

Many school boards across the country refuse to listen. In fact, the National School Boards Association complained to the Biden administration about angry parents. Now the Attorney General is treating angry parents like criminals. The Attorney General of the United States is deciding that angry parents are to be treated like criminals. Attorney General Garland has ordered Federal prosecutors to work with local police to form “strategies for addressing threats against school administrators, board members, teachers, and staff.”

The Department of Justice says it will form a task force on these alleged threats against school boards. The task force is going to include representatives from the Department’s Criminal Division, from the National Security Division, the Civil Rights Division, and Federal prosecutors, as well as the FBI.

Joe Biden is sending in the cavalry to school board meetings to focus on parents rather than focusing on the education the children need and deserve. He is sending the National Security Division after moms and dads because they are concerned about their children’s education.

After the Attorney General’s order, I joined with 10 of my Republican colleagues and demanded a legal justification from Attorney General Garland. I still haven’t received a response.

We have also found out that Attorney General Garland has a family member who helps schools develop leftwing curriculum. The Attorney General’s family member is helping schools developing leftwing curriculum. The Attorney General’s son-in-law owns a company with millions and millions of dollars in government contracts—contracts by the Attorney General’s son-in-law—contracts with schools all across America.

Well, maybe it is a coincidence, and maybe it is not. Attorney General Garland needs to tell the American people whether this played a role in his decision to treat parents like criminals.

Yet the problem is much bigger than the Attorney General of the United States. The problem is how Democrats treat and think about parents and working families.

The former Governor of the State of Virginia said recently:

I don’t think parents should be telling schools what they can teach.

This is the former Governor of Virginia:

I don’t think parents should be telling schools what they can teach.

Last month, Senator MIKE BRAUN asked the Secretary of Education about the role of parents in education. He asked if parents were “the primary stakeholder” in their kids’ education.

Secretary Cardona said this: “They’re an important stakeholder.”

In other words, they are not the primary stakeholders. Parents are not the primary stakeholders.

Is it any surprise so many parents are deciding to educate their children at home?

So who does the Secretary of Education think is the primary educator of our children? The union bosses? Are they the primary educators of our children?

Democrats act like kids are the property of the schools. And schools, of course, are the property—in the minds of the Democrats—of the teachers unions. Parents have every right to be upset with what is happening in the public schools all across this Nation. Parents have every right to demand real improvements.

It is time for the Democrats to stop taking orders from the teachers unions and start listening to parents and to the students.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

#### GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, over the last couple of years, our Democratic colleagues have suggested a range of unrealistic and downright harmful policies in our shared goal—and I emphasize the words “shared goal”—to reduce carbon emissions. But it is not just a question of what you are doing; it is a question of how you are going about doing it. The way they are going about doing it is going to raise the prices of electricity, gasoline, and all forms of energy on people on fixed incomes, people who are seniors living on Social Security, and others. They have proposed everything from the socialist agenda that is the Green New Deal to more targeted, but no more realistic, zero net emission mandates.

Now, we all know that energy transition occurs at all times. I have traveled to India—perhaps the Presiding Officer has—and to other countries where people literally cook their food using cow manure patties, dried cow manure. I remember Prime Minister Modi coming to Houston, TX, during an event that we called “Howdy, Modi!” when he heralded the use of increased access to cooking gas so that his constituents, Indians, wouldn’t have to use dried cow dung to cook their food—that represents progress—or wouldn’t have to use wood chips anymore.

Then the transition was to coal, then to natural gas, nuclear, and other forms of energy. So energy transition occurs at all times. The only question is how it comes about, whether it is as a result of higher taxes and forced government mandates or whether it is which form of energy competes favorably for consumers because of its cost and availability.

Well, of all of the dangerous policy proposals, I think the reckless tax-and-spending-spree bill takes the cake. This is the so-called reconciliation bill that is now pending over in the House, or is being negotiated. Nobody has actually seen it yet, but we keep hearing what is in it, and we keep hearing that the left is negotiating with the far left. This is what happens when our Democratic colleagues don’t include people in the opposing political party to try

to build consensus. It is pretty hard, particularly when you only have 50 votes.

