

There is another problem, it seems to me, with the USA FREEDOM Act; that is, it is entirely possible the time period contemplated for establishing the software that will enable the government to query the many different private phone company databases—that timeframe will not be long enough. We don't know whether it is going to be long enough. We will just find out, I suppose, when the time comes. But this is a complex exercise that has to be carried out in real time, and the USA FREEDOM Act simply creates a dead-line. It doesn't ensure that we will have this in place.

A second concern I have is that the USA FREEDOM Act weakens other intelligence-gathering tools that are unrelated to any of the metadata programs which have received most of the attention.

So the USA FREEDOM Act gives intelligence officials—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania has used 10 minutes.

There is an order to recognize the Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent for 30 seconds to wrap up.

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

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, I conclude by saying that we are at least at as great a risk as we have ever been, and the first priority of the Federal Government of the United States is to protect people of the United States.

I am deeply concerned that the USA FREEDOM Act diminishes an important tool for providing for this security, and I hope that in the coming months we can address this bill and try to correct the many flaws it has.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

REGULATORY REFORM

Mr. ROUNDS. Madam President, I rise, for the first time speaking in this Chamber, to discuss the future of our great Nation, how truly fortunate we are to live in the greatest country in the world.

We are protected by the best military that has ever existed and that, in turn, allows us to live freely here at home, to focus on our God-given rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

In my home State of South Dakota, we cherish these rights. We have the opportunity to make our dreams come true because we have these rights and because we have a commonsense value system to guide us.

When I was elected, I promised to bring South Dakota common sense to Washington and to work to solve problems for the good of every South Dakotan and every American. But, unfortunately, when I travel back home, I continue to hear from my fellow South Dakotans about the Federal Government infringing on these rights and values.

You see, our great Nation has been bogged down in recent years with what I believe is one of the greatest hindrances to job growth and economic productivity; that is, the overregulation of our citizens. Overregulation is not a Democratic or a Republican issue, it is an issue that affects every single one of us. But I believe it is a challenge we can solve through cooperation and perseverance. It doesn't matter if you are talking about a doctor or a small business owner or a farmer or a rancher, overregulation has affected every single sector of our society.

The regulatory burden on this country is nearly \$2 trillion annually, and this is in addition to the tax burden already placed on our American citizens. That regulatory burden is larger than Canada's entire economy. In fact, the cost to comply with Federal regulations is larger than the entire GDP of all but only eight other countries in the entire world.

Even more staggering, just a few years ago, we surpassed 1 million Federal regulations in America—1 million Federal regulations. Regulations are stifling economic growth and innovation and hurting the future of this country by crushing the can-do American spirit that founded our Nation, settled the West, won two World Wars, and put a man on the Moon—and every year more than 3,500 new Federal regulations are added.

This just does not make sense, and it certainly is not South Dakota common sense. What alarms me is not only the volume of regulations being thrust upon our citizens but also the process for creating them. The purpose of Congress is to be the voice of the people when making laws. Unfortunately, the voice of the people in the rulemaking process has been cut out and replaced by unelected government bureaucrats who think they know better than the farmer or the scientist or the entrepreneur.

Our Founders recognized the need for making laws, granting the power to create laws to Congress and only Congress. They meant that process to be difficult so our government would not overburden citizens and restrict their freedom, freedom that those Founding Fathers had just fought so hard to obtain. Through Congress, every citizen should have a voice, but unfortunately that is not what is happening today.

Our Founding Fathers created three branches of government with checks and balances for each one. They could never have imagined that we would have a regulatory process in place today where unelected bureaucrats would both write and have the final approval of the rules and regulations under which our people must live.

This regulatory regime, which is responsible for the 3,500 new rules each year, has essentially become a fourth branch of government and a de facto legislative body. The problem is exacerbated because these bureaucrats in

Washington have this misperception that they know how to run our lives better than we do.

