

comes to the floor. The majority in the Senate, therefore, has an obligation to consider and act on the Senate's behalf, particularly when it comes to matters of oversight and matters of separation of powers. Yet, so far, we have no indication that Senate Republicans are planning to act. Most have yet to speak out.

The Republican Senate's "see no evil, hear no evil" attitude is unacceptable and must change. Again, this is an issue of solemn obligation. There is no wiggle room here—none. The obligation of the inspector general is to turn over the whistleblower information now that he has found it credible and urgent. And here, typically, our Senate Republicans and the Senate leader sit supinely in obeisance to Donald Trump's reckless lawbreaking.

This is a democracy, and we have heard nothing from our Republican colleagues about what the President has done, as abhorrent as that is, and the stonewalling of information. What is the President afraid of in this whistleblower report? We don't know; we can only speculate. But we do know there is an obligation for it to come to Congress.

So today I sent the Republican leader, Senator MITCH MCCONNELL, a letter calling on him and the Republican chairs of the Senate relevant committees to fulfill their constitutional duties and immediately take the following actions:

One, convene hearings to determine exactly what prompted the whistleblower to file this urgent complaint. At a minimum, these hearings should include testimony from Acting Director of National Intelligence Joseph Maguire, Acting Office of Management and Budget Director Russell Vought, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, and President Trump's private attorney, Rudy Giuliani, among others.

Two, issue a subpoena to compel the delivery of the whistleblower complaint to Congress as required—required—by law.

Three, request the White House to release the transcript of President Trump's conversation with Ukrainian President Zelensky during which President Trump reportedly pressured the Government of Ukraine to investigate Vice President Biden and his family.

Four, identify the administration officials who directed that \$341 million of security assistance to Ukraine be delayed, and request that all records related to this decision be turned over to Congress.

Five, insist that the Department of Justice provide any legal opinion or other guidance it has given regarding the administration's obligation to transmit the whistleblower complaint to Congress.

It is the Senate's duty to take this national security matter seriously and investigate now. Senate Republicans have the sole power and the overwhelming responsibility to see that it does. How long must we wait for our

Republican colleagues to rise up to their responsibilities to the Constitution, to separation of powers, and to rule of law when President Trump brazenly violates that law? When are we going to hear the voices? It is unbelievable.

As President Trump erodes the very fabric of this democracy, our Republican colleagues—I believe out of fear—do nothing. That is not a profile in courage. That is not even what Senator after Senator, for generation after generation, regardless of party, has done. But we are obviously in a new era here where, on the Republican side, anything Donald Trump wants to do, he can get away with, whether or not it violates the law, violates our principles, violates the grand traditions of this democratic Republic.

DECLARATION OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on a somewhat related matter, again about President Trump's overreach and lack of respect for any rule of law, Senate Republicans will be forced to vote later this week on the President's emergency declaration, which he is using to steal money from our military to fund a border wall that he promised Mexico would pay for. Again, my Republican colleagues face a choice about whether to have the Senate enforce its role as a check on the executive branch.

By declaring a national emergency, the President has tried to go around the constraints of his office to spend taxpayer dollars the way he wants instead of the way the Congress appropriates. Remember, Congress has explicitly and repeatedly rejected the President's request for border wall funding. Now he is trying to improperly take it from funds elsewhere—in this case, the military.

The Constitution dictates that Congress alone has the power of the purse. Will my Republican colleagues vote to reassert those constitutional powers, or will they buckle to the pressure of partisan loyalty to the President?

And I say to some of my very conservative friends, conservatism says: Let's not have large agglomerations of power. Let the individual have the most freedom to exercise his or her will.

When the President overreaches, what has happened to the true conservatives? They are quiet. They almost hide under their desks. History will not look at it kindly.

Many of my Republican colleagues have military installations, schools, and major projects in their States that would suffer as a result of the President's emergency. The Pentagon last week warned of dire outcomes if this funding is not restored, even warning that lives might be at risk.

