to call attention to, and we are going to vote on this amendment in a few minutes. This is protecting girls in sports. We know that title IX has opened the doors for young women and girls to compete in sports.

Now, 50 years ago, when title IX came to be, we only had about 300,000 college and high school female athletes that were competing. Today, that number is over 3 million. And I know many of us are watching March Madness and the talented young women that are playing in this tournament. We love cheering for them. We love watching them excel and succeed. We love it when we are watching college sports and we see young women who have come together, who have formed a team, who have built that camaraderie and know how to compete as a team.

They like that, but obviously our friends across the aisle, who once upon a time liked to say that they were leading the pack supporting women, decided they no longer support women; they can't even define the word "woman." So therefore they are not able to support women, and therefore they want to tear down title IX, which has opened doors of opportunity for young women.

Now, thank goodness President Donald Trump has tried to chase away some of the adverse actions against title IX that were carried out during the Biden administration, when opportunities for young women and girls were lost, when women would be forced to share a locker room with guys because the guy decided he was going to claim to be a female so he could compete, whether it is track or swimming or volleyball, softball. The guy couldn't win in the guys' category, so they claimed to be female so they could take away that opportunity, so they could take away that trophy, so they could take away the scholarship from young women.

Actually, I think that is disgusting—absolutely disgusting—but our friends across the aisle support that. They want to diminish these opportunities for women. But President Trump said:

I have had enough of that. He did an Executive order banning men from competing in women's sports.

Secretary McMahon, who is doing a fabulous job as our Education Secretary, is investigating educational institutions all across the country that are violating title IX and are allowing men to compete in women's sports and thereby take away the opportunities from women. Thank goodness she is doing that, and thank goodness these institutions are being held to account for discriminating against these women who want to compete, who want to be able to do it safely and without being injured.

In just a few moments, Senator TUBERVILLE and I are going to push to pass the Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act. We are doing this as part of the SAVE America Act because it is another of these issues where you have 80 percent of the American people, 90 percent, 70 percent of the American people who are for this.

What the Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act will do is to codify President Trump's Executive order.

I am asked regularly by Tennesseans: These Executive orders are great, but when are you going to codify this and put it into law so that it will have the force of law behind it?

So today, when it comes to protecting women in sports, to making certain men cannot compete in women's sports; when it comes to affirming biological reality, we are going to take that vote as the Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act is offered as an amendment.

To my friends across the aisle, I would encourage them: Choose today to honor women. Choose today to stand with women. Choose today to support so many young women that absolutely want to be able to compete.

You know, today is a beautiful day in the great State of Tennessee, which I think is the best place on the face of the Earth to live. It is a gorgeous spring day. The forsythia is bright yellow and blooming. The red buds are purple, and they are magnificent. The Sun is shining.

In driveways all across our great State, you have young girls who are out bouncing that basketball. They are hoping for their shot to play for Vanderbilt or to be a UT Lady Vol and to make that college team. They want to be able to compete. They are watching what is happening with March Madness. They are following women that they have seen compete on these college teams.

I hope they find it as absolutely disgusting as I do that our colleagues across the aisle have chosen a course of action. They cannot define "woman," and they will not defend women. I would encourage them to change course and vote for the Protection of Girls in Sports Act.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. 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 Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, it seems like "Groundhog Day" in here to me. I have been here 6 years, and this is the fourth time that I have had this bill on the floor, and I am still trying. I am going to continue to try until I am gone. I can't believe this is even an issue, but nothing, basically, has surprised me since I have been here, the things we have either voted for or voted against here in this body.

I have come to the floor, as I said, four different times to try to get the Senate to pass the Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act. It is not very complicated. For some reason, we are making it complicated. Every time we have voted on this, I have not gotten one single Democrat to vote for it.

I think you can look back at the election this past year in 2024. One of the main issues that put a majority in here, a majority in the House, and control over 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue is because for some reason, my Democrat colleagues do not want to protect girls and women in sports. It is ludicrous.

For the life of me, I cannot understand how biological males can be given the right to take away the rights of young girls—elementary school, junior high, high school, junior college, 4-year universities, and even in pro sports. I cannot understand it.

We have women's sports, and we have men's sports, and that is the way it should be. That is the way it has been up until just a few years ago.

President Trump has changed that since he took office. He Executive-ordered that no men participate in women's sports. Here is the deal: We all know that Executive orders only last a certain amount of time. If the Democrats take control of the White House, that will change overnight. Biological men will be allowed to participate in women's sports.

But surely to goodness, everybody in here has daughters or nieces or granddaughters that love sports—one of the best things this country has going for it. You are taught teamwork, dedication, work ethic, time control, organization. You get all those things out of sports.

I did it for 35 years. I have seen people change their lives because of what sports did to their lives. Sometimes they are not very focused through a school—whether it is high school, junior college, or a 4-year university—but if they participate in that and they go through the grueling practice and meetings and lifting and all the things they have to do, they learn. They learn how to control their lives. They learn how to take care of themselves. But for some reason, we don't want women and

girls to have that opportunity. In this body, the Democratic Party wants biological men to be able to participate.

So what would you say to the volleyball player at San Jose University who thought that on a road trip, you double up—whether it is men's sport or women's—you double up in a hotel room before you play the next day. She did not realize that she was sharing a room and possibly even a bed with a male. She didn't know he was transgender. She did not know it. She quit school and did not get her degree because she was petrified at what she had to go through because of this body right here. It is ridiculous—absolutely ridiculous.

Female athletes suffer long injuries because of competing against bigger men. Can we not figure that out? Can we not figure that out?

How about the trophies and awards that are stolen from young girls and ladies that work all their life to win a game or a sport or win some kind of award in the sport they are in, and they put all their dedicated life into that, and they lose to somebody that is much more physical—bigger, stronger, and faster—because of us in here? Not anybody else; because of us. Because we won't vote to say: No, they can't do it. It really makes no sense whatsoever.

But do you know what? The people of this country voted. They voted their tails out a majority in the House, in the Senate, and the White House, and one reason was because of no common sense—none. And they should, and it is going to get them again next year.

If I was a leader over there, I would go: Hey, listen, we are getting our tails kicked on this. Let's go vote for this and get it over with because we are going to lose a lot of votes.

Eighty percent of the country believes that men should not play in women's sports, but, no—they are going stand up for the 20 percent—the 20 percent crazies that have no clue of what they are doing when they are voting for men to play in women's sports.

So I appreciate President Trump's Executive order to put life back into women's sports. And we are not talking about all 18-, 19-, 20-year-olds; I am talking about 4 or 5 years old—all of women's sports.

So this is an 82-20 issue—common sense. I mean, there is not a lot of common sense up here because my colleagues on the left a couple years ago tried to push on the United States that men can have babies. Are you kidding me? Are you kidding me? What country do we live in when we have leaders of this country trying to push an idea that men can have babies?

We have lost it, and we better get control of it. I think that my colleagues on the left have really lost touch with reality. Because why? You would ask yourself why. You go home and think, why would anybody vote for that?

And I will tell you why. There is a group of people they are trying to protect that would vote for their power. They are not voting for young women. They are not voting for older women. They are voting for power so they can push this nonsense on you all over this country. And enough is enough of it. Enough is enough.

So I hope today when we vote on this bill for the fourth time that men cannot play in women's sports, that when they walk up to vote and say: No, I am against that, look at the damn camera up there and let the people see you vote against women in this country to have the same rights as men when it comes to athletics.

Please do that so we can put your picture on television. Don't vote for this guy next November because there is no possible way that you can elect somebody that believes this nonsense.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The Senator from Kansas.

HONORING THE LIFE OF KANSAS CITY, KANSAS POLICE OFFICER HUNTER SIMONCIC

HONORING THE LIFE OF HAYS, KANSAS POLICE SERGEANT SCOTT HEIMANN

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of the following resolutions, en bloc: S. Res. 372, for Officer Hunter Simoncic, who was killed in the line of duty on August 26, 2025, and S. Res. 425 for Officer Scott Heimann, who was killed in the line of duty on September 27, 2025.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged of the relevant resolutions, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table all en bloc.

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

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolution (S. Res. 372), with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of September 3, 2025, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

(The resolution (S. Res. 425), with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of September 30, 2025, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

WAIVING QUORUM CALLS

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum calls in relationship to the Senate amendment No. 4421 and the Schumer motion to suspend rule 25.

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 amendment No. 4421 to the motion to concur in the House message to accompany S. 1383 with substitute amendment No. 4420, a bill to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes.

John Thune, Roger Marshall, John Barrasso, Bill Hagerty, Pete Ricketts, Bernie Moreno, John Cornyn, Rick Scott of Florida, Lindsey Graham, Shelley Moore Capito, Jim Banks, Jon A. Husted, Joni Ernst, Marsha Blackburn, Ted Budd, Steve Daines, Tommy Tuberville.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on amendment No. 4421 to the motion to concur in the House message to accompany S. 1383 with substitute amendment No. 4420, a bill to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. CURTIS), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), and the Senator from Montana (Mr. SHEEHY).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) would have voted "yea."

Mr. SCHUMER. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY), and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 49, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 60 Leg.]

YEAS—49

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

NAYS—41

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

NOT VOTING—10

Coons	Fetterman	Shaheen
Curtis	Kaine	Sheehy
Daines	Kelly	
Durbin	Paul	

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. On this vote, the yeas are 49, and the nays are 41.

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

The motion was rejected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader.

S. 1383

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I have a motion today that asks every Senator a very simple question: Do you want TSA workers to get their pay—yes or no? Are you tired, like many Americans are, of seeing long lines at the airport—yes or no?

If Senators want to pay TSA workers and end the airport chaos, they should support my motion. Our TSA workers cannot be taken hostage for political games, but that is what Republicans have done.

It is unacceptable—unacceptable—to say we will only pay TSA workers if it is attached to a bill that funds ICE with no reforms, but that is what Republicans have done.

Democrats want to pay TSA workers ASAP, no strings attached. A "yes" vote on my motion would start doing just that. This is the only vote—the only vote, not the others—that the Senate has taken that will fund TSA—no ands, ifs, or buts.

This is the first time—the first time—the Senate holds a vote related to paying TSA workers that has zero strings attached to it. This is the only vote that says you are for supporting TSA families unconditionally. All the votes Republicans have pushed so far tie TSA paychecks to fully funding ICE without any reforms.

Republicans say: Sure, we will pay TSA, but only if you keep funding ICE agents without any guardrails whatsoever.

That is not acceptable to the American people.

So, today, my motion makes the matter very simple: Let's pay TSA workers ASAP. That is it—nothing else. We can keep negotiating ICE and CBP separately.

We are having some productive conversations on getting reforms to ICE, and Democrats are going to continue pushing for real, serious reforms

through legislation. But that is an ongoing process that should not get in the way of funding our TSA workers.

So let's keep negotiating the outstanding issues with ICE while sending paychecks to TSA workers now. Let us end the long lines at the airports now. This is the logical, expedient, and correct thing to do.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, this motion—and when I hear the phrases used like “no strings attached” or how “simple” this is—there isn't anything that would be more complicated than this.

This is a Schumer motion to suspend the rules to refer the House message—the bill that we are on—to the Rules Committee, which doesn't have jurisdiction over appropriations or spending, and he is trying to call it a vote to fund TSA.

Mr. SCHUMER. You bet.

Mr. THUNE. I mean, we have had countless votes to fund TSA. We had one yesterday. We have had countless motions by our side to pass a continuing resolution that funds all of DHS—including TSA—and consistently blocked by this side.

So this is a convoluted—I mean, I don't know how you come up with this. This is very—I will give you credit for coming up with something that is this convoluted. But it doesn't do anything that the leader says it does. It has nothing at all to do with funding TSA.

The opportunity to fund TSA has come and gone multiple times here, when we have had votes here on the floor, including as recently as yesterday; and countless motions, continuing resolutions, to fund all of DHS, including TSA, numerous times, over and over and over again. And our colleagues on the other side have blocked it.

Mr. SCHUMER. Would my colleague yield for a question?

Mr. THUNE. Sure. Sure.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, this is the only vote available to us because you have filled the tree and not allowed an amendment like this here.

Would the Senator be willing to put this amendment to pay TSA immediately on the tree?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, this is not an appropriations bill. The legislation we are on right now, which has to do with whether or not citizens—and only citizens—ought to be able to vote in American elections has nothing to do with funding the government.

We have had countless votes and countless appropriations bills brought in front of this institution, the U.S. Senate, that actually would fund TSA. And we ought to fund TSA. Let's get to work doing it.

And if that group that is meeting can't come up with a solution here

pretty quickly, things are going to get worse and worse and worse—and they already are. People at airports—anybody who has gone through an airport lately, they don't see what is happening here as “serene.” They see this as a convoluted mess, and that is what is happening across the country if we don't fund the government—DHS—including TSA.

We are all for it. We have tried repeatedly to do it. This has nothing to do with funding TSA. This is a ploy—nothing more, nothing less, nothing else.

Let's vote.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Is the tree full, Mr. Leader?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. THUNE. The tree, I would say to my colleague from New York, has on it right now a vote that we just completed, and there will be other opportunities to vote on other amendments related to the legislation that we are on here today.

Mr. SCHUMER. Like this past amendment was?

Mr. THUNE. But if we want to have—

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader has the floor.

Mr. THUNE. If you want to have a debate on appropriations, we can have that.

We have made ourselves available. The White House is available. There are meetings going on right now which I hope ultimately lead to a result where we get these Agencies opened up again, including TSA. In order for that to happen, you have to have a willing partner and somebody who is willing to sit down at the table and negotiate with you, which we haven't had until 2 days ago.

Now, hopefully, these discussions will lead to what ultimately will be a result to fund all of these Agencies, including TSA, but that is not what this is about, and you know that.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, we are having productive discussions. I just met with our team 20 minutes ago. We are making some progress. There is more to be made. Each side has its own views.

But why hold pay for TSA workers up when we can do it immediately? Why wait? We don't know how long these negotiations will take. There are some pretty tough positions. We could do it now.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I will just say, when you talk about doing something quickly, referring it to the Rules Committee, which has no jurisdiction over spending, over appropriations, on a bill that has nothing to do with funding these Agencies—but we are happy—we are happy—we will pivot

immediately to fund all these Agencies when you are ready to do it.

I ask for the yeas and nays on this.

CLOTURE MOTION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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 suspend the operation of rule XXV, paragraph (n)(1), to permit the Committee on Rules and Administration to consider the pending motion with respect to the message to accompany S. 1383 to fund TSA and as noticed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on March 16, 2026.

Charles E. Schumer, Alex Padilla, Brian Schatz, Chris Van Hollen, Raphael Warnock, Tammy Baldwin, Peter Welch, Jack Reed, Richard J. Durbin, Amy Klobuchar, Adam B. Schiff, Jacky Rosen, Christopher A. Coons, Tina Smith, Cory A. Booker, Catherine Cortez Masto, Mark R. Warner.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. By unanimous consent, 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 suspend the operation of rule XXV, paragraph (n)(1) to permit the Committee on Rules and Administration to consider the pending motion with respect to the message to accompany S. 1383 to fund the TSA and as noticed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on March 16, 2026, 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.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. CURTIS), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), and the Senator from Montana (Mr. SHEEHY).

Mr. SCHUMER. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY), and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 41, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 61 Leg.]

YEAS—41

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

NAYS—49

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

NOT VOTING—10

Coons	Fetterman	Shaheen
Curtis	Kaine	Sheehy
Daines	Kelly	
Durbin	Paul	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. LUMMIS). On this vote, the yeas are 41, and the nays are 49.

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

The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 697.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Colin McDonald, of California, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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. 697, Colin McDonald, of California, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

John Thune, Chuck Grassley, Roger Marshall, John Barrasso, Bill Hagerty, Pete Ricketts, Bernie Moreno, John Cornyn, Lindsey Graham, Thom Tillis, Rick Scott of Florida, Shelley Moore Capito, Jim Banks, Jon Husted, Joni Ernst, Marsha Blackburn, Ted Budd.

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. CASSIDY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

SAVE AMERICA ACT

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I am here to talk about the SAVE America Act.

I have had two people already tell me my sign is upside down. The Presiding Officer is probably thinking it. I can tell the pages are too. It is a lot easier to show your photo ID when you go to vote than it is to read the poster. How do I know that? Because I go to vote and I show them my photo ID in Louisiana, which has a long history of, shall we say, people voting who are already buried. We no longer have that history since we have begun to put photo IDs out.

Think about that. It is no imposition upon our people, and now we don't have a problem with voter integrity despite our having had a long history of it, so I am told.

We keep on hearing that it is too difficult, so we have a commonsense, widely supported bill which is being objected to. The same people objecting to this bill don't object to having to show an ID to buy a gun, which is a constitutional right, but when it comes to this constitutional right and protecting its integrity, it doesn't work. The SAVE America Act is supported by 71 percent of Democrat voters and 95 percent of Republicans. If only it were supported by 71 percent of Democrat Senators. That is why I am a proud cosponsor.

You might scratch your head when you hear that some refuse to support it. I think that there is a small left-wing base who opposes this who is very vocal; therefore, that is the genesis of the opposition, but this does not keep an eligible American from casting a ballot. It doesn't take away someone's constitutional right.

I will say MIKE LEE, who is sitting next to me, has been working with those who object to its passage in order to meet their concerns.

For example, one of the concerns is that, if someone marries and changes her name and her driver's license is different than her birth certificate, she won't be able to vote. I just confirmed with MIKE—and he can tell me the page number and the line number, of course—that now all you have to do is sign an affidavit. My wife was born a Layden. When we married, she became a Cassidy. If she went and they said, “Well, your birth certificate says Layden and now you are a Cassidy,” she would sign an affidavit. “I am married, and my name is now Cassidy,” and—boom—she is there. So, as to the concern that it is discriminatory against women who marry and take their husbands' last names, just sign an affidavit.

Similarly—and, again, I don't always find Mr. LEE the most reasonable person. On this, he has been very reasonable, which is that, when you go originally to vote and you have to prove you are a citizen, MIKE—I am sorry. I should not be addressing him—you can

sign an affidavit establishing that I don't have my birth certificate but that I was born on this date, in this community, and you get to register to vote. The State shall come up with a mechanism by which that is allowed. It is really an attempt to meet the objections of those who oppose this bill. The lack of documentation is not an issue.

By the way, I will also point out, I have lost my birth certificate in the past. I called the place where I was born, and within a week, I had it in the mail, but now I am sure you can do it online. So even should you need a birth certificate—people lose birth certificates all the time. Then they get them back.

We have to show a photo ID or our citizenship sometimes, like, at least on a weekly basis. You fly. You open a bank account. You cash a check. All of those are routine activities of our lives, and you show your driver's license, which is a Real ID.

Those who are opposing this say that they are concerned regarding the woman who marries and takes her husband's name. That has been addressed; that you have to prove citizenship, but you don't have the documents when you go over to vote. That has been addressed; that the very fact of showing an ID is discriminatory. Yet over and over again in life, we show IDs to do things that are part of daily life.

I will note that, when New York City Mayor Mamdani offered New Yorkers a chance to make a little extra money snow shoveling during the blizzard last month, he required not one but two forms of valid ID.

So it is a weak argument when leading Democratic figures are having their citizens show ID. It is a weak argument that you have to endure some incredible hardship to show an ID to vote.

By the way, I have been asked about the talking filibuster. I have supported returning to the talking filibuster since I joined the Senate in 2015. I still remember Jimmy Stewart's “Mr. Smith Goes to Washington.” It was rough on the Senators, but being rough on the Senators, frankly, kind of pushed people together to get something done. I am from Louisiana. For the longest time, Huey Long had the record for the longest filibuster, but that filibuster eventually either broke him or it broke the Senate in the sense that they were willing to compromise to get something done.

So, to my Democratic colleagues, I ask you to listen to the people. Pass the SAVE America Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BANKS). The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the SAVE America Act, legislation that I have cosponsored to make certain that only U.S. citizens are voting in our elections.

This legislation would require proof of citizenship in our elections, and it would require that this citizenship be

identified when registering to vote and by presenting a valid photo ID when casting your vote at the ballot box.

As of last fall, 36 States were requiring voters to present IDs in order to vote. This includes my home State of South Dakota, where you can present your driver's license, passport, or Tribal ID. All we ask to cast your vote is that you can prove you are an American citizen and that you are who you say you are. That shouldn't be controversial. In fact, it should just be common sense.

Our neighboring State of Minnesota says that most voters will not have to show identification at all. In fact, if you want to vote, you can simply ask someone else who is registered in your precinct to vouch for your identity. One person can vouch for up to eight people. This loose requirement does not appropriately address voter integrity.

We require identification for many parts of everyday life in America. You need your photo ID to open a bank account, to rent a car, to start a job, or to board a plane. In New York City, you need two forms of ID just to shovel snow. Requiring identification to vote should be the standard.

The American people understand that. In a recent poll, over 80 percent of Americans favor requiring all voters to show government-issued photo IDs to vote; that includes 95 percent of Republicans, 85 percent of Independents, and, yes, even 71 percent of Democrats. Let me say that again: 71 percent of Democrats support voter ID laws. Our Democrat colleagues are on the wrong side of their own constituents.

This legislation implements a reasonable policy with broad support from all sides of the political spectrum. I simply do not understand why our colleagues on the other side of the aisle continue to hold up this legislation.

Voting in elections is a constitutional right, but it is also a privilege. We live in the greatest country in the world, partially because of our free and fair elections to choose our leaders. We compromise these values when we allow noncitizens to vote in our elections.

The right to vote in our country belongs to the American people, not foreign nationals. American elections should be for the American citizen only. American leaders should be decided by Americans.

I urge my colleagues to support the SAVE America Act to uphold the law and protect voter integrity.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BUDD. Mr. President, I rise today on behalf of 80 percent of Americans, including millions of North Carolinians who are asking Congress to ensure that only Americans can vote in American elections.

The charge here, it is really that simple, but I find it ironic that we are once again debating an 80-20 issue because my Democrat colleagues refuse to ac-

cept the stance held by an overwhelming majority of their own constituents.

Staging political theater on such commonsense issues, it has really become routine for Democrats. Let's take, for example, a few things: keeping our borders wide open, opposing the deportation of dangerous criminals, defunding the police, backing radical gender ideology for children, and allowing biological men to compete in women's sports.

