

your benefit. The Democratic leader of the Senate praised President Trump for doing that. Stay tough on China. When it comes to China, don't let March be the month when it is said that President Trump went in like a lion and went out like a lamb, and President Xi, a darn good negotiator, figuratively eats our lunch.

There is a generational imperative to get this right. The President and his folks must not squander the chance to achieve permanent reforms to China's economic relations with the world. This chance will not come around again for a long time, and American wealth, income, and jobs will ebb. This is one of the most important moments in the Trump Presidency.

President Trump, stand tough. China can no longer be allowed to take advantage of us.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

TORNADOES IN ALABAMA AND GEORGIA

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I know the entire Senate joins me today in offering deep sympathies to the communities affected by yesterday's spate of tornadoes in east Alabama and Georgia. As first responders continue to search for survivors in the rubble, we know that at least 23 innocent lives were lost to this disaster all in Lee County, AL. Our condolences are especially with their loved ones, and our gratitude is with the emergency personnel and local officials who spearheaded evacuation and rescue efforts.

The people of Alabama are all too familiar with the pain caused by devastating storms like yesterday's. The entire region has been hit hard in recent years, seemingly by one disaster after another. They continue to brace against the threat of tornadoes and the flooding that so often impacts communities in my State of Kentucky.

At every step of the way—from response and recovery to resilient achievement—Alabama has benefitted from the devoted leadership of Senator RICHARD SHELBY. On the specific issue of disaster recovery, his hard work and steady hand have helped to lead the charge. When supplemental funding for natural disaster relief receives floor time here in the Senate, it will be thanks to the hard work of our colleagues like Senator PERDUE, Senator ISAKSON, and others, and, certainly, Chairman SHELBY.

Of course, this is far from the only area in which RICHARD SHELBY has delivered results for his State and for our Nation. For years, he has made a per-

sonal mission out of restoring and improving our Nation's infrastructure. He has brought wise and decisive leadership as our chief appropriator, and the State of Alabama bears countless signs of Senator SHELBY's dedicated service—from supporting the missile defense and space exploration programs in Huntsville to helping to establish the National Water Center in Tuscaloosa, where researchers forecast floods and work to mitigate water-related hazards.

It is fitting today to praise Senator SHELBY's continued service. It also happened that, over the weekend, the senior Senator from Alabama became the longest serving senator in the history of his State. I couldn't be happier to recognize my friend RICHARD SHELBY on this occasion, and I know each of our colleagues will join me in congratulating him on the years of faithful service to Alabamians that have made this recognition possible.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, on an entirely different matter, this week the Senate is considering the nominations of three more well-qualified jurists to vacancies on our Nation's Federal courts.

First is Allison Jones Rushing, of North Carolina, to serve on the Fourth Circuit. Ms. Rushing is a graduate of Wake Forest University and Duke University School of Law with high honors. In the years since, she has built a distinguished record in private practice and has held prestigious appellate clerkships on two Federal circuit courts and the U.S. Supreme Court.

I will have more to say on the state of our nominations process soon, but I hope each of our colleagues will begin the week by joining me in voting to advance Ms. Rushing's nomination later today.

THE GREEN NEW DEAL

Mr. President, on one final matter, like many Americans, I have spent the past several weeks watching with interest as prominent leaders in the Democratic Party have engaged in a political footrace. They are sprinting—literally, sprinting—as far left as possible, as quickly as possible, trying to outdo one another. The result is that one of our two major political parties has begun embracing one radical, half-baked socialist proposal after another. It is really a sight to see.

First came the Democratic Politician Protection Act, a sweeping Washington, DC, takeover of what Americans can say about politics and how they elect their representatives. Speaker PELOSI and her House colleagues were ready with that from day one in this new Congress. They chose it as their No. 1 ceremonial first bill of the year, H.R. 1. Let me say that this is quite a piece of legislation to hold up as the defining product—bear in mind, the defining product—of a new Democratic House majority.