While working as a business owner, a State legislator, as a Governor, and now as a Senator, I have seen just how detrimental this “Washington knows best” mentality is on the daily lives of South Dakotans and Americans.

Many of my friends on both sides of the aisle have come to the Senate floor in recent weeks and months with some great ideas and legislation to limit or stop or repeal or remove some of the worst regulations currently on the books. I applaud them for these efforts, many of which I also support.

I look forward to working with the senior Senator from South Dakota, my friend JOHN THUNE, as well as anyone who is willing to work with me to remove these burdens that are stunting American greatness and, well, bring a little South Dakota common sense back to our regulatory environment.

The regulatory system in America has run amok. Too often, burdensome, costly regulations are crafted by bureaucrats at the highest level of government, behind closed doors, with little input from everyday Americans who disproportionately feel the effects of these one-size-fits-all policies.

It is regulation without representation—and it is wrong. The American people are being squeezed out, their voices falling on deaf ears in Washington. Small businesses, which drive our economy and create the majority of jobs in America, are especially hurt by overregulation because they, too, have to hire lawyers and employees to comply with these rules. This takes away capital that could be used to hire new production employees and expand their businesses.

People in my home State of South Dakota feel victimized by their own Federal Government. It is keeping crops from getting to market, and it is keeping businesses from growing. The idea that unelected and unaccountable bureaucrats should be allowed to make sweeping rules and regulations with no recourse should be a concern to every American, regardless of political affiliation, because it impacts everyone. No party has a lock on the American dream, and American innovation doesn't have a party affiliation.

From the stack of paperwork required to process a bank loan to the regulatory price of putting food on the table, the cost of Federal regulations are ultimately passed down to each and every American. Without excessive regulation, imagine how much more money American families could have in their pockets to spend on what they want, instead of what the government wants. If we cut our redtape, families can stop having to cut their budgets.

The regulatory regime is a dark cloud over our entire economy. I am not saying there isn't a place for rules in our society; there is. Rules are meant to keep us safe and to promote the greater good, and I do believe there

are some good rules and regulations which are on the books today. The problem I have is with the bad rules that keep good people from going about their daily lives.

Unfortunately, there are too many of these bad rules that are hindering our freedoms and stifling our growth. These are the regulations which we should have a process in place to reexamine.

Today, I come to the floor to discuss bipartisan legislation, which we have already introduced, to permanently end regulation without representation. It takes a giant leap forward in restoring the people's role in the rulemaking process. After all, if the American people don't like the laws we make, they can vote us out, but they have no such power with unelected bureaucrats. They are stuck.

You see, the bipartisan legislation we have submitted, S. Con. Res. 17, would create a Joint Select Committee on Regulatory Reform, whose purpose includes reviewing regulations currently on the books and proposing a new rules review process that includes the elected representatives of the American people. It is rooted in South Dakota common sense and the principles that have made this country great, making government work for Americans, rather than against them.

Madam President, this committee would make several recommendations to Congress to rebalance this broken regulatory scheme.

First, the committee would be tasked with exploring options for Congress to review regulations written by agencies before they are enacted, providing much needed oversight through the possibility of a permanent joint rules review committee, which would be tasked with reviewing rules with a cost of \$50 million or more. This permanent joint rules review committee would have the ability to delay the imposition of these rules for not more than a year from the time the agency submits the rule for a review to enable Congress to act on the rule if they do not care for the rule.

Second, the committee would examine an option for agencies to submit each regulation with a \$50 million or more impact to the appropriate committees of Congress for review before the rule is enacted.

Finally, the joint select committee could recommend ways to reduce the financial burden regulations place on the economy as well as sunsetting onerous and outdated ones.

This joint select committee would not be a permanent one, but it would be bipartisan, bicameral, and hold meaningful hearings so that a permanent solution to our overregulation problem can be properly addressed.

This legislation also offers a starting point for the committee by requiring certain possible solutions to our regulatory problem to be considered. I firmly believe that regulations should be reviewed by elected officials, those who

are accountable to the American people through the democratic process.