And, like clockwork, here we are again, but this time my colleagues across the aisle are refusing to keep our elections fair, transparent, and secure by requiring proof of citizenship to register and have voter ID at the polls. Over 70 percent of Democrats across our country—Democrats—believe that voter ID should be required, but it seems that Senate Democrats couldn't care less.

And why is that? Because instead of accepting the will of the people that they represent, Senate Democrats have chosen to dig their heels in on their failed campaign as the party of open borders and illegal immigration.

By opposing the SAVE America Act, Senate Democrats are telling the American people, loud and clear, that they don't care about preserving the right to vote for American citizens because of their political agenda, which props up illegal immigrants over working-class Americans.

My Democrat colleagues should understand that it is a Federal offense for any noncitizen to vote in a Federal election. Providing proof of identification is a basic security measure, and everyone knows that.

When you board an airplane, you go to the doctor, you start a new job, or even if you get a library card, you are required to show proof of government identification.

In North Carolina, we require every voter to show a government ID before voting. Twenty-three other States already have this same voting law on their books, and nearly every European country has voter ID laws in place. And why? Because power in a democratic society is vested in the will of the people, and that fundamental right to self-determination must be protected at all cost.

I want to address a misleading claim that my Senate colleagues across the aisle continue over and over and over to repeat. Senate Democrats claim that the SAVE America Act would somehow disenfranchise millions of Americans, and that is just false.

This legislation does not target any American citizen eligible to vote; instead, it protects them. The SAVE America Act ensures that only U.S. citizens participate in Federal elections by requiring States to maintain accurate voter rolls and stopping non-citizens from voting. That is not disenfranchisement.

But, at its core, this bill is about restoring trust. The American people de-

serve to have confidence in our Federal elections, and they deserve peace of mind to know that their right as American citizens to determine the future of our country is not diluted by noncitizens meddling in our democratic process. The SAVE America Act puts the integrity of our Republic first again.

President Trump—he has been a steadfast champion of voter ID, and he has encouraged Congress to move this legislation forward because the state of our Nation depends upon protecting the power of the people, and I agree with the President. Ensuring that certainty in our Federal elections, it really shouldn't be controversial at all.

But every single time President Trump supports a policy, no matter how logical it is, Democrats draw a hard line in the sand and they oppose it. Common sense and deciding policy based on the merit of its principles seems right now to mean nothing to Senate Democrats because they refuse to come to the negotiating table to responsibly lay out their concerns and negotiate in good faith.

And when I travel to all 100 counties in North Carolina, I hear the same frustration. Americans see Congress stuck in gridlock with negotiation replaced by partisan stonewalling. I think the American people deserve better.

I am all for having passionate disagreements, you know, but a friendly debate, it is just as American as it gets. But discord should never be an excuse for obstruction, and partisan games are no substitute for responsible governance.

That is not what Americans sent us here to do. We must listen to the 80 percent of Americans calling on us to restore trust in our Federal elections by ensuring that only citizens can vote.

The American people, they didn't send us here to posture. They sent us here to legislate, and legislating requires setting aside partisanship, returning to common sense, and doing what is best for the country and not what is politically self-serving.

So I hope my colleagues across the aisle—that they will listen to the overwhelming majority of Americans, Republicans and Democrats, calling for action and vote to pass the SAVE America Act now.

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

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here to speak about the so-called SAVE America Act, which I think probably would be better described as the "Steal the Next Election Act" because of the purpose that this bill has to throw the election and to throw political influence in America to the Republicans.

You can imagine why they would want to engage in special weapons and tactics to try to win the 2026 election when you see the political disaster that they are enmeshed in: the mess that the Trump administration has made of the economy, the stench of corruption pervading the administration, a war that is running up gasoline prices and has no end in sight and no evident plan. Wherever you look, you see a party in complete disarray with Americans angry, frustrated, and befuddled by the nonsense, and an election coming.

So, of course, they want to change things at the ballot box.

Now, where would you go to test that proposition, that the purpose of this bill is to throw elections to the Republicans? Who might have a view on this that we should listen to?

Oh, right. The President of the United States, the one who has caused the Republicans the political catastrophe that they have looming from the disastrous second term that he has inflicted on this country.

"Republicans have to win this one," he said. Get this bill passed is what he is talking about. "Republicans have to win this one. We'll never lose a race for 50 years." That is how much the President thinks this bill will tank American elections in favor of him and his billionaire donors who already have way too much influence in our politics.

He is talking about us here, Democrats, "we know." "They know if we get this"—if Republicans get this bill—"they probably won't win an election for 50 years, maybe longer."

This is the President of the United States, the head of the Republican Party, the person most responsible for the mess that Americans are rejecting, and he is being pretty candid about what the purpose of this bill is; it is to throw the election. It is to politically interfere with the coming election so that the Republican Party, and, more importantly, the billionaire backers who are pulling the strings and giving it its direction don't lose, don't see split government, don't see compromise, don't see Congress in the people's hands again.

"Republicans have to win this one," he said. "We'll never lose a race for 50 years." And this isn't about political influence with comments like that, from the head of the Republican Party?

You may think he is thinking about some dim and distant future perhaps, that this effort on the floor of the Senate right now to throw the election to the Republican Party isn't immediate.

Whoops. There he goes. "It will guarantee the midterms." The guy says the quiet part out loud. I will give him that.

He tells Republicans: You are going to win the midterms at levels that you can't even believe. How would you win the midterms at levels that you can't even believe? Well, you probably can't believe that you would win the midterms based on current polling as

Americans reject the wars, the spending, the waste, the corruption, the cost increases. You can't even believe it, unless you get this bill—unless you are going to get this bill—and then you are going to win every election for a long time.

It is a conceded point by the head of the Republican Party—Donald Trump—the one who has caused this year of disaster, this year of change and disaster—that the whole purpose of the exercise we are going through is to lock in Republican control—more wars, higher costs, worse corruption—by making elections unwinnable for Democrats for 50 years by guaranteeing Republicans the midterms.

So let's not pretend there is some high-and-mighty, civic-minded motivation for this. That is just a screen. Behind the screen, Trump can't help himself. He admitted what this is all about: It will guarantee the midterms. You are going to win the midterms at levels that you can't even believe, and you are going to win every election for a long time.

We'll never lose a race [for] 50 years.

We will "never lose a race [for] 50 years."

We will have so fixed voting in this country—not enough with the gerrymandering, not enough with the dark money—we now have to fix elections so that Republicans will never lose a race for 50 years. He has admitted it. He has admitted it.

And how do they do that? Well, until recently, Director of Homeland Security former Secretary Noem said: We just want to make sure that the "right people" are voting. The "right people." Gee, who might that be?

And so this whole scheme gets cooked up, marketed falsely as some civic safe voting proposition, when what it really is, is a scheme to influence elections so that the creepy billionaires behind the Republican Party can continue to control the decisions that get made in this town. That is what this is about, plain and simple.

My friends will say: Oh, this is just a voter ID bill. Everybody loves voter ID. You will hear 80–20 more than you can imagine.

Oh, voter ID. Just voter ID. People should have to bring their ID when they vote.

Well, we did that in Rhode Island. It was a bit of a pain. You can imagine an individual person—let's say an 80-year-old woman—widow—living alone, living in, say, a senior high rise in Providence or in Pawtucket. She is not traveling. If she had a passport, it has lapsed. She is not driving. She hasn't had a car in 5 years. Her community is largely in that high rise and people who come to help and help bring her groceries. She has a Social Security card because she is on Social Security, but the Social Security card isn't a photo ID.

So when you bring in voter ID, you have now dumped on that lady a new hassle. She has been voting her whole

life. She has been voting for 60-plus years, and now suddenly they have a problem with her voting—even when she comes downstairs to the voting machines that get set up in the senior center lobby to make it easier for seniors to vote, and everybody in the building knows her; but no ID, no vote.

So, in Rhode Island, we went through the hassle of helping people who needed an ID—who for perfectly legitimate reasons didn't have one—get an ID. It was unnecessary. We had essentially zero voter fraud, but we did it and we put in the work and it worked out fine.

So let's not pretend this is just a voter ID law. This points its attack at voter registration. If you move, you have to reregister to vote. If you are young and are registering to vote for the first time, that is where you run into the obstacles designed to prevent certain people—people who aren't the "right people"—from being able to vote. That is where you run into the problem.

And worse than that, they are trying to take the voter information that we entrust to our secretary of state and to our elections board. They are trying to get the private information of voters in our voter rolls and put it into a national website controlled by, oh, the Department of Homeland Security, the ones who are running ICE around in neighborhoods, the one who ran their agents through the Rhode Island courthouse and threatened a judge with smashing his car windows when he tried to vouch for his high school intern whom the ICE agents wrongly thought was a 30-year-old person they were looking for. We are going to trust the entire country's worth of voter information to that operation?

Look at what just happened in Fulton County. In Fulton County, a Trump U.S. attorney from Missouri sent the FBI in Georgia into the election headquarters to seize all of the voter data that they had. I have separately explained what a completely fouled-up operation that was and how the way in which they did that search warrant left enormous holes for any defendant, who was later charged based on evidence obtained in that search warrant, to run a truck through that prosecution.

They violated really basic rules that prosecutors follow—prosecution 101—rookie, dumb errors. And that leads to only one of two conclusions: One is they are idiots. They are incompetent. They have no idea what they are doing. And there is some sense around that because the local U.S. attorney in Georgia wanted no part of this mess. It was being directed by Washington through Missouri into Georgia. The FBI special agent in charge in Georgia didn't seem to like it much. He got run out of his job—presumably for objecting to this nonsense.

But there is a worse theory than that this was a completely incompetent screw up of a search warrant execution, and that is: They didn't mind leaving

all these holes for a future defendant—somebody charged on the basis of that evidence—to exploit. They didn't mind opening these unnecessary vulnerabilities in a case for a defendant who might later be charged to exploit because they never thought there would be a defendant.

The point wasn't to do a criminal prosecution or even a criminal investigation; the point was to use the search warrant process falsely in order to get their hands on a massive amount of voter data in a swing State. That is being litigated right now, and we will find out.

But that is the kind of effort by this administration to use the Federal Government to seize private voter data. That would be exactly consistent with why we need to worry about DHS, which only wants the "right people" to vote, getting a massive amount of personal voter data.

In Rhode Island, our Secretary of State is fighting that right now because he understands that Rhode Islanders want their voter data to be private, to be safe, and not to be part of some massive political election interference operation run using ICE, using the FBI, using DHS, and using this voter information to hand out to political operatives, to make sure that a weaponized Federal Government is not used to try to throw the election.

It is no small thing to have the Department of Homeland Security want data on every voting American. In recent years, Republican heads would have exploded about that idea. It used to be a party that cared about voter privacy; that in the contest between an individual and the government, tried to take the side of the individual. But now that their billionaires control the government—flip. Now they are on the side of the government, and they want your data.

It is so bad that it seems they have even had one of their little "Musk rats"—the "doggy boys"—running around in government. Remember that operation when Musk was the President's close adviser, and there were DOGE people? Turns out, there may even have been your Social Security data taken. We will find out more about that.

So this is no small thing. And if you want to know what the motive is, just ask the people who are running this. We just want to make sure the "right people" vote. "We'll never lose a race [for] 50 years" if you pass this bill. "It will guarantee the midterms." You are going to win the midterms at levels you can't even believe and you are going to "win every election for a long time."

That is putting the fix in. That is using the power of government to put the fix in to fix the elections, to choose who runs the government. That is about as un-American as it gets.

So why is it that they are so afraid about the midterms? What is it that makes them have to put in place mech-

anisms—from voter ID to registration restrictions to data control—that will give them the tools to guarantee the midterms? Why not run on the record? Because the record stinks—that is why—and voters know it.

This is where President Trump's approval rating has gone. He is down 15 percent. He is down more than 25 percent since when he came in. That is a crash in confidence. And I believe this ended before this Iran—what did he call it?—"excursion" that has driven up gas prices by about a dollar a gallon already, with no end in sight.

So they are looking at an election disaster, and for a really good reason. Here are Trump's job approval ratings. His disapprovals have been going up and up and up to nearly 60. His approval has been going down and down and down to below 40. There is a more than 20-point swing between his disapproval and his approval. That is a politically lethal place to be. That is a signal that you have made such a mess of your unified control of government that voters want something different, want something new, want a change, are sick of the nonsense. And when you are looking at that and you are looking just a few months down at November—man, time to make sure you change the law so that we can make sure the right people—the right people—are voting.

Let's take a look at a few examples of why it is that Trump's disapproval is more than 20 points above his approval. Why is it that they are in such trouble politically? Why is it that these approval ratings have dropped 15 points and 25 from before net zero? This is a real problem.

And we are not the only ones looking at this data. The billionaires who run the Republican Party these days—the billionaires who tell Trump what to do and boss him around and give him big gifts and super deals for his family and his cronies and his friends—they are watching it too. They have never had it so good right now. They can basically secretly, quietly run the U.S. Government through the Republican Party. What a deal. Poor men wannabe rich. Rich men wanna be King. And they get to be King from the shadows, with dark money and influence and a Republican Party that hops to their tune. So they are not happy either.

That is why they need emergency measures that will guarantee the midterms. That is what we are involved in today—trying to make sure elections are fair, trying to make sure everybody has a shot to vote, trying to make sure—for real—this is an election that reflects what the American people get to choose.

Why are these numbers so terrible for Trump and Republicans? Because things aren't so great for the American people right now. The annual cost of residential electricity is up in almost every State in the last year. In some cases, it is up a lot—\$278, \$210, \$123, \$159, \$171 up in Maine. People under-

stand that their electric bills are going up, and if they are paying attention—if they are paying attention—they understand that their electricity bills are going up because Trump and his administration are deliberately pushing clean energy away from the grid. They are deliberately keeping cheap, clean energy off the grid so that, for any given level of demand, the grid has to go where if it doesn't have the cheap, clean energy? It has to go to the polluting fossil fuel plants.

Those plants set the grid price when they are called up, and when they set the grid price, they are more expensive than clean energy, so everybody's costs go up. All that excess money—the billions of dollars that get sucked out of consumers' pockets, out of ratepayers' pockets when they have to pay the higher prices of fossil fuel compared to the lower prices of clean energy—that whole delta of billions of dollars flows where? Right to Trump's billionaire fossil fuel donors, to the ones that he went to in Mar-a-Lago and said: Give me a billion dollars, and I will give you everything you want. I need your money to win this race.

And what did they do? They coughed up hundreds of millions of dollars. Did they get to the billion? We don't know because so much of the money is so dark. But we know they got hundreds of millions to Trump. Now he is paying them back by stopping and slowing down clean energy, which would lower costs for people, and instead he drives the cost up. That is why so much of this is happening.

I will give you an example. The Trump administration has messed around twice with the offshore wind farm off of Rhode Island called Revolution Wind. Out of the clear, blue sky, for no cause, they dropped a stop work order on the project, stopping it dead when it was about 80-plus percent complete. Well, that caused them a little problem because the Trump administration had been in court defending that very project against fossil fuel front groups who were suing it to slow down its arrival on the grid.

So the lawyers—the regular, normal Federal lawyers who were in there defending this, defending their permit—suddenly had to pull a 180 about the same project, in the same courtroom, and suddenly say "Oh, no. That project we have been defending until this minute is suddenly now all bad" because of this ridiculous stop work order.

Well, the judge didn't take long to throw out that stop work order because it was illegal and even preposterous, and the Trump administration then let the appeal period expire. So there is no longer a time to appeal it. So it is like: OK, that is done. Back to work, everybody.

Sure enough, they went back to work. What happened 30 days later, 2 days before Christmas, without notice? Men and women going out to work on these projects were told: Nope. New

stop work order. Sorry about your Christmas. Not sure when you will ever come back to work. Too bad you were relying on all those nice wages. You are done now.

Well, fortunately for the project, that second stop work order crashed and burned in court just as badly as the first illegal stop work order had.

My point is they went to enormous, illegal effort to slow down that project. Why? Because, by contract, Revolution Wind is going to bring 9-cent kilowatt hours to our Rhode Island grid. Nine-cent kilowatt hours is what they sell for by contract. And how much does it cost on our grid, on average? Eighteen cents. Revolution Wind was going to bring 350,000 homes' worth of low-cost, 9-cent clean power onto our grid, so they wanted to stop it because then, without that clean, inexpensive power, the grid would have to go up, up, up what they call the generation stack, calling up more and more different units to burn gas and oil and make electricity. And all that extra money gets moved from customers' pockets to Trump's big donors, his big fossil fuel donors. It is a scheme. It is on purpose.

These people may not know it yet, but by November, I hope they will learn that the reason their electric rates went up was on purpose—on purpose—so that Trump and his cronies could pay off his big fossil fuel donors with all that extra revenue from their delay and their blocking of cheaper, cleaner energy—in the billions. In the billions.

Of course, it is not just electricity where people know that they have an administration that is not looking out for them but is looking out for the big corporations, the big polluters, the big donors. You probably can't read this, so I will read it.

"My cost of living has increased": 80 to 16.

"My grocery costs have gone up": 79 to 17.

"My utility costs like electricity have gone up": 69 to 22.

These are huge numbers that match the dissatisfaction I showed already with where Trump is—more than 20 points in the hole with voters and going the wrong way, approval rating collapsing before the whole Iran mess has kicked into voters' budgets. It is a real mess.

Our electricity prices, look where they are going—up, up, up, up, up, for the exact reason I said: because the Trump administration is blocking clean, cheap energy to force the grid to have to spend more and more money on Trump's big fossil fuel donors.

When a really big clean energy plant comes onto the grid, the grid moves to it because it is the cheapest. They pull the cheapest power first to meet demand. So when a big wind farm comes on, when a big solar array comes on, that means there is a fossil fuel plant somewhere at the top of that generation stack that doesn't get to run anymore, and the owners of that fossil fuel

plant don't get paid for running it, and the fossil fuel dealers who fuel that plant don't get paid. So they have a vested interest in blocking clean energy, and they are doing it because basically they have infiltrated and occupy the Trump administration.

Just look at the appointees and look at the behavior, and all of it drives costs up. Electricity prices are surging in the United States, and what people are going to understand by November is that those electric prices are surging on purpose. Ratepayers are being dragooned into a scheme to pay back Trump's big donors with their money.

Costs of housing: up, 69 to 21.

Healthcare costs: up, 61 to 26.

Medicaid has been cut. People already know that. Half of the Americans already understand that Medicaid has been cut even though the cuts were postponed until after the election. Wait until they actually land in people's pocketbooks.

Social Security and Medicare have been cut: 42 to 40.

That is where all that is.

But check all of these: cost of living, grocery, utility, housing, healthcare—60 to 80 versus 26 to 16.

The American people know what is going on, they know what is being done to them, and they know who has done it.

So that is why they have just got to make sure only the right people are voting.

We did some work on another big cost area for Americans when I was the chairman of the Budget Committee.

One of the biggest expenditures that a family has is home insurance on their home. It is very expensive, and it is going dramatically up. In some cases, not only are the premiums going dramatically up, but the insurance companies are finding that they can't insure the property any longer; it is too risky.

So the poor owner gets a notice of nonrenewal—that is what it is called. You have been a loyal customer for 15, 20 years, you have made your premium payments on time every time, and the company sends a letter to you in the mail, comes through your mailslot: Sorry. Sorry. We can't insure you any longer. You are going have to find a new insurance company.

This creates a huge hassle in the life of that family, which almost always ends up with a more expensive policy or one with a lot less coverage.

This is happening all over the country, and it is happening because of climate risk. It is happening because along our coasts, the rising sea levels, the warmer oceans, the worse storms, the bigger hurricanes that come ashore are making it impossible for insurers to provide insurance to homeowners.

It is also happening out West, although out West, it is not coastal storms and flooding that are making people's homes uninsurable; it is wildfire.

Whether it is wildfire or whether it is coastal flooding, the cascade is the

same; the dominoes that fall are the same.

First is you have the climate risk. And why do we have the climate risk? We have the climate risk because the fossil industry, which is now running the Trump administration, has spent billions of dollars and decades in Congress making sure we let them pollute for free. And they have won. They have succeeded. It is still free to pollute carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. We have never put a price on carbon emissions.

Nothing else is free to pollute. Nothing should be free to pollute. You don't get to dump chemicals in a river and get away with it just because the river carries it away.

So this homeowners insurance problem is a massive, massive cost problem for homeowners across the country.

Here in Florida—you can see how acute the problem is down in Florida. In Florida, I think we are at \$14,000 average homeowners insurance for a standard \$400,000 policy, and it is predicted, depending on the county you are in, to double, triple, or quadruple.

What does it do to the value of your home when a \$14,000 home insurance cost doubles or triples? What if you now have a \$40,000 instead of a \$14,000 annual carrying cost to own your home? Its value crashes.

That is the cascade. You go from climate risk; to uninsurability; to, oops, now I can't get a mortgage on this property because if you can't insure a property, no one will issue a mortgage on it, to its value crashing, to a recession.

Those warnings are all over the place—and not from Save The Whales, not from the League of Conservation Voters, not from the Sierra Club, but from the former risk manager of Goldman Sachs, from the former head of the Bank of England, from the international Financial Stability Board, from the former Chief Economist of Freddie Mac. The warnings are legion.

Here is another cost that families are more and more dealing with. This is the rate of nonrenewal increase, where the insurance company says: Sorry, your property is now uninsurable—at least by our standards.

Here are nonrenewal rates by State. Again, you see the coastal States hit pretty hard, but there is also wildfire coming in.

This was the work of my Budget Committee. Then some other groups followed up and did some more detailed work.

This is where home insurance premiums are changing. They are already up. What this did was to look forward, not to say "OK, they are up; they have doubled in the last few years" but "Where are they going to go? Where do we predict they will go?" The prediction here is that insurance premiums are going to climb as much as 300 percent in the 30-year period of a mortgage holder buying right now.

What does he have to look forward to? Well, if you are down here and you

are already paying 14,000 bucks a year—it is even more in Miami—and it is going to go up 300 percent, it is going to quadruple, these are people who have a real cost problem now, and they have a real cost problem coming, and behind that comes a real home values problem.

If you are a Palm Beach billionaire and you want to swap mansions, that is fine. You can do that. You don't even need a mortgage; you just pay with cash. But if you are living north of Tampa in a development and you bought your house with a mortgage and you want to sell it, the person you want to sell it to is going to need a mortgage. If your property is now unmortgageable because it is uninsurable, there goes your market of buyers.