This isn’t like FDR’s New Deal after the Great Depression, wherein he had huge majorities. I think what our Democratic colleagues are finding out is that, when they try to go it alone, passing these radical policies is really, really hard to do because you have no room for error.

This reminds me of the yellow jackets protests in France, starting back in 2018, as to what is happening now with some of these mandates and these higher taxes. This was, as you may recall, a social movement of French working-class families who felt disenfranchised from the urban elite, who “can focus on the end of the world,” they said, “while we’re worrying about the end of the month.” I think it is pretty apt to where we are today. This reckless tax-and-spending spree not only compiles the most irresponsible policies into one massive bill, as I said, but our Democratic colleagues, along with the White House, are trying to pass it in a 50-50 Senate, on a party-line vote.

Well, talk about bad timing. This comes at a time when Texans and other Americans are already being pummeled by rising costs, especially at the gas pump. Inflation is rearing its ugly head everywhere in terms of energy costs, groceries, commodities, and with things like a washing machine or a new refrigerator. Try buying a new house, and you will see the cost has just jumped dramatically.

It is a demonstrable fact that, in the last year, gasoline costs have gone up 55 percent. The average price today is about \$3.33 a gallon. A year ago, it was \$2.16 a gallon. For somebody who drives a pickup truck—and we have a lot of pickup trucks in Texas—it would have cost \$56 for a tank of gas a year ago, but, today, it is \$87—a \$31 increase.

Unfortunately, sky-high gasoline prices aren’t the only growing drain on family budgets. As I mentioned, electricity, groceries, clothing, eating out occasionally at a restaurant, and countless other expenses are on the rise. Prices are so high that inflation is outpacing wage growth, essentially giving workers a pay cut. Let me say that again. If you are earning, let’s say, \$10,000 a year—just to pick a number—and inflation rises like it does with gasoline costs, you are effectively getting a pay cut because of the rising costs of goods and services.

But that doesn’t seem to deter our Democratic colleagues from moving full steam ahead on legislation that would drive these costs even higher. After spending nearly \$2 billion earlier this year on a party-line vote, our colleagues are back for round 2, and this time they are prepared to take a wrecking ball to one of our crown jewels in this country, which is our energy sector. By drowning the energy sector in tax hikes or in increased regulations and costs, our Democratic colleagues think that they can achieve their green

energy dreams with no consequences, but, of course, that is just a dangerous fantasy.

It sort of reminds me of what I saw reported today by NPR. NPR reports: “Despite climate change promises, governments plan to ramp up fossil fuel production.” Indeed, the President and members of this body are going to be heading to a climate conference in Glasgow, Scotland, starting on October 31. As you know, usually what happens at those conferences, just like at the Paris climate conference in 2015, is that governments make extravagant promises to reduce emissions and to eliminate fossil fuels, including coal and oil and gas, in favor of clean energy.

Now, I am not deprecating clean energy. In Texas, we believe in an “all of the above” energy policy. We produce more electricity from wind turbines than any other State in the Nation. So I am certainly not bad-mouthing clean energy, but it has to play a role and not dominate to the exclusion of other forms of energy.

But, as the NPR article points out, “despite lofty commitments [made] by governments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, they are still planning,” according to this U.N. report that was just issued, “to extract huge amounts of energy from fossil fuels in the coming years.”

This report was published on Wednesday, today, and it details how the world’s largest fossil fuel producers plan to carry on using coal, gas, and oil despite promises made in Paris in 2015. So it really makes you wonder what is going on when these political leaders go to places like Glasgow or Paris, make extravagant promises, and then come back home and break those promises.

Well, I think I know what is happening here because, just like in France in 2018, when the government tried to impose a new fuel tax on consumers, the yellow jackets protested. They said: You are worried about the end of the world. We are worried about how we will pay our bills through the end of the month.

I think a similar phenomenon is occurring now because none of these green energy fantasies come cheap. That is another reason energy costs are going higher. Whether you are talking about energy or agriculture or any other sector of the economy, higher taxes, which are what our colleagues are attempting to assess against the energy sector, always mean higher prices for consumers.