House Democrats are championing an unprecedented takeover of our Nation's electoral system—one that would over-

haul campaign rules and make it harder for private citizens to exercise their right to political speech.

It would replace private money in political campaigns with your tax dollars. Let me say that again. They take your private money contributed to a candidate of your choice out of the political process and replace that with your tax dollars—up to \$5 million to any candidate that wants it—even, by the way, if it happens to be a candidate you disagree with. They are going to take your tax money and give it to candidates you don't agree with and swing the partisan balance of the Federal Election Commission, which has the final say in election regulations.

Oh, and it all comes under the guise of—you guessed it—this is about restoring democracy. Now, of course, this sprawling 622-page doorstop is never going to become law. I certainly don't plan to even bring it to the floor here in the Senate. There are always improvements and reforms to be made, but this certainly isn't it.

It does give us a useful signal of our Democratic colleagues' real goals—what they really want to do. Democrats look out over the landscape of America today, and everywhere they look, they see opportunity to seize money and power from American families and communities and pile it up in their own hands—you guessed it—right here in Washington. Taxing more, spending more, and Washington's seizing more power away from the people—that is the Democrat's hammer of choice. In every part of American life, they see a nail. In every part of American life, they see a nail.

Just look at the Green New Deal. From what we understand, the American people can expect a government-mandated overhaul of every four-walled structure in America—a government-mandated overhaul of every four-walled structure in America—and, if that were not enough, an end to American fossil fuel and energy production from nuclear powerplants—of course, along with all the jobs that make both of those possible.

According to background documents, there are plans for a government-guaranteed income. Listen to this: a government-guaranteed income for those unwilling to work, all at the low price of an estimated—listen to this—\$93 trillion.

Of course, next came the massive one-size-fits-all government-run healthcare proposal—“Medicare for none.” It strips everything from our seniors’ Medicare Program but the name. It slaps that name on a new government-run plan, and they are so confident Americans will love their Democratic-designed insurance that they feel the need to outlaw competing private insurance altogether, just to make sure there is no competition.

Democrats want to strip existing health plans away from middle-class families, even if they are happy with their current coverage, and, inevitably,

hike taxes on those very families to pay for it.

As I have said, none of these things Democrats have pulled off their far-left wish list have a chance of becoming law in 2019. A lot of it almost sounds like standup comedy, but the underlying philosophy that all of this represents is no laughing matter whatsoever.

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

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

DECLARATION OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, despite what you hear inside the beltway, the challenges along our southwest border are real, and the people of Texas feel that impact every day along the 1,200-mile common border we have with Mexico.

Last week, for example, the Border Patrol in the Rio Grande Valley Sector arrested 1,300 illegal immigrants in a single day—the second time in 2 weeks they exceeded that number. In the same time period, the Laredo port of entry seized \$2.3 million worth of cocaine and marijuana. Sadly, a father and son traveling from Guatemala nearly drowned while attempting to cross the Rio Grande but were saved thanks to the efforts of the Border Patrol. In a small town just north of Eagle Pass, a group of 90 undocumented immigrants—many of whom were women and children between the ages of 1 and 17—were apprehended after crossing the Rio Grande River. That was all in Texas last week.

Last year alone, 400,000 people were detained coming across our southwestern border—400,000. Tens of thousands of unaccompanied children and family units were detained as well.

These stories have become so common, somehow we have become anesthetized to the human emergency and crisis occurring along the border. Frankly, I do not understand why our Democratic friends have become completely apathetic when it comes to border security or dealing with what President Obama himself called a humanitarian crisis.

A few weeks ago, we know President Trump declared a national emergency over this crisis, which would allow some funding to be shifted from other areas to support our Border Patrol missions. This decision was met with a great deal of pushback, some of which I believe is warranted and some of which I believe is not. I would like to explain what I think is warranted and what I think is not.

For those, like some of our colleagues across the Capitol, including some of the Texas Democratic delegation—they call this a fake emergency. I couldn't disagree more. Just ask the

folks who live along the border and deal with this each day. The scenes I describe are not isolated incidents; they are happening daily, weekly, monthly, and at a scale and volume that, frankly, are overwhelming the ability of officials and people along the border to deal with.