We talked to people in Florida when we did this investigation who literally cannot sell their home at any price. It is not fancy enough for a billionaire, and it is not mortgageable and insurable for a normal person. They are just stuck. They are just stuck.

Here, what the map shows is where they expect to see changes in home value, again, in the next 30 years, in the period of a mortgage entered into at the time, and they are looking at changes in value, dropped 20, 40, 60, 80, and even 100 percent—a total wipeout of home value—based on that home insurance, mortgage, property values cascade because we won't take care of the climate danger that everybody in their right mind knows exists.

The fossil fuel industry has a big reckoning coming from that mess, and they do not want to be responsive to voters. They want the White House and the House and the Senate controlled by a party that they control. They want this election to keep Republicans in power so that they are not held to account for the fraudulent climate denial, for the dark money corruption, and for the looming catastrophe in home insurance rates. And the way they do that is making sure with this bill that “we just make sure only the right people are voting.” So the stakes are very high right now.

I will close, because I think I have the floor only for another few minutes, by talking just briefly about Kansas. Why would a Rhode Islander want to talk about Kansas? I will tell you why. Because they tried this in Kansas. They had a similar law in Kansas, and it went to court, and the court threw it out as unconstitutional. The SAVE America Act resembles a law in Kansas that was decided to be unconstitutional.

There are some other interesting things the court found. Across 19 years, the proponents of that law could only show 67 noncitizens registering to vote or even attempting to register to vote. Over 19 years, 67 people.

If you look just at the Presidential elections in that period, Kansans voted in this number: 5.5 million votes cast. So those 67 people are 0.0012 percent of voters.

For the pretext of trying to deal with those 67 attempts, the effect was to keep 31,000 legitimate Kansas voters from voting—31,000 kept from voting to solve a problem of 67 that didn't even exist because most of them were only attempts.

So this is a solution to a nonproblem. The solution that it provides is to the problem of Trump and Republicans having made such a hash of things that they are now in a 20-plus point hole.

So the billionaires who run the Republican Party and, through the Republican Party, run this body, run the House, run the Oval Office, make all the decisions for their own benefit—this is their clawing hand coming out of what seems like election disaster ahead to try to just grab back the power they are losing because their Republican Party has made such a hash of things. That is what this bill is. It is the dead zombie hand of the billionaires who are seeing the exact same approval rating as Trump taking the Republicans into a crash of an election and trying to solve that problem by guaranteeing the midterms by making sure that just the right people vote.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LEE. Would the gentleman yield for a question?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. No.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

IRAN

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, it has been a long weekend up here. We have a lot of balls in the air. We have DHS funding. We have the SAVE Act and a war going on in the Middle East. All these are demanding our attention simultaneously.

I would like to shed a little light here. What makes this job generally challenging isn't the workload. I worked much harder as an obstetrician delivering a baby most every day, at least every other night if not every night of the every week. It is when you are trying to have serious policy conversations up here and you are up against misinformation, moving goalposts, and arguments that seem completely detached from the facts on the ground. The frustration can be exhausting. But today, I decided to start with the easy stuff.

Let's talk about Iran. First of all, I want to mourn the loss of the 13 soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice and let their Gold Star families know that we are grateful for the price their loved ones paid and that we will be there for them as they go through their mourning.

I want to praise the military, let them know I stand beside them, that our family stands beside them. My dad served. My brother served. I served. My son is serving. We support our military, and we salute the incredible job they are doing.

Now, as we all know, President Trump had four basic goals when the war started. Don't let the legacy media confuse you. The four basic goals are

basically to end Iran's ability to have missiles and navy nukes and destroy Iran's ability to fund an armed terrorist.

I would say we are 90 percent there. I am not on the Intelligence Committee. I don't have the inside numbers. But it looks like to me we are 90 percent there. Now, I warn folks that the last 10 percent may be as hard as the first 90 percent. But they are doing an incredible job, and we want to do everything we can to make them successful so that we are safe for decades to come.

SAVE AMERICA ACT

Next, I want to talk about the SAVE Act just for a minute. As you all know, the SAVE Act has three pillars. It wants to make sure that only citizens register to vote, it wants to make sure every voter has an ID, and we want some guardrails around mail-in ballots.

I think it is important to remember that 70 percent of Democrats and 80 percent of Americans believe in voter ID, and it was just this week that Democrats voted against a stand-alone voter ID law.

And I do want to get back to some of the comments—the erroneous comments—that my colleague from Rhode Island made. You would think he would know better. He is a lawyer. He is a former attorney general.

Kansas did have a law that required you to be a citizen to vote. It did go to the Supreme Court, but the Supreme Court didn't say that was unconstitutional. What they said is: Look, if Congress wants it that way, if your State legislature wants it that way, then you need to legislate it.

And that is what we are doing right here. We are trying to make our elections safer, to make them more secure, to make sure that just American citizens vote.

So be careful—be careful what you are listening to up here. There are absolutely some very erroneous statements and conflation made by people that are smarter than I am when it comes to the law.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. President, I want to sit down and talk a little bit more specifically about DHS funding though.

Again, it is important to remember that it took 18 days for Democrats to respond to the President's offer—18 days, crickets, nothing from the Democrats. That is because they are the party of “defund the police.” They don't want ICE to be working.

And then it took over a month for Democrats to be willing to sit down with Republicans. It has been over a month since DHS was defunded, and it wasn't until later, at the very end of this week, that Democrats were willing to sit down with Republicans to have any type of conversation.

Now, as near as I can tell, there are two issues left separating us from funding DHS—at least on the surface, that is what it looks like to me—that prevent us from funding TSA, from funding FEMA, the Coast Guard, or the cyber security defense team.

Again, these issues don't happen in silos, right? We have this war in Iran. We don't have DHS funded. I am as worried and concerned about American citizens here at home, about their safety, as I am our soldiers in harm's way overseas.

So there are two issues, at least that is what the Democrats have told us—the two main issues that we haven't figured out here. One is demasking ICE officers, and two is the issue of warrants for those who entered our country illegally.

Let's quickly touch the demasking issue. That is a nonstarter. I am not going to put the families of my ICE agents in harm's way either. That is because, when the names are revealed of these ICE officers, their family back home, their children, their spouses, their lives are being threatened. So we are not going to do that.

I am all for them being more recognizable. I think that is straightforward. But maybe what is not quite as straightforward is this warrant issue. And, again, I have to admit that I needed to try to understand this a little bit better myself—the difference between a judicial warrant versus an administrative warrant.

Now, why is this important? Because I continue to hear arguments in this Chamber that don't square with the facts, and I think the American people deserve to hear the truth about how the immigration enforcement system actually works.

Now, as you know, my Democrat colleagues want to overhaul—really, they want to destroy—the warrant system that ICE uses to arrest or remove people in this country illegally. Now, on the surface, maybe that sounds like a good idea, and it is certainly worth discussing. But when you really take a close look at the law—and, remember, I am just a country doctor, and I am the last one that needs to be up here pontificating about our legal system when it comes to immigration. But I think it is important that even I, as a country doctor, understand that their case evaporates when you look at the truth.

Now, here is what the current court system requires. Before ICE makes an interior arrest, officers must have probable cause. That is an important fact to remember—the term “probable cause.” It is a legal standard as old as our Republic that the person in front of them is removable under the Federal law, that they have probable cause to remove this person.

Now, they have to document that. It is reviewable. It is not a rubberstamp. These ICE officers would lose their jobs if they didn't follow this protocol. It is no different than when a highway patrolman pulls you over for speeding. He or she has to have probable cause. They can't just pull you over because you have a hat on or because you have sunglasses on. They need to have some type of probable cause. Maybe you didn't use your blinkers when you

changed lanes. But they have to have probable cause.

Now, some of my colleagues are blurring a very important distinction, and it is worth clearing up: the difference between a judicial warrant and an administrative warrant. A judicial warrant is issued by a Federal judge in a criminal proceeding. An administrative warrant is issued by a trained Federal officer in a civil process.

Immigration enforcement has always been civil, not criminal. There are different tools for different systems, and conflating them, as my colleagues are across the aisle, once again—again, they are all lawyers. They all should know this better than I do. So they are purposely deceiving the public—or, at least, a deliberate attempt to confuse the public.

Let me be direct about what an administrative warrant does not authorize. It does not allow ICE to enter a private home. It does not allow them to walk in the back of a business or workplace.

Let me emphasize this: Without either the owner's consent or a judicial warrant signed by a Federal judge, the door stays closed. These limits are very real. They are enforceable, and they are already built into the system.

Now, I think there are two situations that exist, for the most part, when ICE officers work inside the country.

Now, one, the first bucket is for someone who has already been through the immigration court. They have had a full hearing before an immigration judge. They have made their arguments. They could appeal if they chose to. And a final removal order was entered. Then ICE executes that order. This is one way the administrative order is used. The due process has already happened in an immigration court with an immigration judge presiding.

Demanding a second judicial signoff at that point isn't protecting anyone's rights. It is running out the clock, and we all know it.

So that is the first bucket. Someone has been through this entire process. They have had an immigration judge make the decision, but instead of leaving the country like they were supposed to, they are still inside the country, and our ICE officers are charged with removing that person.

Now, here is the second bucket. For those immigrants who haven't yet been through the proceedings—and, again, they are in the country illegally to start with, right. For those who haven't been through the proceedings, ICE makes an administrative arrest, but they have probable cause to start with. They have probable cause. They make an administrative arrest, and then they make a notice to appear before an immigration judge, typically months or years down the line, unfortunately.

The person gets their day in court. They get a lawyer. They present evidence. They could appeal all the way to a Federal circuit court.

Now, that is due process, right? It is quite an expense for the American people to pay for, and it is also a risk to the American public by allowing these people to stay in our Nation, many times with social services paid for by Americans. But it certainly is due process.

Guess what. This system has been in place for decades. It has been upheld by Federal courts. It was used by administrative courts of both parties, including the ones my colleagues across the aisle seem to remember so fondly.

The Supreme Court has affirmed the broad authority Congress delegated to immigration enforcement officers. It is not a gray area. This is settled law being relitigated for their own political purposes.

Now, I will grant this: There are real problems out there, and they are worth fixing. Immigration courts are backlogged. Detention facilities are strained.

If my colleagues want to fund the courts, clear the backlog, and strengthen the legal representation for those in proceedings, now that we have our border secure and we have stopped the hemorrhaging, then count me in. Let's make this broken system better.

But it is not the issue at hand. It is not the warrant issue. There is a significant difference between saying the system needs more resources and saying the system is unconstitutional.

Let me say that again, there is a big difference between saying the system needs more resources versus saying the system is unconstitutional. One is a policy debate. The other is not supported by facts, the law, or decades of court decisions.

Now, back home in Kansas, we have a simple standard: If the fence is doing its job, you don't tear it down. If a gate is broken, you fix it. If the fence posts are leaning, you straighten them out. You don't have to come bulldoze the whole fence and call it progress.

The warrant system is doing its job. It is grounded in probable cause. It provides due process. It has been tested in court, and it has upheld, and it keeps us safe. So let's stop pretending otherwise.

It all makes you wonder. It really does make you wonder: What do the Democrats really want? Their arguments disappear when it comes to the two things they are talking about, when it comes to the warrant issue or demasking. What is it that they really want?

We have to be concerned. Is it that they want these 30 million illegal aliens in this country to be given amnesty? Is that really their goal here? Is that really their goal? Why don't they just say it? Why don't they just come out and say it?

The Democrats, what they really want, is for 30 million illegal aliens to be given amnesty so they can vote.

It is time we demask the Democrats who are telling false misrepresentations of immigration law, and fund DHS.

It is time to get the SAVE Act across the floor.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, first let me commend my colleague Senator WHITEHOUSE for his excellent remarks that show all the dangers of the SAVE Act. And like my colleague, I rise today to speak out against the deceptively named SAVE America Act, a bill that would create new barriers for American citizens to exercise their most important right: the right to vote.

The success of our Nation, both as a source of opportunity for all Americans and as an inspiration for freedom-loving people everywhere, has depended upon strong civic engagement from all Americans. When more Americans vote, our government is more representative of the people. It is more responsive to their needs. It has more legitimacy, and it is a better steward of their tax dollars and public resources.

I am here to support laws that make it easier for American citizens to vote. The SAVE America Act will not do that. In fact, it will suppress the right to vote.

The SAVE Act is being portrayed as a simple voter ID bill that is supported by a vast majority of Americans. If the bill simply required every American to show an ID at the polls, then I would not be ringing such a loud alarm.

I represent a State that has a sensible voter ID law and that regularly reviews its voter rolls. This approach has been extremely effective.

The SAVE Act does not simply require everyone to prove their identity when they vote; instead, it requires them to prove their citizenship at the time of registration.

Now, that sounds very simple and very appealing, and people might ask: What is the difference if you have to prove citizenship to register versus showing your ID at the polling place? But as I will explain, proving citizenship at the time of registration requires a total and complete overhaul of our election system and will force millions of American citizens to scramble to gather the right documentation—if they can ever do so at all—while imposing very costly and burdensome unfunded mandates on the States.

That is a charitable version, which assumes that this bill is a good-faith effort to improve election integrity and security. But make no mistake, this bill is a bad-faith effort to help Donald Trump and his potential successors stay in power no matter what the voters say in 2026 and 2028. It is loaded up with additional measures that allow the Federal Government, under his control, to deter people from voting and then to challenge people's votes after they are cast.

It is designed to make people fearful that our elections are not safe and secure. That includes every single election that my current colleagues won. Now, if our elections are so rife with

cheating and fraud, as my Republican colleagues would lead you to believe, then do they also think their own election victories are tainted or illegitimate? I think this is a question that the sponsors of the SAVE Act need to answer before we vote.

Here is how the SAVE Act bolsters the tremendous power and resources of the Federal Government and places them at Donald Trump's disposal.

The bill compels the States to share their most sensitive information—their full voter rolls—with the Department of Homeland Security, a Department that has flagrantly violated the American people's civil liberties under the Trump administration.

The bill requires the States to review their voter rolls and purge them of people who have not shown “documentary proof of citizenship,” which, based on current law, could encompass millions of law-abiding American citizens. That is right. Technically, millions of Americans could be wiped off the rolls as soon as this bill is passed and signed.

The bill establishes a private right of action allowing anyone to challenge a State official for registering voters that the litigant believes are illegitimate, which means every American's registration is now at risk of being questioned or invalidated. This will open the floodgates to thousands, perhaps millions, of frivolous cases and tangle every election up in knots with never-ending litigation. Indeed, given the record of filing outlandish lawsuits after the 2020 election, it is not hard to imagine that Donald Trump will use this law to contest the registration of everyone he believes is opposed or at least in areas the election is expected to be close.

Mr. LEE. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. REED. No, I will not yield.

By the way, these mandates and requirements would be effective immediately, meaning they must be implemented for the 2026 election, which, I should point out, is already underway. There are primaries that have been completed in several States, and one could raise issues, if this bill passes, on the outcome of those primaries simply by invoking what the SAVE Act does, which is to question the validity of one's citizenship.

Of course, there is no one better suited to exploit this confusion and chaos than Donald Trump. That is how he has operated as a businessman, as a candidate, and as an elected official. When the bogus suits on the 2020 election results that he and his surrogates filed failed in court after court—62 times—he fomented an insurrection on January 6, 2021, in an effort to cling to power illegitimately.

On that day, 46 of my Republican colleagues had the fortitude to say no to Trump and voted to certify the election, which means they acknowledge the fact that Trump won in 2020. Today, many of these colleagues are prepared to hand Trump powerful new

tools to subvert free and fair elections. They know what Trump will do with this power, but they are willing to hand it to him anyway.

President Trump said that he wants the Federal Government, under his command, to “take over” elections and “nationalize the voting.” The SAVE Act is the vehicle for him to do that.

Does anyone really believe that Donald Trump—the man who stoked that insurrection in which we all fled for safety off this floor, a man who has never accepted an electoral defeat even when the other candidate got more votes—all of a sudden genuinely cares about election integrity? Nobody should be fooled into thinking that.

Since the Civil War until now, our history has been all about securing the right to vote for all Americans—women, African Americans, and young people who could be called upon to fight and die for their country.

Now the Party of Lincoln has shed its proud legacy by advancing policies that would disqualify tens of millions of Americans from voting.

If the SAVE Act is enacted, it will be the latest assault on voting rights that we have seen under the Trump administration through partisan gerrymandering, which he insisted upon and which was unique—perhaps unprecedented historically—of a President asking to redistrict before the 10-year census window, the deadly insurrection of January 6, as I mentioned, and the subsequent mass pardons of those individuals who tried to overturn an election. Also looming in the background is the Supreme Court, which has gutted campaign finance laws, nullified key parts of the Voting Rights Act, and declined to prevent gerrymandering that has interfered with the bedrock principle of “one person, one vote.”

Let me now discuss the specific reasons that the SAVE Act is so dangerous and why I will oppose it.

Simply put, the SAVE Act could disenfranchise tens of millions of Americans, and I cannot support any bill that makes it harder for law-abiding American citizens to vote.

Now, I can see people saying: What is the big deal about making someone show ID?

Well, like many slick sales pitches, this policy is really a bunch of “gotchas” that will stand between millions of voters and the ballot box.

Under current law, a vast majority of Americans vote by attesting to their citizenship and by showing a government-issued photo identification card—usually a driver's license—showing that person listed on the voter rolls is the person who is actually casting the vote. The penalties for violating these requirements are severe. This has made the system simple and secure. Indeed, instances of voter fraud are so rare that calling them minuscule would be a gross overestimate.

But under the SAVE Act, a person will need to demonstrate their citizenship in order to register to vote. That

can be accomplished only through either a U.S. passport or through a government-issued photo identification card plus a birth certificate with a name that matches what is on the photo ID.

According to the Brennan Center, more than 9 percent of voting-age Americans—those are 21 million people—don't have documents sufficient to prove their citizenship at this time, either a passport or a birth certificate that is readily available. Maybe they are at the home of another family member or are stored in a safety deposit box. And 4 million Americans don't have these documents available at all for many different reasons. Maybe they were lost, destroyed, or stolen. These millions of Americans are most at risk of being prevented from voting.

Americans can, of course, use a passport as documentary proof of citizenship, but more than half of Americans—an estimated 150 million to 200 million citizens—do not have a passport, and to get one, you need to find your birth certificate and a government-issued photo ID, submit the paperwork, pay \$165, and then wait a month for it to arrive, which would really bother someone who suddenly, in October, decides that they must vote, and they are legally entitled to do so but can't get a passport.

Proponents of the bill say that Americans can just use a REAL ID to satisfy the requirement. This is a State-issued driver's license which complies with Federal security standards established after 9/11 to limit counterfeiting; and the SAVE Act does say that a REAL ID is acceptable. It says we will accept the REAL ID so long as it "indicates the applicant is a citizen of the United States," but that is a false premise.

Fifteen secretaries of state, including Gregg Amore of Rhode Island, wrote:

REAL IDs do not indicate citizenship status. Even if the federal laws for REAL ID were amended, the nearly 140 million REAL IDs that have been issued over the last decade could not be used as proof of citizenship.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the letter from the secretary of state of Rhode Island be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

February 12, 2025.

SENATORS REED AND WHITEHOUSE AND CONGRESSMEN AMO AND MAGAZINER: I write to urge you to vote against the federal legislation known as the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act should it come to a floor vote. Passage of this Act would threaten one of the most core principles of our democracy—our right to make our voices heard—by making access to the ballot box more difficult for millions of Americans. The SAVE Act is creating mistrust in our elections and solving a problem that simply doesn't exist. The Act's main objective is to require election officials to verify proof of American citizenship at the time of voter

registration, positioned as a solution to the false notion that non-citizens are voting in American elections in great numbers.

This Act deviates from pro-voter and pro-democracy policies that make it easier for people to cast a ballot by placing an undue burden on voters. The law is already clear. The United States Constitution, Rhode Island Constitution, and Rhode Island General Laws all explicitly state that only eligible United States citizens are permitted to vote in federal elections. It is a felony for a non-US citizen to cast a ballot in an American election.

Should the Act pass, the two most common ways an individual would be able to prove their citizenship would be by supplying a US passport or birth certificate. *USA Today* reports that only 51% of Americans have a US passport, and the Brennan Center indicates that nine percent of adults (21.3 million people) don't have proof of citizenship readily available. Additionally, millions of Americans, mainly spouses who have changed their name after marriage, currently have a different name than what is reflected on their birth certificate.

Individuals who do not have the required documentation would need to pay the associated fees to obtain those documents. Currently, the cost is \$165 for a Passport Book/\$65 for a Passport card. In the city of Providence, a birth certificate costs \$22. This is a clear violation of the 24th Amendment to the United States Constitution, effectively creating a poll tax in order for eligible citizens to participate in an election. In addition to placing a monetary burden on voters, this Act creates an unfunded mandate on election officials. The Act provides no funding for changes to voter registration systems and voter registration forms, or resources for a robust education campaign to ensure voters understand the dangerous changes this Act makes.

As a government by and for the people, it is imperative that we work together to resist legislation that disenfranchises our constituents and creates barriers for voters and election officials. As Rhode Island's chief elections official, I am available to provide any assistance you may need in that effort. If you have any questions, please contact Deputy Secretary of State Rob Rock.

Sincerely,

GREGG M. AMORE.

Mr. REED. Now, in Texas, for example, to get a REAL ID, an applicant "must provide proof of lawful presence in the United States." That is according to the instructions to form DL-53, which is the document the Texas Department of Public Safety uses to inform noncitizens of the documentation that they can use to get a REAL ID. Yes, that is correct. You don't need to be a citizen to get a REAL ID in Texas. For example, individuals seeking asylum are eligible for a Texas REAL ID if they provide "immigration documentation with an alien number." So non-citizens who are ineligible to vote can still get REAL IDs. By the way, a REAL ID issued by Texas does not indicate the holder's country of citizenship. So, in Texas, having a REAL ID won't allow you to register to vote under the SAVE Act.

Now, some people may still think that it is easier to get acceptable documents and register to vote in person, but that hasn't been the experience of my constituent who wrote me:

My wife is a native Rhode Islander. We just secured a certified copy of her [Rhode Island]

birth certificate from the State Archives a few weeks ago—primarily to ensure that she's able to vote in 2026 and beyond. The fact that we're forced to think about obtaining certified birth certificates as a precondition of voting is completely antithetical to our actual right to vote.