Companies don’t absorb those costs. They pass them right along to consumers in the form of increased costs. In fact, many businesses can’t absorb increased taxes and keep their prices stable because they simply can’t operate in the black, and they will go bankrupt. So businesses just don’t take the hits that keep on coming. They will raise prices; they will lay off employees or will implement any combination

of cost-cutting measures, and that is exactly what this pie-in-the-sky, green energy fantasy bill contained in the reconciliation legislation would spur.

This year, as I have pointed out, has already given us the highest gas prices since 2014. Now, I just did this year over year, but they are the highest prices we have seen since 2014, and I have no doubt that President Biden’s tax hikes will send those prices at the pump even higher just at a time when we are beginning to sound the alarm bells over inflation, including by Democratic-leaning economists like Larry Summers, who sounded the alarm over inflation.

I am old enough to remember when inflation was ranked at about 20 percent, and interest rates were up almost at 20 percent. People had to pay huge amounts of money or borrow huge amounts of money and pay exorbitant interest rates because of inflation.

We are in danger of getting back to those bad old days. The proposal our Democratic colleagues are trying to ram through Congress would increase taxes—already paid by energy companies—on income earned not in the United States but globally. It also adds a new tax, the Superfund excise tax, which was eliminated 25 years ago. They want to add that back on top. The Democrats want to resurrect this tax and force energy companies to pay more on every barrel of crude oil that is used in the United States.

Once again, the burden won’t be, ultimately, on the energy and chemical companies. It will fall on consumers, who are already struggling post-COVID to get back on the job and pay the bills and provide for their families—only to be met with a kick in the teeth known as Bidenflation.

The middle class won’t just be footing the bill for tax hikes on companies. This is, really, sort of an elitist irony. The Biden reconciliation bill would force middle-class families to subsidize the purchase of electric vehicles for wealthy Americans. Not only are we going to raise prices on you through tax increases, but we are going to take money out of your pocket and give it to rich people who can afford to buy these expensive electric vehicles. This bill provides a tax credit for electric vehicle purchases even if the vehicle is made completely or substantially in China. Won’t they love that.

On top of that, you get a bigger tax credit for electric cars built in union shops—some of the greatest political friends of the Democratic Party. Our colleagues haven’t provided a very good explanation for this, but I, for one, find it hard to believe that union-built electric vehicles are any greener or cleaner or emit less than nonunion-built vehicles. This is just a big wet kiss for a political constituency.

As a reminder, unlike gas-powered vehicle drivers, EV drivers don’t pay any money into the highway trust fund. Now, if you buy a gallon of gasoline, I think it is 18 cents on the gallon

that goes into the highway trust fund that is used to build and maintain our bridges and roadways.

Because of more use of electric vehicles that don’t pay any money into the highway trust fund, that trust fund is going broke.

So the tax breaks for the rich just keep on coming. They take money from middle-class families, give it to rich folks so they can buy fancy electric vehicles, courtesy of the American taxpayer.

I also have concerns about how the proposal that is being considered by the White House and our Democratic colleagues—how it would impact our energy security.

Over the last several decades, we have made incredible strides. Thanks to great investment, innovation, and expertise in the energy sector, we have made great strides to reduce our dependency on other countries to keep the lights on in the United States.

After all, we don’t want a repeat of the 1970s energy crisis.

Now, I know a lot of these young folks who are here serving as pages may not have been around in the 1970s, but they can look it up online.

Here is what happened: When the U.S. supported Israel in the Yom Kippur war in 1973, the Arab members of OPEC—the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries—they weren’t happy.

What did they do?

They banned the sale of crude oil to the United States—cut us off—and it sent shock waves throughout our country. As you might imagine, such was our dependency on imported oil from the Middle East. Despite some strong domestic oil production, we were still relying at that time heavily on imports, and once the supply was cut off, prices quadrupled.

Many gas stations simply couldn’t serve the demand, and when they could, they basically made you get an appointment to come fill up your gas tank.

Some States banned neon signs to cut down on energy use, and a number of towns asked their citizens not to put up Christmas lights because of the drain on the grid.

It was a slap across the face, a hard dose of reality that brought America’s energy dependence to light and underscored the need to increase our domestic production and resources and wean ourselves off of this dependency—this dangerous dependency on imports.