Will Senate Republicans vote to defend our troops, their families, their children? Will they vote to defend millions of dollars of important projects in

their States, including medical facilities in North Carolina, a hurricane recovery project in Florida, and a middle school in Kentucky? Well, these questions will be answered this week.

I have seen reports that the Republicans are searching for other ways to restore military funding other than by ending the President's emergency declaration. Make no mistake—Democrats will not assent to backfilling accounts or other backhanded ways of approving taxpayer dollars for the President's border wall. The President said Mexico would pay for it. That is the only thing he said during the campaign. When people yelled "build the wall," it was Mexico that was going to pay for it, not American taxpayers and certainly not our military—not the brave men and women who risk their lives for us and whose families go through such hardship.

The simplest, quickest, and only way of protecting military funding is for my Republican friends to join us in terminating the emergency declaration later this week.

I urge—urge—my Republican colleagues to think about their States and the important military projects that hang in the balance, to think about the precedent it would set for this President and for future Presidents, and above all, to think about the constitutional questions, to just read the Constitution and defend the Article I powers of Congress given to us by the Founders.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this week the Senate will consider more of the President's choices to fill important positions in the Federal Government. Too many important seats have continued to gather dust 2.5 years into this Presidency due to systematic Democratic obstruction.

The President deserves his team, and the American people deserve to be governed by the government they actually elected back in 2016. So as long as there continues to be resistance to processing uncontroversial nominees in the typical fashion by voice vote, we will just continue to vote on these impressive men and women.

Leading off this week are nominees to be Deputy Under Secretary of the Treasury, Ambassador to the Republic of Fiji, Solicitor of the Department of the Interior, and Deputy Commissioner of Social Security. I hope our colleagues will join in supporting each of them.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Senate also needs to remain focused on

our important job of funding the Federal Government.

Last week brought an unfortunate spectacle: The vast majority of our Democratic colleagues actually filibustered legislation to fund our national defense—at a dollar figure they had previously agreed to—for the sake of a political fight with the President.

The funding our commanders need to keep pace with China and Russia, the funding our men and women in uniform need for their tools and training, even a pay raise for our servicemembers—all of it was blocked by our Democratic colleagues, blocked by Democrats in order to pick a partisan fight with the White House. That is an interesting statement of priorities, but I remain hopeful that we can get this process back on track.

Back in July, both parties in both Houses of Congress and the White House all agreed to a bipartisan, bicameral roadmap to guide appropriations. We all agreed to rule out poison pill policy riders and not to seek changes in Presidential authorities relative to current law. So I hope we can rediscover that roadmap and make some progress. In the meantime, before the end of the week, we will vote on a continuing resolution to prevent a lapse in funding while the work continues.

SOCIALISM

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on a related matter, while Senate Republicans continue to seek bipartisan solutions, the story on the other side of the Capitol has been a little bit different.

Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic House continue to neglect opportunities to find compromises that might actually become law and instead churn out one leftwing messaging bill after another.

Two weeks ago, just days before Iran's coordinated attack on the world's largest oil processing facility in Saudi Arabia, House Democrats took it upon themselves to send us several pieces of legislation that would have reduced—reduced—American energy independence.

Domestic energy is a driver of American prosperity and one of the big success stories of recent years, but the House Democrats want us to retreat. They send us go-nowhere legislation the Senate will not pass and the President will not sign.

And then, lest a whole week go by without one of these exercises, here is what happened last week: House Democrats began unveiling Speaker PELOSI's handmade plan to have Washington, DC, bureaucrats start micromanaging America's prescription drugs. It is the same old one-size-fits-all, government-controlled philosophy we continue to see from our Democratic colleagues. Forget about choice. Forget about competition. Forget about free enterprise and finding ways to unleash more market forces to help consumers. Just

give Washington bureaucrats more power to clumsily call the shots and manipulate markets from the top down.