Now, if you don't have money to spare to get the proper documents, if you can't easily get to your town hall to fill in the gaps in your paperwork, if you are just too busy living your life, what are you to do? Faced with these barriers, you may just give up and not vote at all.

Let me tick through the Americans who will be the most directly affected if this legislation passes.

First, there are 69 million women who have changed their names after getting married. Their birth certificates do not reflect that change. While many of them have access to their original birth certificates, that alone would not be enough to register under the SAVE Act. They will also need to produce official documentation that their name has changed and matches what is on their current government-issued photo ID.

Now, if you have been divorced and remarried, good luck getting all that together. This isn't just a barrier for recently married women who haven't gotten around to updating their papers. Women of all ages will be affected.

Another one of my constituents reported an enormous headache with just proving her identity in order to get a REAL ID. And, mind you, a REAL ID is just a modern driver's license that doesn't even indicate citizenship status.

As a divorced woman it took me 3 visits to get my Real ID. The first time I did not realize I needed my marriage certificate. The second time, I brought the divorce decree and it was not accepted. The third time, I had to go to the town hall and have my marriage certificate made. This bill is so damaging to the women of this country.

Can you imagine the hardship that many other women will have to go through not only to get a REAL ID but also to document their citizenship under the system established by the SAVE Act?

Another one of my constituents has similar fears about her elderly mother being turned away from the polls:

If the SAVE Act gets passed, my husband and I still have the ability to vote. But my 85-year-old mother will not. She does not have a passport and changed her name when she married my father in 1964. Please do not let Trump do this to our female voters.

These barriers aren't being faced just by women in blue States. They are being felt in red States too. Take Brandi Halladay from Utah—Senator LEE's home State. She wrote a letter to the editor of the Salt Lake Tribune on March 15:

When my 80-year-old mother moved to Utah, she needed to get a new ID and register to vote. She had to show a birth certificate, her marriage license to my father, her divorce papers from my father (in which she kept his last name to match that of her children) and then her marriage license to her second husband.

This was the only way to trace the name on her birth certificate to her current last name.

This took two trips to the DMV, which was not an easy task for someone of her age who uses a walker, and she was fortunate to have my help in tracking down the relevant documents.

Now imagine trying to do this for a person who may have moved frequently over the course of their lives and has lost documents along the way. They will need to contact various offices, possibly across many states and request the appropriate documentation which may also require fees that they may not be able to afford. And imagine someone working two jobs while trying to raise a family needing to do this.

Now, my colleague from Utah has sought to minimize these burdens. He has pointed to text in the bill, specifically page 14, line 15, purporting to say that “if you don’t have documentation, you don’t have a problem” and that you can register “without a single additional document other than what you provide to the government in the form of a sworn affidavit under penalty of perjury.”

So if this is true, then what is the purpose of this bill? What the Senator from Utah described is basically the current system, at least in Rhode Island.

Mr. LEE. Will the gentleman yield for a question?

Mr. REED. I will not.

But this is not the way the bill works. If you review the specific page and line that Senator LEE has referenced, page 14, line 15, and just look a few lines further in that same direction—specifically page 15, line 6—the bill says that anyone submitting a sworn affidavit must also “submit such other evidence to the appropriate State or local official demonstrating that the applicant is a citizen of the United States and such official will make a determination as to whether the applicant has sufficiently established United States citizenship.”

This section further requires the State or local official to then file their own affidavit that “the applicant has sufficiently established United States’ citizenship.” And if that official makes an improper determination, then he or she could be put in jail for 5 years. All I am doing is reading the words on the page that we are being asked to enact into law. I am trying to take a textualist approach and derive the original meaning.

So this purported exception to alleviate the gross injustice that this bill would inflict upon the 69 million women who have changed their names and the 21 million Americans without ready access to the papers, well, this exception wouldn’t deliver them any relief at all. They still must show their papers—which exact ones, no one can say. It will be subject to the decision of the clerk who is attesting to it. Asking the clerk to risk 5 years in jail simply for permission to register to vote doesn’t sound like much relief at all. It is another “gotcha.”

Second, young Americans in college will face issues at the polls. The 26th

Amendment lowered the voting age from 21 to 18. This was a critical reform in the Vietnam war era that embodied a simple principle: If you are old enough to fight, you are old enough to vote. It is the height of hypocrisy to place barriers to vote in front of any American citizen who puts his life on the line to keep us safe.

Well, in Rhode Island, which has a voter ID law, a college ID is sufficient to show at the polls when voting. But through the SAVE Act, that Rhode Island law would be invalidated; a college ID is not on the list of “valid photo identification” in the SAVE Act. And I will bet there are very few college-age students bringing their birth certificates with them to school. At their parents’ rightful insistence, these documents are probably kept locked away at home. And very few college students go through the trouble of getting a local driver’s license because they only are temporarily living where they attend school. So young Americans may disproportionately get turned away, maybe be denied the right to participate in civic life, even though they have so much riding on it.

Concerns that many Americans will be stripped of their voting rights are not theoretical or hypothetical. We have seen this play out very recently. In 2013, Kansas implemented a State version of the SAVE Act. According to the Associated Press, it was “one of the biggest political fiascos in the state in recent memory.” In other words, it was a total failure, and we are on the verge of replicating that failure nationwide. It was such a failure because over 30,000 Kansans—that is 12 percent of everyone seeking to register—saw their registration suspended or invalidated. Fortunately, in 2018, the court stepped in and invalidated the Kansas law before it could do more damage.

As Trump and the Republicans are purportedly trying to do now, Kansas was trying to prevent noncitizens from voting. It turns out that this is a completely illusory problem. In Kansas, only three noncitizens registered to vote each year from 1999 through 2012. That is a total of 39—or 0.002 percent—of all registered voters. The court found that these were nominal cases, explained by administrative error and confusion. And of the 39, only 11 actually voted.

When invalidating the Kansas law, the court found the following fundamental and fatal flaws:

The law had acted as a deterrent to registration and voting for substantially more eligible Kansans than it has prevented ineligible voters from registering to vote. At least one applicant testified that he opted not to apply to register to vote again, despite possessing documentary proof of citizenship, because of the burdensome experience of being held in suspense and prevented from voting in 2014 due to the law.

Based on this record, the magnitude of the burden on unregistered eligible Kansas voters cannot be justified. The evidence at trial demonstrated that the documentary proof of

citizenship law disproportionately impacts duly qualified registration applicants, while only nominally preventing noncitizen voter registration. It also may have the inadvertent effect of eroding, instead of maintaining, confidence in the electoral system.

Imagine disqualifying 30,000 legitimate Kansas voters because, over a 13-year period, a total of 39 noncitizens were mistakenly added to the voting rolls. This unfortunate episode in Kansas is a cautionary tale for us here in Congress. We should learn from their mistake. We should be humbled by their mistake. And, more importantly, we should not repeat their mistake. In Kansas, it made no sense to punish 30,000 law-abiding American citizens who wanted to vote, just to prevent 11 noncitizens from voting.

The way to solve this election problem of noncitizen voting is simply to enforce existing Federal and State law, that only U.S. citizens are allowed to vote, with strong penalties for non-compliance. Under Federal law, it is a felony for noncitizens to vote. Section 1015 of title XVIII of the U.S. Code states that:

Whoever knowingly makes any false statement or claim that he is a citizen of the United States in order to register to vote or to vote in any Federal, State, or local election (including an initiative, recall, or referendum) shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

The Rhode Island Constitution states, “Every citizen of the United States of the age of eighteen (18) years or over who has had residence and home in this state for thirty (30) days next preceding the time of voting, who has resided thirty (30) days in the town or city from which such citizen desires to vote” is eligible to vote.

Under current law, to register in Rhode Island, all voters must attest to their U.S. citizenship. They must “swear or affirm that I am a U.S. citizen.” Then check a “yes” or “no” box for whether they are a citizen of the United States. They are warned on the registration form—a simple, one-page document—that “if you sign this form and know it to be false, you can be convicted and fined up to \$5,000 or jailed for up to 10 years.” And then to vote in Rhode Island, all voters must show a valid photo ID.

These laws are enforced. They are an effective deterrent. They have made our elections safe and secure, and that is why noncitizen voting is so rare. According to Christine Stenning, the President of the League of Women Voters in Rhode Island, “There is no evidence that noncitizen voting has ever been significant enough to impact an election’s outcome.”

Research from the Heritage Foundation, perhaps a preeminent Trump-aligned conservative think tank, found only 77 instances of noncitizen voting from 1999 until 2023, each of which was investigated by the authority. That is 77 out of hundreds of millions, maybe even more than a billion, votes cast during this time period. During the

2016 election, an exhaustive study by the Brennan Center found that at least 30 cases of noncitizen voting were referred for investigation.

And in Trump's first term, 2017 through 2021, only 19 people were indicted for voting without U.S. citizenship. In 2024, the numbers looked very similar. The top election official in Utah reviewed all 2.1 million registered voters and found just one "confirmed noncitizen" registered to vote, and that person never voted. In Idaho, officials found 36 "very likely" registered noncitizens, and not all of them voted. The secretary of state of Idaho said that "out of the million-plus registered voters we started with, we're down to 10 thousandths of a percent" of the overall count—"10 thousandths of a percent."

In Louisiana, investigators found 390 noncitizen registrants out of 2.9 million. Only 79 had voted in an election over the last several decades; in Montana, only 23 possible noncitizen registrants out of approximately 785,000; in Georgia, only 20 out of 8.2 million; in Maricopa County, AZ, only 2 out of 2.5 million.

Now, none of these people should have registered or voted, and they should be punished for breaking the law, but we are talking about a handful of votes. We do not need a complete overhaul of our election system and to potentially strip millions of American citizens' voting rights when the evidence demonstrates that this purported issue is already addressed by current law.

According to an op-ed by Stephen Richer of the Cato Institute, a famously conservative and Republican-leaning think tank, the results of these State investigations, in his words, "affirm what is simply common sense. People largely aren't willing to risk their status in the United States—the land of economic opportunity—for the ability to cast one more vote out of hundreds of thousands or millions in a state and hundreds of millions in the country."

The Wall Street Journal editorial page, a loudspeaker for conservative views, similarly said about the SAVE Act:

Although Mr. Trump insists that voter fraud is endemic, his big claims aren't backed by hard evidence. The President recently said illegal aliens are voting in such huge numbers that he won Minnesota three times.

Audits in a variety of places—Georgia, Michigan, Texas, Utah, Idaho—have found noncitizen voting and registration to be rare. Other states might be worse, but consider incentives: Illegal immigrants who want to stay are trying to be avoid being noticed by the authorities. Green card holders have much to lose if they commit a crime. Prosecuting violations is good for deterrence, and vigilance is important.

Now, you might be thinking that you are a law-abiding citizen or have lived in the same neighborhood for decades and, therefore, you have nothing to worry about if the SAVE Act were en-

acted—not so. Even if you have been registered for decades and voted without issue, you still should be worried about what the SAVE Act means for you. States would be required to report their full voter rolls to the Department of Homeland Security and certify that there are no noncitizens on their list. And the Federal Government can require then States to purge their voter rolls of any suspected noncitizens.

Think about it this way: The Department that maintains the "no fly" list, which often misidentifies people, will be now maintaining a no vote list. What could go wrong?

There is not a single State that commonly requires documentary proof of citizenship on par with the SAVE Act. So how will the States be able to meet this new mandate and avoid voter purges? The short answer is: They can't—at least not easily. So there is a real risk that States will take a conservative approach to compliance and require all their voters to reregister with documentary proof of citizenship.

In addition, the SAVE Act does not contain any express language protecting voters who have already registered under the current system, so there is also a risk that Trump's DOJ could use authority under the SAVE Act to find a State's entire voter roll out of compliance with the "documentary proof" of citizenship requirement.

If that happens, someone who has voted for decades, and lived in the same home, could be forced to reregister.

Consider those 30,000 U.S. citizens in Kansas who were in the exact same boat and were denied the ability to register to vote. If you can't furnish the required documentation or you are busy and miss the window to reregister, well, you simply won't be able to vote in the 2026 election and maybe beyond that.

The SAVE Act will centralize all States' voter rolls in a Federal Government database. According to the Campaign Legal Center, "this is a plain attempt to bully states into sharing voters' sensitive personal information with the Federal Government. Making matters worse, the SAVE America Act places no restrictions on what the Federal government can do with the sensitive data once DHS receives it."

That is sensitive personal information for around 75 percent of the Nation's adults. The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights has said that "DHS's desire to turn the SAVE program into a de facto national citizen registry raises significant civil liberties concerns."

My Republican colleagues should tell the American people whether this invasion of privacy is worth it. I do not personally believe that it is.

Such a database is an irresistible one-stop shop for hackers and foreign governments to steal America's most sensitive personal information.

Again, this is not a theoretical concern. A whistleblower report from last

week alleged that a former DOGE representative with "God-level access" to Social Security Administration servers copied data onto a thumb drive and planned to share it with a private employer.

The data allegedly included the "Numident" and the "Master Death File" containing more than 500 million living and dead Americans, including Social Security numbers, places and dates of birth, citizenship, race and ethnicity, and parents' names.

We have seen the current administration be incredibly sloppy and careless with classified information, from then-former President Trump taking documents with security classification markings to Mar-a-Lago and storing them in his bathroom to the current Secretary of Defense sharing military strike plans via Signal with a journalist.

In 2015, the Office of Personnel Management announced that it had been a target of a data breach targeting over 22 million records involving security clearances in which Social Security numbers, names, dates and places of birth, and addresses were exfiltrated by hackers working on behalf of the Chinese Government.

Now, ask yourself if you would trust Secretary Noem and Attorney General Bondi to keep the personal information of the 200 million registered voters safe. Would you trust them with your name, address, date of birth, driver's license number, and biometric information like height, weight, hair color, and eye color? The SAVE Act asks you to place that trust in them. I personally would not.

So the SAVE Act centralizes election administration with the Federal Government. It reveals another fatal flaw in the bill which, again, replicates mistakes and the problems with the Kansas law. It is this centralization that makes the SAVE Act, in my view, unconstitutional.

Article I, section 4 of the Constitution reads:

The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of choosing Senators.

So the Constitution says that the States play a role in election administration. It says the Congress place a role in election administration. It does not say anything about the Executive branch playing a role in election administration. And yet that is exactly what the SAVE Act would do. It gives DOJ and DHS, which are part of the Executive branch, immense power to determine the sufficiency of State voter registration laws and then to mess around with State procedures to actually conduct elections.

The Wall Street Journal editorial page said March 18 that:

The decentralized nature of American elections is a source of resilience, and Republicans rightly opposed President Biden's attempt to federalize voting rules on the lax

California model. Have they given up federalist principles?

Well, it appears they have.

Now, one could argue that if the Congress intervenes, then the constitutional requirement is met, but we have seen daily this administration ignore Congress, ignore the law, and ignore the Constitution. This will be a pass for President Trump to exploit the elections that are before us.

And you can bet that there will be lawsuits initiated as soon as the ink is dry with President Trump's signature. And before the Supreme Court ultimately weighs in, there will be litigation in district courts and the appellate courts across the country.

There will be conflicting rulings, and the constitutionality of the SAVE Act will almost certainly not be resolved before the 2026 election—possibly not even until the 2028 election. In the meantime, there will be mass confusion about the rules that govern those elections.

And the 2026 elections, as I said, are already underway. At least six States have already had their primary elections. If the rules suddenly change or there are mass purges of the voter rolls between the primary elections and the general elections, then that will undermine the integrity of the election far more than the illusory problem of non-citizen voting.

In addition to these constitutional infirmities, there are tremendous unfunded mandates and burdens that will be placed on the States if this law is enacted.

According to Rhode Island secretary of state Gregg Amore, the State government would need to change its voter systems and forms. It may need to purchase new voting machines and equipment, and it would need to pursue a significant public outreach campaign to educate voters about changes in the law. But the SAVE Act provides zero dollars to cover these costs. States and localities will need to cover this unfunded mandate, and that means higher taxes or more debt.

With regard to Rhode Island, first, Rhode Island would be required under the SAVE Act to essentially eliminate registration by mail and online. Under current law, any Rhode Islander can print and then fill out a voter registration form, get their signature notarized, and mail it to their town hall or they can complete the process entirely online—they can do it entirely online. The SAVE Act requires anyone who registers by mail to also present documentary proof of citizenship in person at the election office by the registration deadline. While the election is silent about online registration, I am assuming the same rule applies.

So Rhode Islanders will need to spend precious time and inconvenience to go in person to show their proof of citizenship, which means that this process of mail-in registration will be practically eliminated.

As I said at the beginning of these remarks, what I would like to see is to

make voting easier for American citizens, not to give my constituents yet another headache, place additional demands on their time, and impose, frankly, ridiculous government mandates—especially when it comes to exercising their fundamental rights to vote.

Second, Rhode Island would need to narrow its list of acceptable photo ID to present at the polls when voting. Rhode Island law permits voters at the polls to verify their registration and identity through ID cards that are issued by educational institutions and government-issued medical cards. The SAVE Act would not permit these cards.

Rhode Island currently permits voting without photo identification if accompanied by a birth certificate, Social Security card, or government-issued medical card. The SAVE Act does not permit nonphoto IDs to vote under any circumstances.

This example alone should shred any notion that the SAVE Act is a simple voter ID law. If it were, then the very sensible procedures currently used in Rhode Island would be acceptable. They have been in operation since 2012 without any issues. And yet, my Republican colleagues would meddle in them for no discernible and compelling reason.

Third, Rhode Island would need to submit its own voter rolls to DHS and purge anyone suspected of being a non-citizen within 30 days of enactment and then on an ongoing basis. The State must submit its voter rolls to the DHS "SAVE" system to identify noncitizens and then purge them from its rolls. Anyone identified as a noncitizen who believes that is a mistake must meet the new documentary proof of citizenship requirement and reregister.

Rhode Island and many other States—red States and blue States alike—are actively litigating with DOJ to rebuff the Federal Government's attempts to obtain its voter rolls. DOJ hasn't even said why it wants this information. Nobody should believe it is for any legitimate purpose.

DOJ has been losing in court, and this legislation would essentially end this litigation against the States' interests. DOJ should be defending what it is doing in court, not coming to Congress for a bailout, nor should we give them a bailout.

This meddling by the Federal Government is completely unnecessary. Rhode Island already undergoes regular voter maintenance efforts. A statewide voter mailing in 2020 ultimately resulted in 60,619 inactive voter registrations being removed from the State's voter list. Since 2023, election officials in Rhode Island have removed 107,738 voters from the voter lists through maintenance and processes.

In November 2025, the Rhode Island secretary of state launched the latest effort to ensure the State's rolls are accurate. The government mailed every single registered voter in the State

asking them to review the information in their voter record and update any inaccurate or outdated information.

Rhode Island is already a participant in information-sharing agreements to identify potential instances of election fraud through the Electronic Registration Information Center or ERIC, which 25 States use for voter list maintenance and identification of potential instances of election fraud. Our States are constantly and actively determining that their rolls do not contain people ineligible to vote.

Fourth, Rhode Islanders will need to pay to comply with the new Federal mandates. The State, as I indicated, must conduct a marketing campaign to ensure that Rhode Islanders are aware of the requirement to provide documentary proof of citizenship to register. The State must notify every person who registers by mail of the requirement to provide documentary proof of citizenship prior to voting. The State must change its registration forms and its signage at the polls. As noted above, the State must review its entire voter rolls for citizen status.

So the SAVE Act says that Rhode Island—a State where noncitizen voting is punishable by 10 years in prison and where everyone must show ID at the polls—would need to radically overhaul its voting system and pass those costs on to the taxpayers in order to meet new Federal mandates.

The proposal on the table is to throw out State rules about voter ID and require what is effectively a national ID, while ignoring current law that already makes it a serious crime for non-citizens to vote. That is a raw deal to fix a nonexistent problem.

This is so dangerous because it will break a system that successfully prevents fraud and replace it with one that makes it harder for American citizens to exercise their constitutional right to vote.

So why are they doing this? The real reason, in my view, is to support Trump's Big Lie that the 2020 election was stolen, even though he lost by 7 million votes and even though 46 of my Republican colleagues voted to certify the election.

They are doing this in service of President Trump's ego and his insatiable desire for power—power that he is using to take revenge on his political enemies and reward his political allies; power that he is using to personally enrich himself and his cronies through corrupt business deals, while he leaves the American people holding the bag through his tariffs; power that he is using to no longer provide Medicaid to children and seniors, while funding yet another "forever war" in the Middle East; and power that he is using to remain above the law, immune from prosecution, based on a sweeping Supreme Court ruling that he is protected so long as he is President.

Let's examine the record of how Trump is executing this power grab. It is systemic. It began on day one, and this is a component of that effort.

He has gutted the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, or CISA, which is part of the Department of Homeland Security that defends our Nation's infrastructure from cyber attacks. This includes all kinds of election components, including voter registration databases, voting machines, and related IT systems.

Congress created CISA during Trump's first term to avoid a repeat of the 2016 election, in which the Russian Government sowed misinformation to aid the Trump campaign. CISA provides election offices nationwide with intelligence briefings and cyber security systems. In 2023 and 2024, it conducted 700 cyber security assessments for local election jurisdictions across the country.

But upon returning to office, Trump immediately froze all CISA election security work. DOGE cut 130 employees from CISA, including its election security advisers. Trump dismissed the head of the National Security Agency and the U.S. Cyber Command, which provide crucial intelligence to CISA regarding foreign cyber threats to election infrastructure. Trump terminated or cut funding for the public-private and State-Federal partnerships that CISA uses as conduits for the Federal Government to help the States.

At CISA, Trump installed one of his cronies to be his eyes and ears: the 2020 election denier Marci McCarthy, who was the chair of the DeKalb County, GA, Republican Party and has amplified false claims of voter fraud in Georgia and spread disinformation about voting machines. She obviously has zero cyber security expertise.

(Mr. LEE assumed the Chair.)

Democrats want free and fair elections that have integrity. The biggest threat to achieving that is not the illusory problem of noncitizen voting but, rather, outside threats from foreign actors, like the Russian Government, who have actually tried to manipulate election outcomes and who have sophisticated capabilities in cyber space.

According to the 2025 "Annual Threat Assessment" prepared by the Director of National Intelligence—that is, Tulsi Gabbard, by the way, who is not exactly known as a Russia hawk—"Moscow probably believes information operations efforts to influence U.S. elections are advantageous, regardless of whether they affect election outcomes, because reinforcing doubt in the integrity of the U.S. electoral system achieves one of its core objectives."