This is not a new concept. It is not rocket science. It is a common practice at the State level. In fact, 41 of the 50 States, including my home State of South Dakota, have a rules review process to make sure the executive branch is faithfully executing the laws they seek to implement.

It is worth repeating that regulations are estimated to cost \$1.88 trillion annually in the United States, and that is above and beyond the tax burden our citizens already share. That amounts to just under \$5 billion every single day, and it just doesn't make sense. It is unfair to those who still believe in and are working to achieve the American dream. Whether Americans are seeking to buy a car, take out a mortgage on a house, start a business, or see the doctor, regulations obstruct them.

When I think of those who sacrificed everything so that our children and grandchildren could create their own version of the American dream, I think about the freedoms and liberties they fought so bravely to defend. They fought so that we could pursue life, liberty, and happiness and trust that our government would not hinder these lifelong endeavors. It is not Washington that will continue to make this country great; rather, it is the collective spirit of individual Americans who want to work hard to be successful for their families and their communities. But they need the heavy hand of government to be lifted.

Here in Washington, it is not our job to dictate how Americans run their lives but to allow them to achieve their dreams, not make them into nightmares.

The phrase "Washington is broken" is far too common. It seems as though whenever we go home, there is someone who suggests that Washington is broken. We hear it regularly. People use it to describe the current state of our Federal Government. "Washington" is now used in a derogatory manner.

This city, the Capital of our Nation, named after our very first Commander in Chief, the man who led us to victory in the Revolutionary War and birthed this great Nation, has become, over time, the same as a four-letter word. Remember, George Washington left the Presidency voluntarily after two terms in office. He wanted to get away from the monarch style of government in which rulers held their positions for life. And now this city that bears his name is full of lifelong bureaucrats—and even worse, they are unaccountable to the people. It is a far cry from the Republic our Founders envisioned.

Madam President, in the year 2026 our country will celebrate its 250th birthday. That is just over a decade away. When we get to that point, I hope to join my fellow Americans in looking back with great pride in all we have accomplished and all we have to pass on to future generations.

President Kennedy challenged our Nation to put a man on the Moon be-

fore the decade of the 1960s had passed—less than 10 years. I am not asking us to do anything as tough as putting a man back on the Moon, but I think we should commit ourselves to removing the barrier of government regulations that is weighing on the American spirit and again set free the American economy before the decade preceding our 250th birthday.

I have not submitted legislation to start a new committee that exists in name and does no deed. Americans want us and expect us to be up to this challenge, and I believe we are. We can lift the heavy hand of government. The Founding Fathers did not anticipate thousands of regulators and a million regulations when they created this country. It is time to end this regulation without representation and restore the lawmaking process to the people.

I thank my friends on both sides of the aisle who have cosponsored RESTORE and encourage the rest of my colleagues to sign on to this common-sense approach to addressing the issue of overregulation so we can work to make this country even greater and safer than we found it. Then, during our 250th birthday celebration, we can be proud that we restored a little South Dakota and American common sense for our children and their children.

With that, Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

CONGRATULATING SENATOR ROUNDS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, let me say to our colleague from South Dakota how much all of us enjoyed his first major speech and also congratulate him on focusing on what I think is the single biggest problem confronting our country, creating the slow growth rate we have had throughout the Obama Presidency.

The Senator from South Dakota has focused on the biggest drag on our economy, the single biggest thing holding this country back from reaching its potential, and I would say to my friend from South Dakota that he has picked the perfect subject and has laid out a good solution to it. I hope lots of colleagues on both sides of the aisle will rally around this excellent proposal as a good way forward in dealing with the single biggest domestic problem we have regarding the future growth of our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I, too, wish to congratulate my colleague from South Dakota, Senator ROUNDS, because he has already been a great leader on this subject. As a successful two-term Governor, a leader in our State legislature, he was a practical, commonsense, down-to-earth Governor who just liked to get things done.