Predictably, what this plan amounts to is not an efficient, effective way to help American families but an efficient, effective way to bring even more of the economy under the bureaucracy's thumb and potentially set us on a track toward nationalizing a major industry.

There are millions of Americans who benefit from our Nation's incredible innovations and the R&D breakthroughs on new drug treatments and cures. We really ought not to jeopardize that.

American families deserve more choice, more competition, more affordability. The last thing we need is for the socialist delusions of the Green New Deal and Medicare for All to be copied and pasted into innovations and cures, putting them at risk.

Fortunately, this Republican Senate won't let the Speaker's dangerous proposal hurt the country. We will stay focused on the American people's business, and we will keep hoping our friends across the building put aside the political performances and join us to work on real solutions with a real chance of becoming real laws.

UKRAINE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on one final matter, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence has long worked on a bipartisan basis in secure settings out of the public spotlight to conduct critically important oversight of classified and sensitive matters. So I have been disappointed to see our colleague, the Democratic leader, choose to politicize the committee's ongoing efforts with respect to a recent whistleblower allegation—the special subject of which is still unknown.

As my friend Senator SCHUMER is aware, Chairman BURR and Vice Chairman WARNER have been working together to get the Acting Director of Intelligence and the intelligence community's inspector general before the committee this week to discuss the matter. As with most matters before the committee, I believe it is extremely important that their work be handled in a secure setting with adequate protections, in a bipartisan fashion, and based on facts rather than leaks to the press.

It is regrettable House Intelligence Committee Chairman SCHIFF and Senator SCHUMER have chosen to politicize the issue, circumventing the established procedures and protocols that exist so the committees can pursue sensitive matters in the appropriate, deliberate, bipartisan manner.

Although we don't know the substance of the allegations, there is speculation that it relates to our relationship with Ukraine. For my part, as I stated earlier this month, I was very glad to see the White House release security assistance funds for Ukraine.

I championed U.S. security assistance to Ukraine over the objections of the Obama administration in 2014 and have consistently believed in the importance of helping our Ukrainian partners defend their territory against Russian aggression. In fact, I had been personally pressing them to release security assistance funding for several months to ensure the United States did not walk back our important commitments to Ukraine.

On two occasions I raised the need to keep our commitment to Ukraine with the Secretary of Defense, expressing my interest in seeing this money be released to help our Ukrainian partners. I raised it with the Secretary of State. My staff also engaged senior officials at the Pentagon, at the State Department, at the National Security Council, and at the Office of Management and Budget. I also worked closely with Senator GRAHAM on the State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee and Chairman SHELBY.

Throughout July, August, and early September, I worked hard to ensure that Ukraine received this much-needed assistance. That is because, going back years, I have urged administrations of both parties to be completely clear-eyed about the dangerous intentions of Putin's Russia and the importance of standing with Ukraine.

I sounded the alarm early and often when President Obama went soft on Putin and missed opportunities to send arms to Ukraine, and during the Trump administration, I have been a strong supporter of its efforts to provide defensive lethal weapons to Ukraine and to Georgia.

As I have said repeatedly, Russia poses a significant threat to U.S. interests. The best way to contest Putin and his hegemonic aspirations is to rebuild our defenses, work closely with our allies and partners, and improve the capacity of those threatened by Moscow to defend themselves.

I am grateful that security assistance has finally been released to help our friends in Ukraine defend themselves. Now the task falls on us to pass a Defense bill and make the necessary investment in modernizing our own military to ensure America's preeminent position in the world and to deter challenge from adversaries like Russia and China.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 2486 and H.R. 4378

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand that there are two bills at the desk due for a second reading, en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bills by title for the second time en bloc.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2486) to reauthorize mandatory funding programs for historically Black colleges and universities and other minority-serving institutions.

A bill (H.R. 4378) making continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2020, and for other purposes.