Defunding and gutting CISA is entirely consistent with the core Russian objective to sow doubt in our democratic process. The "Annual Threat Assessment" goes on to forecast that "Moscow's malign influence activities will continue for the foreseeable future and will almost certainly increase in sophistication and volume."

If Trump were actually committed to election integrity, he would not have gutted the Federal Agency responsible for securing our election infrastructure

against this threat. But that is exactly what he has done.

As if to remove any doubt that Trump's primary objective is perpetrating his Big Lie that the 2020 election was stolen and create the circumstances to perhaps do the same thing in 2026 and 2028, he issued an Executive order directing the Department of Justice to investigate the former leader of CISA, Chris Krebs, after he had the temerity to say that "the 2020 election was the most secure in American history. There is no evidence that any voting system deleted or lost votes, changed votes, or was in any way compromised." By the way, at the same time, Trump canceled Mr. Krebs' security clearance.

Over 40 cyber security experts have condemned the "political persecution" of Krebs. They wrote in an open letter that "by placing Krebs in the crosshairs, the President is signaling that cybersecurity professionals whose findings do not align with his narrative risk having their businesses and livelihoods subjected to spurious and retaliatory targeting."

Here we have a prime example of Donald Trump using the machinery of the Federal Government to intimidate into silence those who refute his Big Lie that the 2020 election was stolen and plagued by widespread fraud, and he is gearing up to do the same thing in 2026 and 2028. Trump has stacked DOJ, Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, and other parts of his administration with cronies, sycophants, and loyalists who perpetrated the Big Lie in 2020 and organized the Stop the Steal movement that culminated in the deadly insurrection on January 6.

Notable examples include the following individuals: Harmeet Dhillon, the Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division, who represented President Trump and his campaign in the past and continues to amplify Trump's debunked claims of widespread voter fraud in the 2020 election; Maureen Riordan, the recently departed Acting Chief of the Voting Section at DOJ, who is another election skeptic and defender of voter suppression tactics, who has reiterated unfounded claims of widespread voting by noncitizens; Eric Neff, the current Chief of the Voting Section at DOJ, who has been leading this dangerous effort to compel the States—including Rhode Island—to turn over their voter rolls.

Mr. Neff has been reprimanded for his past work in the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, where he pursued a case against an election software company based on evidence provided by a conspiracy-driven election denier group called True the Vote. The charges were ultimately dropped, Neff was put on leave, and the L.A. taxpayers were stuck paying a \$5 million settlement.

Ed Martin, the Pardon Attorney at DOJ, represented January 6 rioters in

court and has defended Trump's claims of voter fraud in the 2020 election.

Kurt Olsen, the White House Director of Election Security: Mr. Olsen was a Trump campaign lawyer who worked on the efforts to overturn the 2020 election results, including being part of the Texas attorney general's attempt to get the Supreme Court to stop four swing States from certifying Biden's 2020 victory over Trump.

Heather Honey, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Election Integrity at DHS: Ms. Honey worked closely with Cleta Mitchell, who participated in Trump's infamous call with the Georgia secretary of state, pressuring him to "find" sufficient votes for Trump to win the State, which I think most casual observers would cite as one of the most egregious attempts to influence votes illegally that we have seen—certainly, from a President.

Honey was on the ground in Maricopa County, AZ, for a Republican-backed audit seeking proof of fraud in the 2020 election. Honey pushed a conspiracy that there were more votes counted than were cast in Pennsylvania.

And Gregg Phillips, the Director of the Office of Response and Recovery at FEMA: Mr. Phillips was a board member of True the Vote, the organization that traffics in conspiracy theories that Mr. Neff used to pursue a faulty case against an election software company. Phillips made the outrageous claim that he reviewed voter rolls with over 3 million noncitizens on the rolls in 2016—absolutely preposterous.

The machinery of the Federal Government has already been deployed, through these individuals and others, to relitigate the 2020 election and intimidate election officials into doing Trump's bidding in 2026 and 2028.

On January 28, the FBI raided the election office in Fulton County, GA, and actually seized ballots. Fulton County contains the State's biggest metropolitan area—Atlanta—where half a million votes were cast in 2020. According to court documents, the reasons for this raid were the same claims and conspiracy theories that underpinned Trump's Big Lie about the 2020 election. It was based on a referral from Kurt Olsen, whom I discussed above. He was a key person who tried to steal the 2020 election and is currently working in the White House, which historically and for good reason, has not directed law enforcement, which is supposed to be nonpartisan and based on facts and evidence and the law, not the whim of the President.

The FBI's affidavit claimed a discrepancy in votes cast and votes counted of 3 percent, but, in reality, those numbers were off by less than 0.2 percent. That the FBI would mislead the court to justify this raid about 2020 should give everyone tremendous concern about what kinds of falsehoods will underpin efforts to subvert results in 2026 and 2028.

A similar "investigation" about the 2020 election is underway by the FBI in

Maricopa County, AZ, which is the State's largest metropolitan area.

So why is the FBI investigating an election that occurred 6 years ago, and why is the FBI focusing on the biggest cities in the two States that swung the election against Trump? Again, it is to perpetrate the Big Lie and to lay the groundwork for interference in the 2026 and 2028 elections.

It is not just the Federal Government that has been stacked with election deniers who are dedicated to making sure Trump remains in power. Trump has also installed allies at every level of State and local election offices. These allies stand ready to do his bidding and disenfranchise large numbers of voters who oppose him. These efforts by Trump's enablers have already disenfranchised American citizens. In North Carolina, Republicans sought to cancel 65,000 votes in a judicial election last year. An estimated 2,000 to 8,000 of the votes were military and overseas voters.

Speaking of the military, Trump may be preparing to use the National Guard in order to deter Americans from exercising their constitutional right to vote. He signed an Executive order requiring each State to be ready to deploy a "National Guard Response Force" with a total of 23,750 members nationwide that can be ordered into States without the consent of local Governors. And under existing law, the President has command of a "Quick Reaction Force" of 2,000 National Guard members. He can deploy them nationwide to any State within 8 hours of notice.

Trump may try to abuse his authority as Commander in Chief to place these forces in polling places—perhaps in Fulton County or Maricopa County—under the guise of "protecting" them. They could be used to quell protests if Trump tries to steal another election.

Trump famously did not deploy the Guard to defend the Capitol on January 6. But now the pendulum may well swing in the other direction. He could preemptively deploy the Guard to deter people from voting.

Steve Bannon last month on a podcast stated:

[W]e're going to have ICE surround the polls come November. President Trump has to nationalize the election. You've got to put—not just, I think, ICE—you've got to call up the 82nd and 101st Airborne on the Insurrection Act. You've got to get around every poll and make sure only people with IDs, people . . . actually registered to vote and people that are United States citizens vote in this election.

So here you have Steve Bannon—someone who is very close to Trump and who essentially served as his consigliere in the first administration—openly saying that the military and ICE should be enforcing the SAVE Act.

Steve Bannon said he wants the 82nd Airborne to do voter intimidation. I served in the 82nd Airborne. I was a platoon leader and a company com-

mander. It is so offensive to our values and so denigrating for the men and women in uniform for Steve Bannon to suggest that they should be turned against their own neighbors, to be conscripted to help President Trump cling to power. This is not what happens in functioning democracies; this is what happens under authoritarian regimes and in dictatorships.

Let anyone believe Mr. Bannon's attempt to cultivate himself as a deeply read intellectual, I would note that it is a criminal offense for military officers to do what he has proposed. Section 592 of title 18 of the U.S. Code says that if a commander sends troops under his command into a polling place, he can go to jail for up to 5 years:

Whoever, being an officer of the Army or Navy, or other person in the civil military, or naval service of the United States, orders, brings, keeps, or has under his authority or control any troops or armed men at any place where a general or special election is held, unless such force shall be necessary to repel armed enemies of the United States, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years or both; and be disqualified from holding any office of honor, profit, or trust under the United States.

That is the military forces.

This notion of ICE being at the polls is just as concerning. Agents have detained law-abiding American citizens who have gotten caught up in Trump's mass deportation campaign. So there are some citizens who would be justified in thinking that it is still risky to go to the polls, lest you inadvertently get picked up.

What is the criteria for ICE to stop, detain, and harass people? It seems to be how they look, not what is in their hearts, not that they are dedicated Americans, not that they may be police officers in civilian uniforms, not that they may be former veterans.

If ICE will be asking people to "show their papers" before they even enter the polling place, then that adds more time, more process, and more complexity to something that should be quick, easy, and simple.

Finally, even if you do not cast a vote, the bill contains a dangerous private right of action allowing anyone to challenge another voter's registration status. That provision can be used with great effect to challenge large numbers of votes in States and localities that elect non-Trumpers.

Even if those claims are meritless and ultimately dismissed, they will tangle the courts with so much litigation that we will not know the actual election results for months on end. That sows additional mistrust in the process and, depending on the judges who hear these cases, could result in mass disenfranchisement of U.S. citizens who vote.

Given the data I have recited about the paltry numbers of noncitizen voters, reviews of the voter rolls after the fact and strong enforcement of existing criminal penalties are more than sufficient to achieve the purpose of allow-

ing American citizens to vote and encouraging them to do so.

So this is not about election integrity or protecting the will of voters. This is about voter suppression and voter intimidation. This is about keeping Trump and his gang in power. This is about Trump knowing that he is deeply unpopular, that he could be on a path to lose fair and square and trying to bend the rules and create the machinery for the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security and even the military to do his personal bidding to cling to power. If that happens, if he is successful, then we will no longer be a democracy.

Let anyone still think that this bill is about "election integrity" and not 100 percent about Donald Trump's power grab, my Republican colleagues have added two provisions covering "culture war" provisions that denigrate trans rights—Donald Trump's favorite boogeyman and his personal pet issuing having precisely nothing to do with the alleged scourge of noncitizen voting.

I am proud tonight to join my Democratic colleagues in sounding the alarm. We want to help our fellow citizens participate in our elections because only their participation will ensure that the government is truly accountable to the people it represents.

My secretary of state Gregg Amore has said:

The SAVE Act deviates from pro-voter and pro-democracy policies that make it easier for people to cast a ballot by placing an undue burden on American citizens. It is already illegal for non-citizens to vote, and requiring documentation proving citizenship effectively creates a poll tax for voters. President Trump is disregarding our country's separation of powers as the SAVE Act makes its way through Congress.

This isn't or should not be a partisan endeavor. Democrats and Republicans shouldn't be afraid to face the voters—all the voters—and compete on the basis of our ideas and aspirations. The SAVE Act shows that Trump has a different agenda—consolidating power for himself while subjugating the American people.

I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will understand that and oppose these efforts.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

MR. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I rise today for the hard-working American families who are struggling to make ends meet. These are hard-working American families who are struggling to make ends meet because they are victims of Democrats' political theater.

I grew up in public housing and watched my parents struggle to make ends meet. I saw my adopted dad lose his job. I remember when my dad had his car repossessed.

When these things happened, I felt the panic my parents dealt with in trying to keep food on the table for me and my siblings when the next paycheck wasn't guaranteed. I don't wish

what my family went through on any one. I actually ran for Governor of Florida and the U.S. Senate because I wanted to change this country so fewer families grow up with the struggle that mine did.

So it makes me furious to see what Democrats are doing right now with this political stunt of shutting down the Department of Homeland Security. It has been more than a month since this shutdown began. This is the third time in the last 6 months that the hard-working Americans who work to keep us safe each and every day had to worry about how they are going to pay mortgages, pay the rent, buy gas, bring home groceries to feed their kids.

It is unfair, and it is un-American.

I think every American has probably felt the squeeze from this shutdown when they go to the airport. TSA's staffing shortages have gone through the roof, and that has meant longer screening times at airports across the country.

Lines are stretching out the door and wait times are skyrocketing into hours. People in Atlanta are missing 6 a.m. flights when they showed up to the airport at 3 a.m. in the morning.

But the Federal employees—the ones who show up to work every day to keep the rest of us safe—are the ones going through the worst of all this shutdown.

A union official who represents workers at TSA said:

A lot of employees that I've talked to don't have any money in their bank account. They've already missed half a check, so they don't know what bill to pay.

This week in my State of Florida, the good folks over at Feeding South Florida distributed food to Federal workers who aren't being paid because of this reckless shutdown.

Think about the situation that Democrats in the Senate have put DHS workers in. What if your boss called you tonight and said: Listen, I need you to come in tomorrow. Your job is absolutely essential to the security of our Nation. We need you to help us keep people safe. Millions of people around America rely on you to show up so they can be safe.

But management decided not to pay you, and we don't know when management will decide to pay you.

What would you do? Who would you call? What would you do when your rent was due? How would you feed your family? What would you do about that car payment coming up? What would you tell your child when you couldn't afford their upcoming field trip or sports lessons or were forced to cancel the thing that your little boy or girl was really looking forward to?

These aren't hypothetical questions for the more than 50,000 TSA agents Democrats are forcing to work without pay right now. But don't just think of them as a number. These are Americans, and here are some of their stories.

Alondra Galvan is a single mom and a TSA officer currently working with-

out pay because of the partial government shutdown. She has been working for TSA for 2 years. Here is what she said:

It's very frustrating for everything, from financial restraints to mental instability. There's times at night I'm like what am I going to do, how am I going to do it.

She says:

I'm a single mom right now. My son usually goes to spring break camps, and I can't afford that right now because there's no money coming in, and I just don't know what to do anymore. There's no babysitter. I don't have money to pay a babysitter, so it's all around bad.

She is not alone.

There are food banks for DHS employees springing up all over the country—in San Diego, Pittsburgh, Chattanooga. Demands have been so great in Las Vegas that supplies are now limited, and they are looking for more donations according to one report.

"Most people have drained through their emergency funds" said TSA agent Johnny Jones.

"The majority of TSA agents live paycheck to paycheck" he said.

"A lot of them still have loans or debts from the previous shutdown" he said.

In Omaha, NE, one man started a GoFundMe page to raise donations so he can buy meals to deliver to TSA employees at Eppley Airfield.

Airports across the country are asking for gift card donations so the people who keep our economy going, the people who make it safe and possible for other Americans to visit their families, do business, or go on vacation can keep scraping by while Democrat politicians in this Chamber can put on a show for the news cameras and fight for illegal aliens.

In Nashville, one TSA supervisor noted people are "starting to get eviction notices."

She summed the entire situation up when she told the same newspaper "We are forgotten."

I want to tell you another story I read about in the Christian Science Monitor. In an article published 2 days ago, they wrote about a woman named Susan. That is not her real name. She asked to remain anonymous for fear of retribution at work. Her story is real, and it is fully verifiable.

Susan is a single mother. She has a teenage son. Next month, she will mark her 10th anniversary as a TSA employee. That is 10 years of showing up, 10 years of being the one who checks the bags, scans the boarding passes, and stands between the traveling public and whatever threats might be lurking.

Before the longest government shutdown in American history last fall, the 43-day shutdown—Susan had finally paid off all of her debts—all of them.

For a single working mother, that is pretty amazing.

Susan went through years of sacrifice, years of careful budgeting, years of telling her son "no" or "not yet." And she got there. She was debt-free.

Then the fall shutdown came and the one after that and now this one. Today, two of Susan's credit cards are maxed out. She has three-quarters of a tank of gas left and enough food in the house to make it until yesterday.

She has \$1.15 in her bank account. Still, when talking to a reporter for the Christian Science Monitor, she said she was one of the more fortunate ones.

She said "We just dig in and hope that we get paid before we get evicted and our cars get repossessed."

Susan is still going to work every day. She is still showing up to protect the traveling public. She is doing it on empty pockets, maxed-out cards, and on borrowed time. She considers herself one of the lucky ones. Think about what that says about the people who are less fortunate than Susan.

Democrat Members of the U.S. Senate: These are our fellow citizens. These are patriotic people who made the decision to serve our Federal Government, and you are torturing them.

Meanwhile, every Democrat Senator who voted to start this shutdown is getting paid. The average salary of a TSA agent is around \$50,000. U.S. Senators make \$174,000. While the folks at TSA are working-class Americans fighting every day to live their dreams, the average net worth for a Democrat in the Senate is nearly \$3 million.

I am not here to shame those who worked hard and have been successful in life. I worked my butt off during my life, and I have been very successful, and I don't apologize for it for a second. But in addition to donating my entire Senate salary every year, I am also not the one sitting here today denying a paycheck to more than 260,000 hard-working Americans at DHS.

The last time the Democrats shut down the government and hurt our Federal workers, one of my colleagues on the left said that he couldn't go without his Senate paycheck because he has a mortgage to pay. What the hell do you think the hard-working people at DHS have to do? They have bills to pay. They have mortgages. They have to pay the rent. They have to buy groceries.

It makes you sick. It makes you sick to hear a Member of the U.S. Senate who voted to not pay people say something so insulting. Imagine how it makes someone at TSA feel to hear that. A U.S. Senator needs to get his paycheck to pay his mortgage, but if you are at DHS, good luck. I think that is disgusting.

If Congress shuts down the government, Members shouldn't get paid. I have a bill to make sure that is how it works. My No Budget, No Pay Act would keep everyone in this Chamber from getting a paycheck if we can't provide them to the hard-working men and women who work in our Federal Government. There needs to be serious personal consequences for politicians that want to play games with people's lives and cut off their paychecks. We need to pass my No Budget, No Pay Act.

After hearing about the suffering Democrats have caused for the TSA agents that I talked about earlier, how can anyone here oppose this? Sadly, the answer to that question is the same as the answer to the question of how we got here in the first place.

I don't get it, but Democrats want to defund the police and shut down ICE and CBP. Why? Because the brave officers in these Agencies were simply doing their jobs and enforcing existing U.S. law.

Here is what happened: During the Biden administration, Democrats allowed the office and power of a mentally incapacitated President to be hijacked by unelected radical staffers. Once these staffers seized the levers of power without President Biden even realizing it, they opened our southern border and actually allowed or encouraged millions upon millions of illegal aliens to flood into the United States. They let criminals in, rapists, murderers, child abusers, drug dealers. They all flooded in. They let drugs pour over the border and poison the American people. And my Democrat colleagues did nothing to stop it.

It was a national disaster, and the American people saw that it was intentional and would ruin our Nation, so they elected President Trump. They elected President Trump to take the White House and Republicans to take control of Congress because the American people knew we would clean up Biden's mess and secure the border.

The agenda wasn't a surprise. President Trump ran on securing the border and getting criminal illegal aliens out of our country. It was probably the biggest reason they elected President Trump.

Now that he is executing on that agenda, I don't get it, but Democrats can't stand it. He is undoing all of their work to let illegal aliens flood across the border, and he is doing it without passing any new laws. He is simply allowing ICE and CBP to do their jobs and enforce the laws that are already on the books. It is incredible what simply letting people do their jobs can accomplish.

Now, because radical Democrat mayors and Governors won't work with ICE and in some cases are actively encouraging resistance against our Federal law enforcement, there has been conflict.

Two Americans, Alex Pretti and Renee Good, lost their lives in incidents with Federal agents. It is horrible. I wish it never happened in this country. My heart goes out to their families.

If we didn't have illegal sanctuary cities in the States, ICE would be able to peacefully detain individuals at jails. That is how we do it in Florida. We don't have issues with ICE. But there are liberal mayors and Governors who want to put the concerns of illegal aliens over American citizens and American law enforcement. It doesn't make any sense to me.

President Trump has made offer after offer to Democrats to address the concerns they have with ICE actions that they have forced to happen. President Trump is trying to meet this moment with reasonable reforms to how ICE operates. He has even said he will bring ICE agents to help our TSA agents. But Democrats aren't engaging.

There are violent illegal aliens in our country. We have to remove them. If you don't believe me, here are three names: Rachel Morin, Jocelyn Nungaray, Laken Riley. Rachel Morin, Jocelyn Nungaray, Laken Riley—a mother and a child and a college student—all murdered. Three lives that were shattered. Three families that were devastated. Why? Because of the horrific violence caused by an illegal alien.

These are the people that ICE is targeting, and in my mind, it is worth it. If ICE can save one person, if ICE can prevent another woman from facing the same fate as Rachel Morin, Jocelyn Nungaray, and Laken Riley, it is worth it.

I don't get it, but Democrats insist on protecting illegal aliens with sanctuary policies while they spit in the faces of American law enforcement officers who risk their lives every day, every single day, to keep us safe.

It is happening here just outside Washington. Last month, a 40-year-old mother from Fredericksburg, VA, was stabbed to death. She was stabbed to death while standing at a bus stop in Fairfax County, VA. Her name was Stephanie Minter.

On a Monday morning, a mother was ripped from her children by an illegal alien that officials in Virginia refused—they refused—to let ICE deport.

Stephanie's alleged killer had a long criminal record. He was a known violent criminal who Fairfax County described as being "a danger to the community." But not only was he never handed over to ICE, he was let off the hook again and again. He had more than 30 arrests to his name—charges of malicious wounding, assault, drug possession, identity theft, firing a weapon, contributing to delinquency of a minor. Over and over, the charges were dropped, and he was released.

But this injustice in Fairfax County wasn't limited to the alleged killer who murdered Stephanie Minter. The Center for Immigration Studies found that from October 2022 through February 2025, the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center freed more than 1,000 deportable individuals in direct defiance of over 1,150 ICE detainers.

Fairfax County ranked third in the entire Nation for refusing to honor ICE detainer requests, and soon, all of Virginia could follow suit, because the same week that Stephanie Minter was murdered at that bus stop, new Governor Spanberger ordered the termination of all 287(g) agreements between State agencies and ICE.

Think about that for a second and ask yourself, how could this happen in America?

Sadly, this is the reality facing Americans in Democrat cities, counties, and States. According to DHS, sanctuary jurisdictions across the country declined to honor 17,864 ICE detainer requests in 2025 alone—nearly 18,000 in 1 year.

In California alone, over 4,500 criminal individuals have been released since January 2025 despite active ICE detainers. The crimes those individuals were associated with include homicides, assaults, burglaries, and sexual offenses.

In New York, ICE has documented cases where individuals with records including rape, strangulation, and burglary were repeatedly released by sanctuary policies.

First, Democrats pass sanctuary laws to protect violent illegals that they know their Soros-funded prosecutors won't go after. Now Democrats are trying to destroy ICE completely so that the very system of brave law enforcement officers, which was established to save the lives of individuals like Stephanie, Laken, Rachel, and Jocelyn, could no longer protect our families.