And that is what we did. Thanks to incredible investment and innovation in the energy sector and something that has come to be known as the shale revolution—named for a way to basically get oil and gas out of a rock—the tide of the energy landscape geopolitically turned in our favor.

These efforts were so successful that in 2015, the U.S. lifted the crude oil export ban that was put in place in the seventies. Back when we were dependent on imports, we said: You can’t export it because we need not only what

we can produce, but what we can import.

We lifted that in 2015 because American energy producers were producing so much oil and gas.

And, in fact, rather than import energy, including natural gas, we turned around what were built originally as LNG—liquefied natural gas—import terminals and created export terminals so we could send that low-cost energy to our friends and allies around the world.

But our Democratic colleagues seem to have a short-term memory problem. They seem to have forgotten about our history.

After years of building our energy independence and strengthening our energy security, they want to turn back the clock. The tax hikes they are trying to impose on energy producers would ensure that the United States, once again, is reliant on other countries, like Russia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela, for our energy needs. The dangers ought to be obvious.

We should never ever put ourselves in a position where we are reliant on any other country for us to keep our lights on, to operate our vehicles, for our small businesses to be able to operate, for us to be able to get electricity from a wall socket when we plug in an appliance.

So we shouldn't be dependent on our adversaries or any other country for our energy needs when we can produce it here in America; and by exporting it to friends and allies around the world, we can actually liberate them.

Recently, I was in on a trip with some Senate colleagues to the Balkans, in a number of countries that used to be part of the old Soviet Union but which are now independent countries, many of which are part of NATO and the European Union.

And one of the things they brought up time and time again is their desire to have a diverse source of energy because they know—they know—that if they depend on Russian gas, that Mr. Putin could turn off the spigot and put them in mortal jeopardy. And that is why it is important for us to be able to continue to export and not be dependent on imported energy ourselves.

President Biden unintentionally demonstrated the hypocrisy of some of his policies earlier this year when he literally begged OPEC to increase production to bring down these prices.

An American President basically shutting down American energy production and begging Russia and Saudi Arabia to please sell us the oil and gas we need so we can bring down prices at the pump—it is unbelievable.

If the President is worried about affordable energy, he needs to stop pushing policies that will drive up these prices.

And it is not just gasoline. It is electricity, you name it.

Well, Texans are already facing high gas prices. Household energy bills, your utility bill, is on the rise. This is not

the time to make it more expensive for families to pay for the energy they need.

As I mentioned, Texas has always been a proud supporter of an all-of-the-above energy strategy. We are recognized for the might of our oil and gas sector for sure, but a lot of folks don't realize we are a leader in renewable energy as well. In fact, we produce one-quarter of all of the wind energy in the United States. If we were a country—and we were once—we would be the fifth largest wind energy producer in the world.

And we have no plans of stopping there. We are also making serious strides in energy innovation through cutting-edge carbon capture and storage projects. That is the answer. It is called innovation. Not more taxes, not more regulations that raise prices, but innovation, things that literally suck carbon out of the environment, deposit it in the ground in some of these injection sites so we can actually produce more oil and gas, and keep the carbon sequestered in the ground permanently.

So we need to find a balance—something that is too often missing here in Washington, DC—between conservation, production, and economic power. That balance will not be found by imposing heavy-handed regulations or taxes that drive up the cost for consumers and that benefit our adversaries.

Like the rest of the reckless tax-and-spending spree, the cost of this energy proposal far, far exceeds its benefits. There is a better way to do this.

The Biden administration has managed to compound the already unprecedented challenges facing our energy sector here in America. American energy keeps America and much of the rest of the world running, and the administration and Congress need to take action to support a strong, post-pandemic recovery, and not get in the way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I come to the floor today to introduce the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2022. Of course, that is the fiscal year that began on October 1.

Like my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee, I am thrilled about the great work that has been done over many months to craft spending bills that lift up the ideals of our country and put the needs of workers and families ahead of the desires of special interests.

As chair of the Interior and Environment Subcommittee, I can say that this is certainly true for the Interior bill that Senator MURKOWSKI and I, along with members of the subcommittee, have worked so hard to create.

And I want to especially thank Senator MURKOWSKI and our fellow subcommittee members for their contributions to this bill.