Let's rewind to 2014. I alluded to this a moment ago. When President Obama was President, we saw an unprecedented number of Central Americans coming across the border claiming asylum. That year, 68,000 family units were apprehended at the southern border—“family units” meaning at least one adult and at least one child. That is what President Obama called a humanitarian crisis.

Today, not much has changed except for the numbers, and it has gotten worse, not better. In the last 4 months alone, there have been nearly 100,000 family units apprehended at the border. These are people arriving en masse by the thousands, sometimes called a caravan. We know there are dangerous drugs that come in at the same time every day, young women and children are being trafficked into sex slavery, and migrants are being abandoned by coyotes and left to die in the desert.

So I don't see a lot of difference between what President Obama called a humanitarian crisis in 2014 and what President Trump in 2019 calls an emergency.

While I agree that there is a crisis at our border and that more needs to be done, I have been consistent in my concerns about the means by which this funding is being provided.

This whole episode is completely contrived by the fact that the Speaker of the House, Ms. PELOSI—despite the fact that we had bipartisan support for the Secure Fence Act in 2006 and 2008, she all of a sudden decided, because the politics suited her, that building any additional physical barrier was immoral. The Democratic leader here in the Senate said that not one dollar was going to be spent for physical barriers along the border. We saw an impasse that resulted in the Federal Government or at least 25 percent of the government being shut down for 35 days. This was completely unnecessary and contrived. This was all about politics and certainly not about trying to find solutions to the problem.

I have said before and I will say again that where we are now was not anybody's first choice—certainly not mine. We know that many legitimate concerns have been raised about the clear definitions of the role of the legislative and executive branches. It is clear under the separation of powers that Congress holds the checkbook. No matter who the President is or what they want funding for, it must be authorized by Congress. But when Democrats refuse to engage in a problem-solving process, as they have done over the last few months, it makes things much more complicated.

We heard the Speaker of the House, as I said, refuse to provide more than

one dollar for border security. The minority leader said that no additional money would be provided for barriers. The reason they made these statements isn't because Democrats are all of a sudden opposed to improved border security. As we have seen in the past, Democrats have supported those physical barriers. In 2006, the Democratic leader himself and a number of our current colleagues and then-colleagues, such as Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, supported the Secure Fence Act, but today, somehow things are different.

Democrats refuse to come to the negotiating table, not because they are against border security, presumably, but because their political base dislikes the man sitting behind the Resolute Desk. This is not about the facts or the problem presented; this is about whether President Trump will be defeated in his attempts to get additional money for border security. As the President found out, it is pretty tough to find a compromise when your negotiating partners—the Speaker and the Democratic leader of the Senate—refuse to come to the table at all. So the President found himself negotiating against himself.

I believe the regular appropriations process should always be the approved method, but, of course, Congress—and this should be a wake-up call to each of us—Congress has approved emergency powers as an exception to the normal process by which money is appropriated.

While some are trying to make this seem like a constitutional crisis and some groundbreaking breach of power by President Trump, I don't believe that is true, because he is using the power that was delegated to the executive branch by Congress. In other words, he is not making this up out of whole cloth, like President Obama did when he provided deferred action for childhood arrivals. He said more than 20 times that he didn't have authority to do it, that there was no statute to authorize it, but he did it anyway. It continues to be litigated—now up to the Supreme Court of the United States.

Here is what I found when this controversy arose, when we did some research. We found that Congress has granted the Presidency emergency powers under 123 statutes. This marks the 60th time the emergency powers have been invoked under the National Emergencies Act since 1978. So Congress is responsible for providing this exception to the normal appropriations process. Congress has done that 123 times, and Presidents have used those powers 60 times. That ought to put what is happening today in some larger context. Previous Presidents have used them for things like prohibiting the importation of blood diamonds from Sierra Leone or prohibiting new investment in Burma.

Because the President's emergency declaration fits into the confines of the