I don't know why the Democrats want to defund our law enforcement. I don't understand why they want to watch as TSA agents suffer without pay. I don't know why Democrats are fine seeing Americans wait hours in line for a flight. The thing I struggle with most is, I don't know why the left is so hell-bent on protecting illegal aliens while letting a mother like Stephanie Minter be stabbed to death at a bus stop. It doesn't make sense to me.

I think it is time for Democrats to come to their senses and fund DHS.

To the hard-working individuals at DHS: I am sorry this is happening to you. You absolutely deserve to be paid and respected. You deserve a shot at the American dream. My heart goes out to you and your family.

These individuals chose to take a job where every second of their professional lives is spent protecting their fellow Americans and keeping their homeland safe. They didn't sign up to not get paid. When they agreed to take these jobs, the Federal Government made a deal with them that they would be provided for, and we are failing on our end of that agreement.

Now these people who are working full time, dealing with long lines, very frustrated travelers, and long brutal days, dead on their feet, many probably working overtime to protect us, are going home to empty refrigerators, overdue bills, and eviction notices because of my Democrat colleagues' political theater for illegal aliens.

If you look at some of the half-measures Democrats have put forward to get themselves out of this situation, it is obvious: They do not care about whether TSA, FEMA, and the Coast Guard are paid, and they want to absolutely shut down ICE and CBP.

That is just another way of saying they want to defund the police so they

can hamstring our ability to enforce immigration laws—again, not for the benefit of American citizens but for the benefit of illegal aliens.

I think we have had enough of this political theater. We have had enough of the hypocrisy. We need to make sure these individuals get paid. It is unfair to deny paychecks to our TSA agents and more than 200,000 other DHS workers. And we can't allow more heart-breaking stories like Alondra, Susan, Rachel, Jocelyn, Laken, and Stephanie.

America is better than this, and I am not going to stop fighting until these radical attempts end to put illegal aliens before American citizens.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I am somewhat perplexed by the comments of my colleague because six times in the last week and a half, measures have been put forth on this floor that would have paid TSA, would have paid the Coast Guard, would have paid FEMA, would pay CISA, and his party blocked every one of them. There was a vote just today that would have led to the funding of TSA, and I don't know how the gentleman voted, but I suspect he voted no. So this idea that somehow this side of the aisle is defunding and not voting for these other Agencies—it is just not true. There have been six—at least in the last week and a half—motions to move forward with the funding of the non-ICE Agencies, and each time, a representative of the party across the aisle has risen to object.

So let's be clear who is blocking funding for the TSA. It is not over here. We are ready to fund it tonight. We had a vote a few hours ago that would have funded it. So let's be clear about who is blocking funding for the TSA. It is right over here.

The second piece is, Why are we talking about ICE? If ICE, as the Senator suggested, were talking about criminal aliens, we wouldn't be here having this debate. The problem is that that is not what is happening.

In my State of Maine—in Portland—we had an ICE surge back in January and February that was similar to what happened in Minneapolis. It wasn't as large, and it wasn't as violent, but it was, nonetheless, a similar kind of surge, wherein a lot of agents came in, and a lot of arrests were made.

We have had a hard time in getting the actual data, but here is what we do know: Over 200 people were arrested or detained, many of whom were sent far away to Louisiana or to Texas or somewhere else.

But the website—I just looked it up. The DHS actually has a website called the Worst of the Worst, wherein they give you the picture and the name and the crime of the people whom they have arrested to demonstrate that, in fact, this is what they are doing.

Here is the problem: What we know is they arrested or detained over 200 peo-

ple, and the DHS' Worst of the Worst website lists 21. That is 10 percent. Who are the other 90 percent?

I can tell you, from knowing my constituents, a lot of them are people who were asylum seekers, who were paying taxes, who were working people, who were refugees. One guy was approved to be a prison guard in our local county jail.

So, if it were the worst of the worst—the Senator kept using terms like “criminal illegal aliens,” and he gave these horrible cases. If that is what ICE was doing, we wouldn't have had a problem. The problem is the untargeted mass searching and picking up of people because of their accents or their color. That is what we are talking about here, and that is what we should be focused on. Indeed, there are discussions going on right now to try to find some resolution.

By the way, nobody is talking about defunding ICE. Nobody I have heard of is talking about defunding DHS or defunding the police. We are talking about guardrails being applied to ICE that are similar to the guardrails and the codes of conduct that apply to every police force in America.

I would suspect the city of Miami has a code of conduct that talks about how you respond to use of force and when warrants are required. They may also have something about identification. Those are the kinds of things that we are talking about. We are talking about guardrails. We are not talking about defunding anybody.

So let's be honest with the American people about what this debate is about.

I believe deeply—listen, I understand about the TSA and the Coast Guard, which is very important to my State. They should be getting paid, and that is why, starting several weeks ago, this side of the aisle has been bringing forward unanimous consent agreements that would fund those Agencies—only for them to be objected to. If we could have one of those unanimous consent agreements tonight or tomorrow, we could get those Agencies funded right away and then focus on what the issue is that divides us. And there are discussions going on with your colleagues and with the White House to try to resolve some of those issues.

I am an Independent, although I caucus with these guys, but let's not talk about the Democrats shutting down the TSA. The Democrats are moving to fund the TSA and are being blocked by the other side. Let's be clear about what is going on here. If we could solve this and if we could fund those other Agencies, which we should—I agree—then we could talk about guardrails for ICE and putting them under the same kind of reasonable constraints as every other law enforcement agencies in the country.

In my whole life, I have never seen a law enforcement agency that wears masks. Why do they wear masks? Because it is intimidating. It puts people in fear—citizens in fear. It also gives a

license to the person with the mask on to act not in the public interest. It emboldens somebody to use the force that they have.

I understand about doxing, and we can have a law—we can pass a statute—making the doxing of these agents illegal and a crime—a serious crime. I understand that. I have got a draft of that here—of that law—and I think that should be part of that discussion.

But I think we really should be talking about what it is that we are trying to resolve here with regard to the guardrails on ICE. The original communication from the minority leader and the minority leader in the House said nothing about defunding. They talked about what the restrictions are that we need to talk about. Warrants—this is Constitution 101. You don't break down somebody's door without a warrant unless there are certain exigent circumstances. The Presiding Officer is a constitutional scholar; he understands the Fourth Amendment. But those are the kinds of things that we need to be talking about, not “Should we be paying TSA officers?” Of course, we should.

So let's vote on it. Let's do it. Let's put it on the floor and get that done tonight or tomorrow, and then we can focus on the issue that is before us. I just believe that this body ought to be coming together and talking about the real issues and trying to resolve them and not having the collateral damage of these other Agencies.

For myself, given what happened in Maine and what happened in Minnesota, I cannot vote for a budget that leaves ICE rampant and without the guardrails that apply to every other police force in the United States. I can't, in good conscience, do that. That is why I am voting to move forward with the funding of the other Agencies but then will focus on ICE to try to get some reasonable guardrails, and we are negotiating and working toward those.

In the meantime, let's pay the TSA people. Let's pay the Coast Guard. Let's pay CISA. Let's pay FEMA. I get that. But let's be clear about who is blocking that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, let's remember who shut down Homeland Security. The Democrats shut down Homeland Security. They voted to shut down Homeland Security. They wouldn't fund it, and they wouldn't fund it because they don't want ICE to be able to do their job. It is a problem the Democrats caused because the border was completely open for 4 years. So, if we do one part and don't do the rest, we know what is going to happen: ICE will never get funded.

With regard to masks, law enforcement does use masks because they have to protect their privacy sometimes. There is doxing going on. Think about it. All of us have security, probably. I have been swatted, and maybe

my colleagues have been swatted. Think about these agents. They don't have security at home when their families are at home. There are websites out there that, when they find a picture of an ICE agent, they are putting it up on these websites to try to intimidate their families and intimidate their kids.

Sure, I think we ought to always have reasonable restrictions on how law enforcement works. But ICE is busting their butt to solve a problem that was caused by having 4 years of completely open borders, and nobody on the Democrat side wanted to talk about it. Now ICE is trying to do this job and clean up the mess, and, all of a sudden, Democrats want to put all of these rules on them so that they can't even do their job. That doesn't make any sense.

I want to tell my colleague—I mean, the White House proposed things, and for so many weeks, Democrats didn't come back with any proposal. So I am glad there are conversations going on now, but, in the meantime, all of these TSA agents haven't gotten paid, and some ICE agents are not getting paid. This is completely unfair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, let the record show that a real debate broke out for a few minutes on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). The majority whip.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BARRASSO. 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.

HONORING OUR FALLEN HEROES ACT

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, last December, Congress passed into law the Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2026. This important law was passed to expand access to Federal support for the families of firefighters and other first responders who pass away from service related cancers, through the Public Safety Officers' Benefits—PSOB—Program. Firefighters put their lives on the line everyday to keep us safe, and the law we passed honors the commitment we make to first responders who make the ultimate sacrifice.

Included in the law is a confidentiality of information provision, ensuring that when families of these heroes apply for the benefits they deserve, the sensitive medical information required

as part of their PSOB application remains confidential. Because some parts of the PSOB program, such as benefits arising from the September 11 terrorist attacks, were covered under different statutory frameworks, we drafted the confidentiality of information provision to ensure that a uniform set of rules apply to all PSOB claims.

I understand that the Justice Department has argued that the law passed to help firefighters and first responders somehow prohibits the disclosure of Deaths in Custody Reporting Act data made pursuant to a Freedom of Information Act request. That was not our intent.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 4073

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4073, a bill making continuing appropriations for essential Transportation Security Administration pay and operations during the lapse in appropriations beginning on February 14, 2026, and for other purposes.

S. 4127

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4127, a bill making continuing appropriations for essential Transportation Security Administration pay and operations during the lapse in appropriations beginning on February 14, 2026, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 117

At the request of Mr. SCHIFF, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 117, a joint resolution to direct the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities within or against the Islamic Republic of Iran that have not been authorized by Congress.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 4743. Mrs. BRITT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 4743. Mrs. BRITT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1383, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ELECTIONS.

(a) PROHIBIT VOTING BY NONCITIZENS IN DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ELECTIONS.—An individual who is not a citizen of the United States may not vote in an election for public office in the District of Columbia or in any

ballot initiative or referendum in the District of Columbia.

(b) REPEAL OF THE LOCAL RESIDENT VOTING RIGHTS AMENDMENT ACT OF 2022.—The Local Resident Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2022 (D.C. Law 24-242) is repealed, and any provision of law amended or repealed by such Act shall be restored or revived as if such Act had not been enacted into law.

ORDERS FOR SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 2026

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 12 noon on Sunday, March 22; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, morning business be closed, and the Senate resume the House message with respect to S. 1383.

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

Mr. BARRASSO. For the information of my colleagues, we expect a cloture vote on the Mullin nomination at 1 p.m. tomorrow.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order following the remarks of Senators LEE, KING, KIM, and BLUMENTHAL.

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

Mr. BARRASSO. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

SAVE AMERICA ACT

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, we have had more discussion today on a number of topics. One of the topics that has commanded a lot of today's discussion is the bill that is now pending before the U.S. Senate, the SAVE America Act.

There have been more assertions made on this bill today than there have been in the past. So I need to address each one of those points, particularly those that have not been refuted—or at least adequately refuted today—in connection with these debates. While it is difficult to know exactly where to begin, I am going to begin—before I refute these—just with a generalized statement up front that will facilitate my ability to refute.

These scurrilous and false arguments that have been made against this bill—now, although some of these arguments have been mingled with truth, they are almost entirely false. They are built on lies. They are built on a blatant mischaracterization of the legislative text now pending before the Senate. They are based on a mischaracterization of the legal status quo and the effects of existing laws.

They are based on mischaracterizations of the Constitution. They are based on mischaracterizations of the individual motives of the lawmakers in this body—something that we are not supposed to call into question but that has been called into question on a number of occasions today.

First, as to the general backdrop against which we are operating, we remember that the whole purpose of the SAVE America Act is to make it easy to vote and hard to cheat.

We remember the fact that the purpose of the SAVE America Act is to do this through a two-step mechanism—one that focuses on requiring proof of citizenship at the time of voter registration and another that requires photo ID at the time and place of voting.

The whole reason that this law became necessary, that this bill, this legislative project came into existence about 2½ years ago, was that Congressman CHIP ROY and I—Congressman ROY comes from Texas—he and I were talking, and, having been informed by some experts in this area, we pieced together a number of features—legal, factual, historical developments—that have converged into one, producing a massive gap in our election security.

Remember that the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 has been interpreted by the Supreme Court in *Arizona v. Inter Tribal Council of Arizona* as prohibiting the States from doing any followup to verify, confirm, or refute someone's citizenship.

Although Federal law does, in fact—as has been noted repeatedly today on the floor of the Senate—require that you be a U.S. citizen to vote in a Federal election, that doesn't enforce itself. In fact, that criminal prohibition against noncitizen voting in Federal elections has become more or less impossible to enforce because noncitizen voting is nearly impossible to detect under the status quo.

Because of the Supreme Court's ruling in *Arizona v. Inter Tribal Council of Arizona* in 2013, the States can't ask for proof of citizenship for anyone who registers to vote at a DMV—through an NVRA form at a DMV while applying for a driver's license and simultaneously going through the process of registering to vote.

Remember, all you have to do with an NVRA form at the DMV while you are applying for a driver's license is check one box saying: Yes, I would like to simultaneously register to vote.

The only further act is to sign your name certifying that you are, in fact, eligible to vote. That is the end of the inquiry, and there can be no more inquiry, and that is part of what is causing so much of a problem.

Decades ago, there were simply fewer noncitizens in the United States.

In many instances, it was difficult to get a driver's license if you were a noncitizen—especially if you were an illegal immigrant—and that, too, has

changed. We have now got 30 million-plus noncitizens in this country. We have 10- to 15 million illegal immigrants in this country, specifically illegal immigrants who arrived within that 4-year period between January 20, 2021—the day President Biden took office—and January 20, 2025—the day President Trump became President for the second time. This veritable flood of illegal immigration—a mass-scale border invasion invited by the Biden administration, contrary to our laws—brought these circumstances about.

So when you merge that with the fact that we have a lot of noncitizens here generally, coupled with the fact that it is impossible for the State to ask for any type of proof of citizenship for someone registering to vote at a DMV through an NVRA-supplied form, you have a recipe for disaster that we have never had previously in this country.

All right. So as to the arguments, they are picking apart arguments with it. Now, these arguments, first of all, are themselves at odds with how the American people approach this. The American people understand that it is not that big of a deal—it is not the end of the world; it is certainly not Armageddon—to suggest that somebody ought to show who they are and that they have the right to do what they want to do, to establish that they are citizens when they register to vote, to establish on the day of voting at the polling location that they are the person indicated on the voter registration file. The American people overwhelmingly understand and accept the fact that this isn't that big of a deal. Sure, it might be an incremental burden for some, but it is not going to be a problem, and it is a problem that Americans are used to dealing with.

You don't go to the bank or to the pharmacy or to the doctor's office or to a hospital, you don't apply for a hunting license or a fishing license, you don't buy a gun, you don't go through TSA and travel—you don't do any of these things and much, much more without being able to prove who you are and that you have the right to do the thing you are about to do.

The same is true with the Oscars, the Grammys, the Emmys, the Super Bowl, and the Democratic National Convention. You cannot get into and participate in the Democratic National Convention unless you show up with voter ID and credentials.

What else is like that? Oh, yes, I know: the U.S. Senate. You cannot come to the U.S. Senate, you can't cast a vote in the U.S. Senate, you certainly can't make it into this Chamber without ID and without credentials establishing that you have the right to be here as a Senator, the right to vote as a Senator, to make laws as a Senator. Every one of us has had to go through this over and over again—not just when we vote or do any of the other things that I mentioned, but when we register as candidates, we

have to show who we are and that we are eligible to run for the U.S. Senate, that we meet the constitutional requirements for service in the U.S. Senate. We have to show our ID again when we vote.

Then even after we win our elections—if we are so fortunate as those of us serving in this body have been—you still have to show up and produce an ID on a couple of different occasions. You have to show your ID and your birth certificate or a U.S. passport in order to establish your citizenship, just as you would with any other job.

Remember, every American citizen who has any job as an employee in the United States of America has to establish their citizenship. They have to do that by either showing a U.S. passport that establishes citizenship or, alternatively, a birth certificate and a photo ID.

So we have to do that here, just like any other government employee, any other private sector employee in America. But as Senators, we also have to show up with other documentation. In addition to showing that we are who we claim to be and that we are that person who claims to have been elected to the U.S. Senate in the most recent senatorial election, we also have to show up and have the benefit of an election certificate by our chief elections officer—the secretary of state or Lieutenant Governor in most States—to establish that we are eligible to participate here. So this is no different. And the Democratic National Convention and the Republican National Convention as well. These are not unusual standards or requirements.

So let's get onto these arguments. Over and over and over again, we heard this from both the senior Senator from Rhode Island and from the junior Senator from Rhode Island, among others, over the last few days. We are being told this would bring about a massive campaign of voter disenfranchisement.

Let's remember what “disenfranchisement” means. In this context, it means you are taking people who can vote today and making it so that they can't vote tomorrow.

This is an argument conceived in Hell by the Devil himself because it is just utterly false. There is not a scintilla of truth to this. You could try to breathe life into it by adding inference upon inference, taking different statements out of context; you would still be lying if you were making this argument because there is nothing about it that disenfranchises anyone.

(Mrs. BRITT assumed the Chair.)

If anything, what this would do is this would prevent the disenfranchisement of actual U.S. citizens by those who are not citizens of our country, by those who—whether through mistake or, more likely, fraud—may register to vote notwithstanding the fact that they are not eligible to do this.

The modern left has become obsessed with what they consider victimless crimes. We hear about this from the

modern left all the time, and we have heard about that in this very Chamber this very day. They approach noncitizen voting as if it were such a minor thing not only in terms of the numbers, the frequency or infrequency with which it occurs, but also that even if it does happen, let's not worry about it.

Remember, our mantra is, let's make it easy to vote and hard to cheat.

Their mantra appears to be, let's make it easy to vote and screw the rest. We don't care.

When you focus obsessively on "easy to vote" to the exclusion of all other things, you are not just increasing marginally the risk of voter fraud—something that they claim doesn't exist and that we have invented into existence because of our own tendencies toward paranoid fantasy—but they are also ignoring the fact that when we allow that to happen, we are disenfranchising actual American citizens, because their vote matters less. Their vote can be canceled out entirely by 1 or more or 1,000 or more or 10,000 or more people who vote in the same jurisdiction who might not be eligible to do so.

So, yes, it matters. And this is not disenfranchisement. It is a little bit like saying you are excluding entire categories of people by requiring them to prove who they are when they start a job—something that we all have to do every time we start a job. And somehow, the American economy continues to function. Somehow, men, women, people of every race and combination of races imaginable in America do that every single day. Most of us do that many times in a single career—we start a new job, we prove who we are. When we go to the DMV, we have to prove who we are. When we get pulled over in our car, we prove who we are. Why is this any different?

They say: Well, it is a constitutionally protected right.

Darn right it is. And it is our job to make sure that is protected. But the fact that it is a constitutionally protected right in no way, shape, or form means that we have to make it easy to vote and screw the rest; let's let them cheat. That is not a rational conclusion—unless, of course, your objective is to facilitate noncitizen, fraudulent voting in our elections, to the disenfranchisement of actual American citizens who are there to vote.

This is not a victimless crime, and shame on my colleagues for suggesting otherwise.

We also heard—this one was from the junior Senator from Rhode Island, and we heard it multiple times not only from him but from the senior Senator from Rhode Island—that it requires a passport to vote under the SAVE America Act.

This is not just a lie; this is a damned lie because the plain black-and-white text of the bill makes it very clear that there are a zillion ways that you can prove your citizenship. Now, there are a couple of them that are

easy, that are familiar, that roll off the tongue because we use them elsewhere—like, for example, providing a U.S. passport that establishes citizenship on its own and like showing up with a birth certificate and a government-issued photo ID. That will do it too. Those are the documents we use in the employment context under the I-9 form.

But there is a whole lot of other stuff that we have added to this one. For example, there are certain types of driver's licenses. I don't mean REAL ID because there are a lot of REAL ID driver's licenses that are issued to citizens and noncitizens alike. That has become a point of confusion. There is a subcategory of REAL ID driver's licenses known as the enhanced driver's license issued by some States to some people that contain indicia on the face of the driver's license that will establish citizenship. There are, as I understand it, some Tribal identification papers that will also establish U.S. citizenship—not all of them, but some of them do. There are a handful of other things that will do that.

But in addition to all these mechanisms, you can also show up without a single document in hand. If you don't have them—you can't find them, you lost them, your house burned down, whatever it is—you can show up and you can fill out an affidavit, a sworn affidavit, saying: I, MIKE LEE, swear under penalty of perjury that I am a citizen of the United States and this is where I was born.

If you are a natural-born citizen, as I am, as I think most of us here are: I was a citizen as of the moment of my birth by virtue of the circumstances of my birth when I was born on June 4, 1971, in Mesa, AZ, to U.S. citizen parents.

If you are not a—and those are the basic facts. You outline the basic facts of how it is that you became a natural-born citizen—enough facts so that the State election official knows what to look for, knows where to look, and can confirm or refute the existence of your citizenship as a natural-born citizen. You shift the burden onto the State. It doesn't cost you a dime. It doesn't even have to take more than a few minutes to show up and provide that information. Now, some might say: Well, that, too, is a step. Well, yeah, there are a lot of steps in a lot of things, and it is what we do to make sure that the vote matters, to make sure that the vote isn't being just completely left open to fraud and manipulation.

If you take the easy vote nonsense far enough and you don't couple it with anything that makes it hard to cheat, you really are just inviting and—in fact, guaranteeing—fraud. You are guaranteeing effective disenfranchisement, nullification of U.S. citizen voting, and often facilitating foreign election interference—something that my Democratic colleagues claimed for years to be obsessively concerned about, and now, Nah, let's not worry

about it. We just want to make it easy to vote.

So it is not true to say that you have got to have a passport to vote. One of the reasons why they like to make this argument, as dishonest as that argument is, is because passports, of course, are something that not everybody has. Some Americans do, but some don't. Some don't travel enough for it to matter, and if and when they needed to travel outside the United States, they will get one. And it is expensive. It costs a couple hundred bucks to get a passport.