The Interior bill raises some of the more complex and challenging issues facing America, so we are delighted that it has been filed today.

Together, we have crafted a bill that recognizes not only the danger that hotter, more devastating wildfires, longer fire seasons themselves pose, but the dangers of smoke from them. That smoke is making a bigger and bigger impact back home on our crops and on our entertainment because of outdoor venues being shut down and certainly upon people's health. The bill makes critical investments to lessen the peril.

It doubles the funding for hazardous fuels reductions. When you hear that term, you may not be sure what it means. What we are talking about is the buildup of fuels in the forest that make the wildfires so much worse. So it doubles the funding to take out those fuels to \$360 million so the Forest Service can treat more of the highest risk acres of forest lands.

We particularly want to see a concentration of the wild land-urban interface so that the fires are slowed down and can be attacked more aggressively when they are close to our towns.

I will never forget the Labor Day fires of a year ago, where I drove 600 miles up and down our State and never got out of the smoke, and town after town after town was burned to the ground.

This is why we have to invest in reducing the fuels in our forest and making them more fire resilient.

The bill doubles the funding for the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration program to \$80 million instead of \$40 million to help fund critical projects that will improve forest landscapes and add to the resiliency while also removing limitations on how many projects could be in each region each year.

You know, the thing about these landscape restoration programs, it brings together the stakeholders from the entire spectrum—from the timber companies, the environmental groups, the local elected officials, the Indian Tribes—to work out a prescription on how to treat the forest, and then that treatment stays out of the courts.

So it brings an end to the timber wars that have so often frustrated so many on all sides while thereby being successful in treating the forests, producing more saw logs for the mill, producing more jobs in the forests, more jobs in the log trucks. So it is a win for fire resiliency; it is a win for jobs; it is a win for our timber industry.

Funding in this bill goes a long way to transitioning to a larger, permanent forest fighting—firefighting force where firefighters risking their lives now get a minimum pay of at least \$15 per hour. And that doesn't sound like very much, but it is an elevation from the minimum wages of the past.

And it provides \$10 million to create a new EPA grant program to help States, Tribes, local governments, and others prepare for and protect against the hazards of wildfire smoke.

In recent years, whether it is the impact of air quality on those with breathing and health issues or the tourism industry or industries like our wineries and our vineyards, the smoke that can blanket Oregon from fires during fire season has been nearly as devastating as the fires themselves.

Our subcommittee has also crafted a bill that takes on the climate crisis with the seriousness it deserves while we are striving to preserve our lands and our natural wonders. There is no question the planet is getting warmer. Our oceans are getting more acidic as carbon dioxide is transformed into carbonic acid. That is having a big impact on our ecosystems on the Oregon coast. We are facing more extreme weather—droughts, storms, flooding, heat waves—but for too long, we haven't come anywhere close to doing enough to confront this crisis.

We are starting to make changes through the Interior appropriations bill. The bill makes major investments in EPA's climate and enforcement programs, including a 46-percent increase in the clean air and climate program to tackle the crisis, restore clean air capacity, and expand and modernize air quality monitoring. And it provides an extra \$56 million for the Agency's enforcement and compliance efforts and over \$40 million for the Climate Conservation Corps that will create jobs while jump-starting efforts to dramatically expand on-the-ground conservation work to address the impacts of climate change; conserve and restore public lands and public waters; bolster resilience, increase reforestation, protect biodiversity, and improve access to recreation.

There is also \$73 million in new funding to start the process of transitioning the Interior Department from fossil fuel vehicles to zero-emission vehicles. It is something that has to happen across our entire government.

Finally, we have worked together to craft a bill that makes unprecedented, long overdue investments in Tribal communities, in their health systems, their education systems, social services, water resources and infrastructure, and in law enforcement. For far too long, our Tribal communities haven't received the help or the investments that they deserve. In this bill, we are starting to right that wrong.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs is getting a 15-percent increase in funding. The Indian Health Service is getting a 21-percent increase in funding. And for the first time, the Indian Health Service is getting an advance appropriations status. What that means is if the government shuts down, we don't shut down the health services for Native Americans. When that happened in the past, that was an egregious failure.