And all of us, as Senators, have had a lot of experience helping our constituents get passports. Every one of us has had the experience, not just once or twice but often once or twice a day, where we get a call from a constituent saying: I am supposed to be boarding a plane. I am on my way to London or Yemen or Tokyo or wherever it is, and I can't find my passport or it has expired. And we walk them through the process of doing it.

It does have some expense involved, and there are often delays involved in getting one, but if you have got one, it can be helpful.

But the reason they like to use that argument—falsely claiming over and over and over again for the last 4 days in a row—that you have got to have a passport to register to vote under the SAVE America Act is because they like the fact that there is a cost associated with a passport, and they can use that to make one of the other spurious arguments, which is that this is a poll tax.

Well, of course, we outlawed poll taxes more than 60 years ago by a constitutional amendment, and, of course, this is not a poll tax because you needn't shell out a dime. A poll tax is something that you have to pay for in order to have the right to vote. This is not that—nothing like that.

All right. Next point. My colleagues continue to argue that every part of this is so fraught with peril, including the very basic elements of what, under this law, the States would need to do to coordinate with and share voter registration data with the relevant Federal Agencies, primarily those within the Department of Homeland Security who operate the already existing SAVE database so that this coordination can occur between State elections officials—those who maintain their voter rolls—and the Federal personnel who maintain this database.

The argument that they are making is that even those parts—even the sharing of data between State officials and Federal officials just to make sure that we don't have noncitizens voting is something that is going to happen, particularly with this many noncitizens in the country, the ease of going into a DMV and applying for a driver's license and simultaneously checking a box and signing your name to register to vote. Given how easy it has become to do that, it is an absolute certainty that

you are going to have a number of people who are noncitizens who are registered to vote.

Now, some of them might be doing it deliberately. I suspect there are quite a few who might do it inadvertently. There may be language barriers involved. They may think they are supposed to check that box, and they will sign their name. They might not know entirely what they are doing or they might not have a complete understanding that whatever their immigration status is, it doesn't allow them to vote.

The point is this: It is a known fact that we have a lot of registered voters in this country who are noncitizens. Let's talk about how we know that.

In the first instance, we have got a small handful of States—but a growing number of States—that have begun a systematic review of their own voter registration files, and they have shared their voter registration file data with the individuals and Agencies within the Department of Homeland Security in Washington, DC, to figure out who is a citizen and who is not.

Those that have done this have found many thousands of noncitizens in their voter files so far. My hat goes off to those who have done it. This is the responsible citizen thing to do, and they have gone through the process of figuring out how to correct the errors.

So some of them have found out that way. Others, as is the case, for example, with the State of Oklahoma—it is a general phenomenon that occurs all over the place, but in Oklahoma they have a law designed specifically for this situation.

Remember, when you are summoned to show up for jury duty, that happens through a random selection of names from voter registration files in the jurisdiction in which potential jurors are drawn, so nobody should be summoned for jury duty unless they are on a list of registered voters. And when registered voters show up for jury duty, with some regularity, they will stand up, and they will say: Hey, I am not a citizen, and I, therefore, cannot serve as a juror.

Now, there all kinds of reasons. I have seen this happen, as a lawyer, many times. People get summoned for jury duty, and some of them will look for excuses not to do it. And some are really good reasons, others less so.

You hear people joke about different ways they could avoid it. I have heard people joke about showing up and saying, you know: I believe in jury nullification; that the jury can do whatever it wants without regard to the law. It doesn't matter. It is all our choice. And some say that is a way to avoid it. I don't encourage that.

Others will say that, well, there was this great episode of the sitcom "30 Rock" years ago where I believe Liz Lemon, the main character of the show, showed up for jury duty while dressed as Princess Leia and with just as many indicators that she was really

weird as possible, hoping that some of the lawyers would exclude her, perhaps using one of their peremptory challenges to get over it.

Others still might show up and fraudulently claim that they are not citizens when, in fact, they are citizens. So, in Oklahoma, in order to ferret this out, they passed a law that said: All right. If you show up for jury duty having been summoned to show up as a potential juror and you claim that you cannot serve because you are not a citizen, we are going to check. We are going to check to see if you are, in fact, a citizen because if you are not a citizen, you shouldn't have registered to vote, and that is one kind of a problem. We are going to need to remove you from the voter registration files.

If you are, in fact, a registered voter in our State, then you have just stated under penalty of perjury, in order to escape jury duty, that you are not a citizen when, in fact, you are. That is also a problem.

Look, it is much better—don't lie. If you really don't want to do it, show up dressed as Princess Leia or as Chewbacca or something like that. That is probably a better point. I don't recommend that either. Just do your duty as a citizen.

Those States that have adopted procedures like that, whether in the form of a formal law like Oklahoma or as is the case in Michigan, they have adopted a practice: When they assemble those names, they run them through, and inevitably they find a bunch of them were not citizens and then they can remove them.

In other States still, there are four or five States and the District of Columbia in which they openly admit that they register noncitizens to vote because in some local elections within those jurisdictions, they allow noncitizens to vote.

That is a terrible idea. I don't know why they would want to do that, but they do. There is nothing in the U.S. Constitution that prohibits it in a State or local election, as long as there is nothing in State law or the applicable State constitution that prohibits it; therefore, they can do so, and some of them have—some of them do. Foolish as it is, they do it anyway.

Curiously, in those States, when U.S. Federal authorities have asked them to explain how it is that they deal with the problem of voter registration files consisting of people who are allowed to participate in certain local elections as noncitizens, how they prevent those same voters who are not citizens, but registered to vote, from casting votes with a normal ballot as for Federal offices like the U.S. House of Representatives or U.S. Senate, every time that question has been asked, they go silent. They won't say a thing, and then they refuse to cooperate.

Now, a few minutes ago, I referred to a number of States that have, on their own, just because they are good citizens—they have taken advantage of the

SAVE database within the Department of Homeland Security. They have shared their data, usually having entered into a memorandum of understanding between the State and DHS beforehand.

And then they say: Hey, run the numbers. Show us where we have got people in there that we shouldn't have. To their great credit, they have done that.

But there are a whole bunch of other States that refuse—most so-called blue States. States with Democrat legislatures and/or Democrat Governors have been refusing to do that. And so they have no idea—or at least we have no idea—how many noncitizens might be registered to vote in those States.

So this is kind of a problem.

Anyway, back to the argument made, I believe, by both of the Rhode Island Senators. Boy, the Rhode Island Senators sure had a lot to say today. They just didn't have a lot of good things to say about the SAVE America Act—and by "good things," I don't mean that they were criticizing it. I mean they were using really bad arguments that are not rooted in truth and that are made with either knowledge of their falsity or reckless disregard as to their truthfulness.

So this is where it gets interesting. They argue that we can't even trust the States—the States can't even trust the Department of Homeland Security or anyone in the Trump administration with that data that under the SAVE America Act they would be required to supply to the Department of Homeland Security for this review.

And we can't, why? Well, the argument—they use a lot more words to say it, but it basically boils down to three words: "Orange man bad."

Now, that is not a good reason. That is a lame-ass argument to get to a very simple point. They are saying: We don't trust the U.S. Government with data because some of it contains personally identifying information.

Well, welcome to the U.S. Government. They know everything about us. There is no fact that they do not have on us, on every American citizen, like it or not.

We do everything we can—and we do everything we can in this legislation—to make sure that privacy is respected. But with or without that information being handed over by a State election official to the Department of Homeland Security for the sole purpose of ascertaining voter eligibility, it does nothing to maximize or to further protect the privacy of the American people, nor are my Democratic colleagues saying or even suggesting in any way, shape, or form that they want to undo all the thousands, if not millions, of other instances, areas in which they collect a whole lot of data, including a whole lot of personally identifying data on U.S. citizens.

So they are just hyperfocusing on this one where, by the way, the ease and simplicity of protecting the privacy and the personal information of

individual U.S. citizens is far easier than it is in the context of the IRS or of the financial transactions or everything else that the U.S. Government keeps track of. So this strikes me as pretextual; and, of course, pretextual is a fancy word for it is a cheap excuse for the real reason.

Now, maybe we will get to a real reason in a minute. Let's just say that they are opposing this for a reason, but none of the reasons that they are offering pass muster—not one of them can withstand scrutiny.

So their argument that “Trump bad” equals no State should have to share its data, even where necessary in order to weed out fraud in Federal elections—that argument isn't good. That argument is basically saying that we don't want our States to have to do that because we are pretty sure that our States have registered a whole bunch of noncitizen voters, and we don't want to have to give them up.

(Mrs. MOODY assumed the Chair.)

From day one, when they talked about this, even before debate began in the Senate, my Democratic colleagues have been arguing that anyone whose name would likely trigger alarm bells through the processes established by the SAVE America Act warranting their removal based on their status as noncitizens—they said that anyone who would likely be removed from the voter registration files would be more likely to be a Democrat than a Republican and that would be bad for us. They literally said this.

Now, they are careful not to say “because they are noncitizens,” but that is the reason. That is the only reason you would be removed through this framework is if they are noncitizens.

And so when they say over and over again this is going to disenfranchise people, it is going to take away their vote—well, yeah, if you are a noncitizen. But if you are not, it is not going to.

And so this process that they go through in defending the status quo and in saying that Armageddon will be upon us if we require people to show up with a photo ID when they vote, to show that they are citizens when they register to vote, and that the States are going to share their data on their voter registration files with the Department of Homeland Security just to make sure that they are, in fact, not voting in U.S. elections as noncitizens—when they object that strongly to it, it makes you wonder why they are so upset. And I think the question answers itself. It speaks for itself when they freak out over something like this.

They have no problem with any of the other myriad areas in which voter ID is required—or photo ID is required. In fact, in the last Congress, when President Biden was still in office and when the Democrats had the majority in this Chamber—we are talking just a little over a year ago—every Democrat in the Senate then joined in and sup-

ported legislation that contained a voter ID element. So the voter ID component of it, most of them have said they are OK with it.

Then when we tried to offer that one up and pass it by unanimous consent at the motion of our friend and distinguished colleague, the junior Senator from Ohio, who has got probably more knowledge of how elections work and State election systems operate than any other Member of the House or Senate—past, present, or future—this guy is sort of the—he is the Einstein of election systems. So he offered that up, accepting at face value our Democratic colleagues' repeated insistence that they don't have a problem with voter ID requirements, and it still drew an objection. Now, it drew an objection that made no sense because the objection articulated had nothing to do with voter ID. At least that is how I heard it. So that was kind of an issue. All right.

Next argument: This one came specifically from the junior Senator from Rhode Island who, if I have this right, falsely claimed that the Supreme Court of the United States has said that it is unconstitutional to ask a registering voter for proof of citizenship. Now, if I misunderstood that, I hope and expect to be corrected, but I don't think I did. I think that was the argument. And if that was the argument, that argument is a lie. It is absolutely false. It is not only guilty of being false; it is innocent of being true.

The Supreme Court ruling to which he is referring is this case called *Arizona v. Inter Tribal Council of Arizona*. It was wrongly decided, but it is conclusive nonetheless. The majority opinion reached this conclusion. It did not say it is unconstitutional to ask a registering voter for proof of citizenship—far from it. It said that based on the text of the 1993 NVRA, as passed by Congress, that the text, as a matter of statutory interpretation, preempts, prohibits any State using the NVRA form at a DMV from asking any driver's license applicant simultaneously registering to vote to also establish citizenship.

That is a statutory conclusion—one that we are free to change. It is not a constitutional mandate. It is far from a constitutional mandate. Now, if that is what my friend and colleague the distinguished junior Senator from Rhode Island meant to say, then he is just plain wrong. But by saying that, he is suggesting that we are powerless, absent a constitutional amendment, from requiring any registering voter to provide proof of citizenship, which would make no sense, by the way, I mean, given how many times you are required elsewhere in Federal law—to say nothing of State law but even just in Federal law—to establish who you are and that you are a U.S. citizen.

Now, for example, you have to do that on the I-9 every time you start a new job. Every American has to do that or you can't start the job. You

also have to do it when you apply for a passport. And there are related issues of proof that you have to do in many, many other circumstances. If you want to buy a firearm and you go into a federally licensed firearms dealer, you have to provide a photo ID. You then have to go through a background check. You have to show who you are.

To this the Democrats say: Oh, but this is a constitutionally protected right. You have a constitutionally protected right to vote. True. There are multiple provisions of the U.S. Constitution that in different ways protect your right to vote. Yes, it is constitutionally protected. So too are a whole lot of other things. So too is your right to travel, and yet your right to travel is not unqualified. If you want to travel in and out of the United States, then you are going to have to get a passport. If you want to travel between two States or even two cities through commercial air travel, you are, at a minimum, going to have to show a driver's license. Yet your right to travel is constitutionally protected; the right to bear arms is constitutionally protected, as is the right to vote.

So the fact that something is constitutionally protected doesn't mean that there are and can be no guardrails around that to make sure that you are a person who is allowed to exercise the constitutionally protected right in question. That never has been the case, and it never will be the case. You still don't escape the need to establish who you are and that you have that right.

Next comes the argument made repeatedly by both the junior Senator from Rhode Island and the senior Senator from Rhode Island that this will somehow disenfranchise women. This has to be one of the dumbest arguments that I have ever heard, not just in connection with this bill, the SAVE America Act, but with any bill ever debated in the 15½ years I have been in the U.S. Senate. I find it utterly offensive to suggest that women just can't possibly be expected to get their stuff together enough to establish who they are and that they are citizens; or, as the argument goes, women who get married and change their name upon getting married are never ever going to be able to prove who they are after they change their name because, after all, their parents couldn't have known what their married name would be when they were born, so we just can't pass this law.

This is really, really dumb. I mean, first of all, we have a lot of women serving in the U.S. Senate, every one of whom had to prove their citizenship, had to establish their election certificate, and many of whom have been married and changed their name in connection with that. And it is not just the women of the U.S. Senate; it is all women anywhere. And I know a lot of women. I have five sisters. My wife also has five sisters. Between us, that is 10 sisters. That is a lot of sisters. Every

damn one of them knows how to establish who they are and that they are entitled to vote. This is not a problem. And they are all married, and they all have married names that were different than the name listed on their birth certificate. It is not a problem. It is not just my family that is like that. I would imagine that the Presiding Officer's family is the same way. Women are no less capable than men of establishing who they are and supplying the necessary documentation.

Now, of course, what they say is: But what if they did—what if they did get married and what if they could find all the other pieces of documentation—maybe their maiden name is still on their passport, if they have one. And their maiden name would obviously be used on their birth certificate. Well, that is not a problem either, for the same reason that it is not a problem if you don't have any documentation.

It is best if you have the normal documentation because it is going to save the State governments a whole lot of trouble under this bill. It makes it a lot easier for them if you just show up with the right documentation, which most people have. But if you don't, that is OK. We have made that OK too. You just have to do an attestation, a short paragraph outlining who you are, when and where you were born, how you became a citizen, whether you were a citizen as of the moment of your birth by virtue of the circumstances surrounding your birth, or whether you were naturalized, and, if so, when, where, and how.

It is not hard. You could write that out. Any American could write out that information in probably less than 2 minutes. I know I could. Whether or not it would be fully legible is a different question. I might need 3 minutes to make sure that my handwriting is neat enough to be read, and even then it is a jump ball. It is an open question, but I am pretty sure I would be OK.

Every single time we bring this up, they refuse to acknowledge the language in the statute, in the bill. Page 12, line 22 and the text that follows from it makes very clear that if you are missing any of that documentation—let's say you are a married woman whose birth certificate and whose passport and whose other documentation uses only your maiden name and not your married name and you can't find your marriage certificate. By the way, if you can find it, that is conclusive proof of the name change. You don't have to worry about it at all.

But let's say you can't find the marriage certificate and you have everything else. Then you swear out a brief affidavit: I got married on July such and such of such and such a year. And I married so-and-so. His name is Jones. My maiden name was Smith, so I changed it from Smith to Jones.

You are done. That is it. From that moment forward, whether you are missing one document or all documents, you fill out the affidavit, you

hand it over to the State election official. They will ask any follow-up questions they need, and from that moment forward, the burden is off your shoulders; the burden is shifted to the State authorities, whose job it is to confirm or refute your citizenship or lack thereof.

States, remember, have access to all kinds of information: birth certificates issued in that State. I believe many, if not most, if not all States, have reciprocal arrangements with other States where they can confirm or refute information on each other's databases about birth and death records and so forth. This is not hard. Yet they refuse to acknowledge that language. They just go on over and over again saying: You are going to disenfranchise women.

Look, the American people don't buy it, and the American people know that when you raise bull-crap arguments over and over and over again, you are not taking the American people seriously, especially when you insult their intelligence and competence by saying that vast swaths of people—and I have heard everything under the book. You name it. I have heard it stated with regard to rural Americans as opposed to more urban Americans—or suburban Americans, people of certain ethnic or racial backgrounds, men, women, old people, young people. They try to otherize just about everybody imaginable and say that certain subgroups will somehow be disenfranchised, disadvantaged. This is all nonsense, and it all ignores the same central feature in the bill that makes this tremendously easy.

All right. The next argument that they both make: fees. You have to pay fees somehow to vote. This gets back to their poll tax argument. Utter lie built on paranoid fantasy, conceived in hell by the devil himself, to make these arguments over and over again to scare people. This really has to stop at some point or another.

At times, they start to argue against the photo ID point minimally, and then they remember that many, if not most of them, at one point or another—including some in the last few days—have said they are OK with photo ID. And so they don't argue with that one too much. But at the same time, they don't own up to the fact that every Democrat in here in the last Congress was, I believe, a cosponsor of legislation that contained an ID requirement. Now, it was a little bit different than this one. The biggest difference was that it wasn't quite as tight, but there was a type of ID requirement in that bill. It is not that different.

Now, they kept arguing also that this would disproportionately burden citizen voters, that it would be citizens that really would have to worry and that this would end up resulting in the disenfranchisement of lots and lots of citizens.

The senior Senator from Rhode Island even went so far as to say a couple of things. I had to listen carefully when

he started to say this because I thought he was joking at first or I hoped I was misunderstanding him.

He started to theorize back to this point that "the orange man bad," so none of this can happen. We hate Trump. We can't trust Trump or anybody in his administration. Therefore, we are going to just say that all of it is unacceptable.

He was saying that if this law passes, we can expect that the Trump administration might just willy-nilly cancel the voter registration files of anyone they felt like canceling. If somebody looked like they might not be a Trump voter or something bothered them about this or that person, they might just willy-nilly say: When in doubt, throw them out.

The senior Senator from Rhode Island even went a step further, in a way that pained me to hear because it is so absurd. He said it is even something we should have to worry about, that the Trump administration could go in and just cancel all the voter registration files in an entire State.

This is nonsense.

Not only is that absurd—to think that they would do that, to think they could get away with it—it is utterly at odds with the text of the legislation. Nothing in the legislation would allow them to do that under any circumstance, other than where, having received the data from the States, they run it through their database, and they identify people: These appear to be noncitizens.

They, then, notify the States: These appear to be noncitizens, voters 1 through 5,000—whatever, however many there are.

Even at that point, they are not removed. The State then does its job of going back through, and if the State believes that the Federal authorities got it wrong, they can push back on that.

The U.S. Government under this regime wouldn't have the authority to just go in and say: He is gone. She is gone. Get rid of this file. Get rid of that file.

They can flag things for the States, and it would be up to the States, ultimately, to remove them. But it is a collaborative, iterative process. It is not one in which they could go in and just say, "This guy bothers me; get rid of him," or cancel all the voter registrations in an entire State.

I mean, let's be realistic. That is not realistic, and it is absurd to argue because it is utterly false that this bill, if it were signed into law, would have that effect. It is just a lie.

OK. Next, the senior Senator from Rhode Island had a real doozy with this one. He said: You know—after doubting whether any of this occurs—let's not bicker and argue about who might be registered to vote as a noncitizen. It probably doesn't happen ever. If it does, it is only a little.

Well, that is cold comfort to anyone in a jurisdiction that has ever experienced what happens when there is a

close election and somebody wins by just a handful of votes. It is cold comfort to say: Well, there are only a few noncitizens fraudulently voting.

But separate and apart from that, he was saying: The best way that we can handle this is just enforce existing law.

Do you know how absurd that is? Do you know how sophomoric, shallow, simple-minded that is—not to mention how reckless and utterly dishonest that is?

Let's work that through for a minute. What does that mean, "enforce existing law"? This is like the candidates who run for existing office that say: Well, I know how I will balance the Federal budget. Just eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse.

Oh, gosh, we didn't think about that before.

The difficulty lies in identifying it. You have to be able to identify the waste, fraud, and abuse, which we should do a better job of doing that we do. It is one of the reasons why we have systems like DOGE and why we have things like rescissions packages. I wish we did them more often and more aggressively, but it is why we have them.

It is not as easy as just saying: Let's just do it.

It reminds me of a movie. There has been a remake of it that I don't think was as good. The original movie was called "Meatballs"—you know, the one that came out in the 1970s, I think. It stars Bill Murray.

Bill Murray is this camp counselor, and in the camp Olympics, they were going up against Camp North Star. Camp North Star had a lot of almost professionally trained athletes. Bill Murray, the camp counselor character, just kept reminding people that they had their own coaches, their other personal masseuse on board. And they were really worried about going into the camp Olympics against the rival camp, a bunch of rich kids at Camp North Star—I think is what it was called.

The one young man was about to compete in the high jump, and he went up to Bill Murray and he said: Do you have advice for me just before I make this jump?

Bill Murray looked at him and he said: Yes.

He got this very introspective look on his face, and he said: Try to jump very, very high.

That is kind of what happens when you hear someone say, "Oh, it is easy—waste, fraud, and abuse"; or "It is easy; let's just enforce existing law."

So this was his argument. It was that we can just enforce existing law because existing law, including but not limited to laws codified in 18 U.S.C. 1015, prohibit noncitizens from voting in U.S. elections. So let's just enforce it.

That is the whole darn point. That is the whole reason why CHIP ROY and I wrote the SAVE America Act in the first place. It is the whole reason we had to, because our existing laws, as

interpreted and as implemented, make it impossible—impossible—to find out where this is happening.