You can't let that happen. This bill puts an end to that, creating peace of mind for everyone that the health service will be there when needed.

We are increasing the Bureau of Indian Education budget by 8 percent, the Native American and Alaska Natives housing programs by 18 percent. We certainly can't make up for centuries' worth of disastrous policy and chronic underfunding when it comes to Indian Country overnight, but I believe this bill and its unprecedented investments should begin to make a large stride toward fulfilling the government's treaty and trust responsibilities, showing Tribal communities that their needs are a priority.

There is a lot more in this bill. The Interior appropriations bill covers a lot of territory. But I wanted to come to the floor to share some of these highlights.

It is important that we get our funding bills for fiscal year 2022 to this floor, to the President's desk, and take all the expertise that has gone into these bills into action by bills that have passed and been implemented.

I want to provide a sense for all my colleagues that the real investments that these bills are making in our Nation are the kind of investments we need to make to ensure strong foundations for families, for our communities, and for our Nation to thrive in the years ahead.

I am grateful for the countless hours of hard work from the Members and, very importantly, from the staff who put these bills together, raising the salient issues, helping to communicate between the Republican side and the Democratic side and the House side and the Senate side and the expertise from the executive branch. The staff work that goes into a bill like this is enormous. So thank you to the staff teams on both the majority and minority side, without whom this bill would not exist.

On my team, we have Melissa Zimmerman, Ryan Hunt, Anthony Sedillo, and Martha Roberts. And on Ranking Member MURKOWSKI's team, we have Emy Lesofski, Nona McCoy, and Lucas Agnew. To each and every one of them, thank you for your tireless efforts. And I must say that the Republican and Democratic team members worked so well together on complex and difficult issues involved in the Interior bill. So I salute them for forging that effort to have a very professional analysis and attitude as we work to solve the challenges facing America.

I look forward to joining with all my colleagues in the Chamber in passing this bill and the other appropriations bills that will put America on a path to a much better future.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I rise today to take a step back really and evaluate the real-life impacts of President Biden's policies. As every in-

coming administration does, promises were made to the American people. That is not surprising. But one of President Biden's first promises was to unite the American people. But as we have seen too often here, he has chosen a path that follows the lead of the Democratic leadership of the House and Senate, which is really a solitary path instead of a path of unity.

So it is fair to ask: Has that agenda resulted in a better life for working families? Has it made us more prosperous, more secure? Has it made us safer?

Well, let's take a look. We can start with what is top of mind for all of our folks across the country, and that is the rising price of everyday goods and services. Every day, men and women go to work, take the kids to school, expecting the predictability that filling up their car will cost a certain amount or that trip to the grocery store will be in the same range. And what do they find? Well, thanks to inflation, fueled in part by excessive government spending to the tune of trillions of dollars—and I am afraid we haven't seen the end of it—Americans are paying higher prices for many of the things they just can't do without. Over the past year, consumer prices have risen 5.4 percent, the largest 1-year jump in 13 years.

So if you are saving up to buy a new or used car or truck, keep saving because it costs more under President Biden. Headed out to the grocery store? Prepare to see larger numbers at the bottom of your receipt, thanks to President Biden. Making monthly rent payments? If it seems higher than last year, that is because it is. The national median rent went up 17 percent since President Biden took office. Well, those numbers don't lie. People see them every day and they are in their bank accounts and in their checkbooks and in the strain of trying to make those things work. These are the real-life consequences of misguided economic policies from the left. Unfortunately, for working-class Americans, it means the only thing we have built back better is the return to soaring inflation and economic misery that many of us remember from the Jimmy Carter years.

Those years also remind us of another problem facing every family, as I mentioned before. That is the rising cost of gas. Digits on the gas pump—they tick up faster and faster every time you fill up, and it isn't because our tanks have gotten bigger, that is for sure. In West Virginia, the average cost of gas compared to this time last year is more than \$1 per gallon. So not only are those trips to the grocery store more expensive, it costs more to get to the grocery store. The White House has insisted that they are working on it, and on behalf of everyone in my State who drives to work, drops their kids off at school, and hops in the car to visit their families, I sure hope they are.

At the same time, it is important to note that on President Biden's first