We can't enforce existing law, at least not existing law within States that, No. 1, refuse voluntarily to come forward and share their voter registration file data with DHS to run it through the SAVE database, which I think roughly half of the States, blue States in particular, are refusing to do.

And those States include especially the small handful of States that openly, brazenly admit that they allow noncitizens to register to vote to participate in certain local elections, even though they are noncitizens.

So with all those States, including the handful of States that allow—expressly allow—noncitizens to vote and then offer no explanation as to how they keep them separate from those who are able to participate in elections for Federal office, they expect us to just, oh, enforce the law.

Now, Rhode Island is a blue State. I will check to make sure, but I will bet \$5—a lot of money where I come from—that Rhode Island is one of those States that defiantly refuses to share their voter registration data.

So how in the heck are we supposed to enforce the law when they make it impossible to enforce the law? It is unknown, and it is unknowable. This is like—I guess it is like the ancient Egyptians telling the children of Israel that they had to make bricks without straw.

It can't be done, but they are just fine with that, just as the ancient Egyptians weren't all that concerned about the working conditions, the health, or the pragmatics behind their slaves.

Apparently, our Democrat colleagues are not all that concerned about noncitizens voting.

All right, one more movie quote while we are on the topic: "Shrek" is one of the great cinematic masterpieces of the last 40, 50 years; half-century—"Shrek."

There is a character named Lord Farquaad. Lord Farquaad is not what you would call a nice guy. Lord Farquaad is a despot. He is a tyrant. He is a fascist, and he is talking to his soldiers as he is about to send them into battle.

He says: Now, I realize that in this battle some of you may die, but that is a sacrifice I am willing to make.

It seems like some of our Democrat Senators are approaching this with an analogous attitude. I realize if we do nothing, if we do not pass the SAVE America Act, we could have thousands, perhaps tens of thousands, probably hundreds of thousands of noncitizens currently registered to vote in this country who will end up voting in Federal elections, and in some instances might even decide the outcome of elections. But that is a sacrifice we are willing to make.

Why? It benefits them. That old Latin phrase, *cui bono*—who benefits?

They do. They benefit from the status quo in which it is impossible to enforce existing law.

So, no, Mr. Senator from Rhode Island, don't talk to me about the fact that we don't need this because all we have to do is enforce the law.

It can't be done. You know that, and you are all too content with that. So knock it off.

The senior Senator from Rhode Island goes on to say that they will just use it to purge voter rolls.

Well, yes, that is the idea, to purge voter rolls of illegal voters, of noncitizens, not U.S. citizens.

Nothing in the law would authorize that. If somebody tried to do it, not only would they lose in court, but they would be fired from their job, and they might even be imprisoned.

I mean, this is serious business, and they are treating it as if they could just make up the facts and make up the law.

They are entitled to their opinions. They are not entitled to their own facts. Those things they want us to accept as facts are just damned lies.

All right, there were several references made to my home State of Utah, talking about how relatively clean Utah's voter registration rolls are—clean of noncitizens—great, yes.

Do you know why? My State is not one of those that refuses to clean up its voter registration files.

Now, I don't know whether we know the sum total of all those who might have been registered to vote or whether they have been able to review all those. I don't know. I am not going speak to that.

But I will say that in the 18 months of the Biden Presidency, Utah had more incoming illegal immigrant traffic into the State than any other State in the Union, measured on a per capita basis.

So even though, over time, yes, we probably have pretty clean voter registration files, there is no telling whether that is still the case today. There is no telling whether that could change between now and this November's election, especially when people figure out that, hey, no citizen, no problem. Just go into a DMV, fill out a form, check the box, sign your name, and, all of a sudden, you are a registered voter.

Next, federalism: This is one of my favorite arguments that they make, and they make it over and over and over again. Both Senators from Rhode Island made the federalism argument today.

They talk about the fact that—part of what they say is true—the U.S. Government is a government of limited powers. James Madison, in *Federalist* 45, described this government, the one we operate, the one for which we make laws, as a government with powers that Madison described as "few and defined." And the powers reserved to the States are "numerous and indefinite." Unlike the States, which are governments of general jurisdiction—they can

legislate on anything just because. Anything that is not prohibited to the States, either by the U.S. Constitution or by their State constitution, they can do it.

We are not the same. This government is not the same. We have to have a specific reason to legislate, a reason that falls within Congress' limited enumerated powers, most of which—not all of which—can be found in one part of the Constitution that too often goes overlooked, article I, section 8.

But there are a handful of other scattered authorities throughout the Constitution, including the one that is most relevant here, and that is the one found in article I, section 4, clause 1 of the Constitution, that gives us the authority to establish rules and regulations specific to the election of Federal officials, namely U.S. Senators and U.S. Representatives.

That same provision, article I, section 4, clause 1, says, in the first instance, that the States will conduct those elections. And that is true. It also says the States will establish the rules governing the "Time, Places, and Manner" of those elections. And that is true. But then it also says, in the very same sentence, that Congress may at any time impose its own rules and regulations, not regarding elections generally but specifically Federal elections—Federal elections for U.S. House and Senate races.

And so, we have that authority. That authority is being exercised here. There is not a single credible argument that the SAVE America Act falls outside that authority—not one.

And it is very amusing. I talked about this a little bit last night. It is amusing to me that my Democratic colleagues in the Senate are making a federalism argument claiming that our authority is too limited—so limited that we don't have the power to enact this.

I am surprised by that for two independent reasons. Reason No. 1: Generally speaking, they don't like federalism. They are not fans of it. Ever since at least the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration—arguably it goes back to the Woodrow Wilson administration—the Democratic Party has not been the champion of federalism, and that is really, really putting it mildly. It is a little bit like saying that Jack Daniels and Jim Beam are not fans of teetotalers or of the temperance movement.

I mean, look, these guys go whole hog into federalizing everything, and ever since April 12, 1937, they have had their way most of the time because most things they can now justify.

Franklin D. Roosevelt had Democratic supermajorities in both the House and the Senate. He bullied and intimidated the Supreme Court of the United States, which had been knocking down his legislative agenda, and threatened them right after his first reelection in the fall of 1936.

Franklin Roosevelt was mad because a lot of the laws that he had pushed

through as part of his New Deal program—remember, the villain was the Great Depression. Franklin D. Roosevelt was going to be the hero, and his weapon of choice was going to be the New Deal programs dramatically increasing the size, scope, reach, and cost of the Federal Government, putting it in charge of all kinds of things. The Supreme Court, during his first term of office, kept knocking him down, one right after the other. You can't do that, can't do that, can't do that. And they were right.

A lot of them were relying on an expansive interpretation of the commerce clause, which is there to give us authority to regulate things or persons moving in interstate commerce, across State lines, as part of interstate commercial transactions or instrumentalities or channels of interstate commerce, interstate airways, waterways, and so forth.

Whenever they tried to get too cute with it and say "Well, it goes beyond that"—anything that is sort of economic-ish and that involves money should do it—the Supreme Court kept knocking it down.

So what did Franklin Roosevelt do? I would imagine that he was one of these guys who probably played tee ball only as a little kid, never made it to baseball, and even when he was on tee ball, he was probably on one of those teams where they don't keep score because everyone is a winner. So he never learned how to lose like a gentleman. He got tired of losing and couldn't lose like a gentleman, couldn't accept the Constitution. So what did he do? He threatened to force the retirement of a bunch of the Supreme Court Justices whom he didn't like, whom he had named the "four horsemen of the apocalypse"—not exactly Mr. Congeniality here—and threatened to pass legislation entitling himself to pack the Supreme Court, to increase it up to a tribunal as big as like 15 people.

Now, they had just barely moved into their marble palace across the street about a year earlier—no, it was 2 years earlier to the day. The Supreme Court had always been sort of the anchor tenant of this building or the subtenant—redheaded stepchild, if you will.

On April 12, 1935, this beautiful building over here opens its doors for the first time. They had been in there only 2 years when this Court packing plan began in earnest because F.D.R. never learned how to lose like a gentleman and wasn't willing to accept the Constitution as the ultimate outcome. So he just threatened them. He threatened them to the point that enough of the Justices flipped their votes.

On April 12, 1937—2 years exactly to the day they had moved into their marble palace—the Supreme Court of the United States rewrote the commerce clause giving Congress newfound power over basically everything. Not only could they regulate things or persons moving in interstate commerce, across interstate lines, as part of interstate

commercial transactions, and things involving channels or instrumentalities of interstate commerce, but now they could also regulate anything and everything, any and every activity that, when measured in the aggregate while occurring in one State at one time, had a substantial effect on interstate commerce.

Yes, this is legalese. Yes, this is jargon for a very simple concept that just means Congress could now regulate whatever the hell it wants. Every aspect of human existence—labor, manufacturing, agriculture, mining, health, safety, and welfare—even occurring in one State at one time, was now on the table, was now Federal.

Democrats championed this the whole time. It was their Court packing plan that forced them to push that through.

So my point is this: It is ironic—one could say hypocritical and deeply so—for the party of unlimited Federal power that distorted the vertical protection of federalism and, with it, the horizontal protection of separation of powers—we have never retreated from that position, and as soon as we gave Congress the power to regulate anything and everything—that messed up the vertical protection of federalism—we started messing up the horizontal protection of separation of powers. Because no sooner had we as Senators and Congressmen gotten all this new power that we started saying: Holy crap. I am going to have to work a lot harder, and I am going to have to take a lot more votes that they are going to make a lot of people mad at me.

So they stopped making real laws, and they started passing platitudes.

It goes something like this: We hereby declare as a Congress that we shall have fair labor standards and practices in this country, and we hereby delegate to the National Labor Relations Board the power to make, interpret, and enforce rules carrying the force of generally applicable Federal law that will guarantee fair labor standards.

They do that over and over and over again. This is what happens with their version of limited government.

So don't talk to me about federalism. This is an area where we actually have a very specific Federal power, and we have a very narrow, nonabusive, nonabusable grant of Federal power to the Federal Government from the Constitution itself. This is not a federalism problem—not by a mile.

That leads to the next argument closely related to that one. The senior Senator from Rhode Island—who was on a roll tonight; I will give him credit for that. The problem is that in an hour and a half, he failed to make even a single correct point without the use of abusing the English language, the law, the Constitution, and common sense. Other than that, it was a great speech.

Having sort of exhausted his lame federalism argument, which doesn't work, he then said: Ah, but we have to

remember that whatever power is granted under article I, section 4, clause 1 to the U.S. Congress to provide rules and regulations governing the election of Federal lawmakers, that is only for Congress. And you look at the SAVE America Act, and it gives responsibilities to executive branch Agencies.

Well, no crap, Sherlock. That is how we do everything. Everything that is delegated to Congress, all Federal powers—when there is a Federal grant of authority in the Constitution, with very few exceptions—like the Commander in Chief power that is given directly to the President, not through the Congress—when the Constitution, throughout article I, section 8—and the same would be true in article I, section 4, clause 4—when Congress is granted a power, it is understood that we make the law, but the execution and implementation of that law is given to someone else.

This is not the same as what I was describing a minute ago where the lawmaking power is handed in the first instance over to an executive branch Agency. That is different. And that, by the way, is why we need to pass the REINS Act after we are done passing the SAVE America Act. I know the Presiding Officer is a fan of that legislation, as am I. Because anytime we are making new law under article I, section 7 of the Constitution, you have to pass through this dual gauntlet of article I, section 7. You cannot make a Federal law—meaning you cannot make a rule enforceable by the overpowering, brooding, omnipresence of the U.S. Government—unless you have satisfied this two-part gauntlet: You have the bicameral passage—House and Senate, same text—followed by presentment to the President of the United States for signature, veto, or acquiescence.

So this is totally different than that. We are not outsourcing the lawmaking power; we are adopting a single visible, understandable, intelligible principle-based legal standard and then handing over to the Department of Homeland Security for the execution of that standard, which we have made with abundant clarity.

So the Senator from Rhode Island says: Ah, but it gives Congress the power to do this, not the Department of Homeland Security or any part of the executive branch of the U.S. Government.

This is just nonsense. I have never heard somebody make such an argument. It is wrong. We do have that power. That power doesn't evaporate simply because we ourselves don't implement it.

Do you know what is funny here? It would be unconstitutional for us to execute it. Why? Because we don't have the executive power. We have a narrow piece of executive power expressly given to us on our Executive Calendar. On our Executive Calendar, we handle the confirmation of Presidential nomi-

nees, and we handle treaty ratification, but that is it. That is the extent of our executive power.

It would be unconstitutional for us to make a law and then also put ourselves in charge of executing that same law. That would put us in the position of the lawmakers in our mother country, who don't have separation of powers like we do. They are barbarians; that is why we left them. It is why we don't fly the Union Jack. It is why our dental care here is much better than it is there. It is why our food doesn't suck—because we left them a long time ago because we got tired of them and their hoity-toity butchering of the English language. But we got sick and tired of their lack of adequate separation of powers.

So those guys are involved in the execution and implementation of the law. We are not. We can't be.

So not only is he not making a good argument, he is making an argument that, taken to its logical conclusion, would be unconstitutional.

All right. Mass purges. The senior Senator from Rhode Island, still engaging in his paroxysm of paranoid fantasy, theorizes that somehow the Trump administration—and I am trying to imagine the animated characters running around in his mind's eye as he is saying this. Like, who is it? Is it Steve Bannon, Corey Lewandowski, Stephen Miller? I don't know who it is, but these very Trumpy members of the executive branch who are friends of the President are just going to come in and say: We cancel all of your votes. Mass purges. Let's do this just to be mean.

This is absolutely insane. That is not at all—there is nothing in the bill that would allow a mass purge of U.S. citizen lawful voters, and it is never ever going to happen.

There was one interesting point that the senior Senator from Rhode Island made shortly after making the argument I just refuted where he said there are zero dollars appropriated for them under this legislation. That is true.

Now, if the senior Senator from Rhode Island is suggesting that we could make the bill better by adding an appropriation, well, we can talk about that. I don't believe that is necessary. The reason I don't believe it is necessary is that we already have several legal regimes, several statutory frameworks through which there are Federal dollars already allocated to the States for their role in carrying out these responsibilities under laws like the NVRA and under laws like the Help America Vote Act. Now, if those are inadequate, which I don't think they are, but if they are, then let's have that conversation.

By the way, before we get to our next flawed argument raised by the senior Senator from Rhode Island, I have to get back to the federalism argument. I left out a key point of it.

In addition to the fact that the Democratic Party is about as into federalism as they are into kosher delis in

Tehran—in addition to that, they themselves pushed a bill ironically called the For the People Act in the 117th Congress.

Remember, this was that lovely time between January 3, 2021, until exactly noon on January 3, 2023, when the Democrats held the majorities in the House and the Senate and also held the White House.

They pushed this bill called the For the People Act which purported to be drawing its authority from article I, section 4, clause 1. Now, not only were there lots, lots, and lots of executive branch Agencies—like multiple executive branch Agencies and Departments—that were going to be empowered under that, thus eviscerating his own argument, but not one of them expressed a single reservation about that. In fact, every single Senate Democrat here at the time was fully supportive of the SAVE America Act. Not one of them ever, ever suggested they didn't have authority to do that.

This article I, section 4, clause 1 is a thing. Ironically—and we don't need to go too deep into this, but they actually pushed the envelope of article I, section 4, clause 1 so far that I don't think that could have been upheld as constitutional. I mean, they trampled on all sorts of State sovereign authority matters that went far beyond the realm of just Federal elections. They would have subjected every voting jurisdiction in the United States—it would have rendered every voting jurisdiction in the United States a preclearance jurisdiction. Whether you had ever had a history of racial discrimination or not, if you wanted to change your voting precincts, your legislative district maps, whatever it was, you would have to go and seek a "Mother May I" from a political appointee in the Democratic Party at the Department of Justice. It is wildly unconstitutional. They would have changed all kinds of things like voter registration deadlines. It actually strips the State legislatures of their constitutionally derived power to draw congressional district boundaries. So, for them to argue federalism here, give me the biggest break. This makes absolutely no sense.

He makes the argument that this bill, the SAVE America Act, is not about election security; it is about disenfranchisement. It is really cheap. It is a really low argument, especially because there is not a single word, not a single syllable, not a single letter in the bill that can justify that. I know that my friend and colleague from Rhode Island must not mean that. I don't know who wrote that speech for him or who told him he had to say that or whether he did it himself. Look, we are all entitled to a mulligan once in a while, and I will give him one here, but that is a doozy. There is literally no truth to it, and that is the hard part about arguments that have zero truth to them. It is that, when they have as little truth to it as that argument, it is

kind of hard to refute it. You have to build it up in order to knock it down, and that is hard too.

The next point that I needed to refute was really important, and this is where I am reminded of the limitations of my own handwriting. I can't read that one, so I am going to step forward to the next argument.

In each instance, both the junior Senator from Rhode Island and the senior Senator from Rhode Island—this being Rhode Island day with the SAVE America Act—they both kept relying back on the fact that it is already illegal. Yes, it is. It is already illegal for a noncitizen to vote, but the fact that something is already illegal doesn't mean that it is self-executing, that it is self-implementing, that it is self-revealing. It is none of those things. Some things are; some things are not.

This reminds me of an argument that I had to refute either yesterday or the day before. Somebody said—they compared it to laws governing the running of a stop sign. One of our Democrat colleagues said the other day, in a way that reminded me of what the two Senators from Rhode Island argued today, is that you don't have a law prohibiting people from running a stop sign at an intersection and then say: We now need another law prohibiting the running of a stop sign in a stop sign controlled intersection. They missed the whole point altogether.

The way that you could make that argument fair and analogous here would be to say, if you had a law prohibiting the running of a stop sign and then you had another law or maybe the same law was interpreted oddly by some creatively thinking judges as prohibiting the police from monitoring or watching intersections guarded by a stop sign, then, yes, that would be a fair analogy, and, yes, then we would need another law saying: No, it is not illegal for the cops to watch that intersection.

Another analogy here that I think is helpful just deals with another instance where you have got to prove who you are. I don't personally drink alcohol, but I know, nonetheless, the way this works is that whether you are a young person or an old, bald person like me, if you go into a liquor store or any other place where alcoholic beverages are sold, you are going to get carded. I know some people profess to being very flattered when they get carded because it makes them feel young when they do that, but my understanding is that you pretty much always have to show your ID when you go in there. They are just not going to take any ifs, ands, or buts. You have to show your ID.

This is the same kind of comparison. If we didn't have that law that you had to show your ID when you bought alcohol, then it would be impossible not only to enforce but even to detect violations of laws saying that liquor stores can't sell booze to kids. That is why we have the ID requirement. You

have got to establish who you are. Then there are some recordkeeping obligations that go along with that.

So this is just really foolish to think for even a second that it is enough to say: It is already illegal. Back to our point earlier of: Oh, I know how we are going to save money. We are just going to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse. Great. You can't just say: We are going to do this.

Whenever you have a system of laws in place that are being broken, there is a grave risk that, by not enforcing those laws, you will cheapen the rule of law itself, not just the law that is being broken but the dynamic in which we as citizens, in a free Republic, choose voluntarily—most of us, mercifully—to abide by the law. We try to keep the law, and things work better when they do. When people break the law, there are generally consequences. When you live in an environment where the law is just disregarded and cast aside, bad things happen, but it gets infinitely worse—infinitely worse—whenever, wherever. You not only say: We are going to just disregard it, but you put legal restrictions, legal impediments, in place so as to make it impossible not just to prosecute but even to detect where the laws are happening. Then, on top of that, it gets exponentially worse beyond that.

Whereas, here, it is not just any law, but it is the law that determines who is going to make our other laws. This is upstream from everything else. It impacts the legitimacy of this government. It is what is standing between us and untold amounts of not just election fraud but foreign election interference. So we can't pretend that this is academic, that this is a frivolous concern.

And I will not indulge for another minute the absurd suggestion that this is about President Trump and his administration wanting to just go in and disenfranchise an entire gender or an entire race or an entire political ideology or a set of party affiliations. Nothing in this law would authorize that. There would be hell to pay if anybody tried for it, and it is absurd to suggest that it is going to happen.

But even worse than that absurdity is the absurdity that goes along with saying our elections will be fair and free of fraud when we have had 30 million people living in this country who are not citizens, about 15 million of whom entered the country unlawfully just in 4 of the last 5 years under the open border policies of the Biden administration, where we have got a law that allows anyone, even a noncitizen, to apply in most States—the overwhelming majority of States—just by going into a DMV, checking a box saying, "I want to register to vote," and signing their name, saying, "Don't worry about it. I am a citizen, and I am otherwise entitled to vote." When we tell our own fellow citizens that not only are we not going to enforce that law but that we are going to continue

to make it impossible to detect and prosecute and punish violations of that law, heaven help us all.

So, no, this is not about a party or a part of a country or this or that subgroup or demographic. This is about one thing; it is about citizenship. Yes, it is already against the law. So let's act like it. Let's allow for the law to be enforced. If we did the same thing with our drug laws, everybody would be taking drugs. It is almost like encouraging people to take drugs if you do it that way. But this is even worse than if you let our drug laws be unenforced, because this one determines who makes the laws. This one determines the legitimacy, or lack thereof, of our government. This, in effect, will disenfranchise Americans who will have their votes diluted and canceled out if we allow persons who are not citizens to vote.

We can get this done, and we will get this done. I was here yesterday and the day before that and the day before that and the day before that and the day before that, and I will be here every day until this is passed. I will not stop, and I know the Presiding Officer won't stop either. We are going to stay on this legislation. We will continue to debate. We will debate in the rain on a train, in a box with a fox—anywhere, everywhere. We will debate this thing, and we will make them speak until they are tired. We will make them speak until every one of their arguments, frivolous or legitimate—I have yet to hear any of the latter, but you know, it could happen—have all been exhausted, and then we will win.

At some point, we will move away from the frivolity. At some point, we will stop making arguments rooted in science fiction, paranoid fantasy and move on to what the bill actually says. That is what happens when we are exhausted. That is what happens when people have to actually stand and speak and articulate their concerns with the bill. Sooner or later, you start being able to separate fact from fiction, from paranoid fantasy. And, at that point, that is where the magic happens. We can start to look for where the real points of contact are. If there are amendments to make to this thing, let's make them. Let's make it work as well as possible, but let's get it done. We are not going to quit.

We have promises to keep and miles to go before we sleep. We will not sleep until this is done.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BRITT). Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 12 noon tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:27 p.m., adjourned until Sunday, March 22, 2026, at 12 noon.