

Republicans can run, but they can't hide. They have two choices: They own it now or, miracle of miracles, try to begin to undo the damage.

Again, to my colleagues, to my fellow Americans, this is not an abstract exercise in the slightest. Do you know why that is true? Because the hard right is not treating it like an abstract exercise at all. In recent years, they have been racing, bolting to pass unhinged, cruel, anti-choice legislation that would catapult women's rights back into the stone age. They have been prepared for this moment for years.

The Mississippi law before the Supreme Court, for example, has zero—zero—exceptions for rape or incest—a position that would have been regarded on the extreme of the extreme not too long ago. Imagine telling a woman who was raped that some White male politician is going to—White male judge is going to determine whether she has to continue to carry the child—fetus.

In Arizona, the Governor signed a law that could imprison anyone who “provides, supplies, or administers” an abortion by up to 5 years should Roe be overturned—again, no exception for rape, no exception for incest.

The infamous law in Texas, meanwhile, bans abortions as early as 6 weeks. Many women don't realize they are pregnant until after 6 weeks, and, again, no exception for rape, no exception for incest.

Unfortunately, these are not aberrations. Twenty-six States have laws on the books that would begin the process of banning abortions if Roe is overturned. Thirteen of these are trigger laws, meaning these bans would happen almost immediately after the Supreme Court decision.

This, it seems, is what the hard right wants—forced pregnancies, no exception for rape, no exception for incest. Republican politicians are telling America's women: Your body, our choice.

We cannot allow this vision of America to succeed. Come next week, Senate Republicans will have to answer for everything they have done over the years to embolden the hard right's hostility against a woman's choice. They have tried to hide what they are doing. They tried to downplay what they are doing. Those days are over.

You are coming clean—not clean, really, at all. Everyone is going to know what you have done and how you feel.

Leader MCCONNELL can duck at press conferences when asked if he is happy to see Roe v. Wade go by the wayside, but he won't be able to duck it any longer.

So our view is that America cannot allow this vision of America to succeed. Come next week, Senate Republicans will have to answer for everything they have done over the years to embolden the hard right's hostility against a woman's choice. They will not be able to hide from the American

people. They cannot hide their role in bringing Roe to an end. The vote will tell next week. America will be watching.

AMERICA COMPETES ACT

Mr. President, now on a different note, last night, the Senate took another important step towards finalizing our bipartisan jobs and competition legislation that has been in the works for over a year. I thank all my colleagues last night for voting swiftly to process 26 motions to instruct the conference committee. Many of these were done by voice, and I appreciate everyone's hard work. We sat in our seats. No one, at noon yesterday, with 26 motions to instruct, thought we would finish by 10 p.m. or even at any point yesterday, but we did. That is good work.

There is still a lot of work to do, of course, before we send the jobs bill to the President's desk, and I hope we will see the same bipartisan, good-faith work in the conference that we saw last night on the floor of the Senate. We all know that no one is going to get everything they want, but if we keep working together, I am confident we can come up with a strong final product.

Our jobs and competition bill is just what the doctor ordered to boost our economy, bring manufacturing jobs back home, and most of all, lower costs for American families.

It is great news for American families who want to see lower costs on daily essentials. It is great news for workers who want to see good-paying manufacturing jobs brought back from overseas. It is great news for our businesses that need help strengthening our supply chains. It is great news for our innovators, workers, scientists, universities, and creators who will help us create new technologies and generate the next wave of good-paying jobs in this century.

I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who worked in good faith to help us reach this point.

WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION

Mr. President, one final note: protecting pregnant working women. As we all continue reckoning with the implications of the Supreme Court's horrible decision—the one that seems to be coming down the pike—the Senate must also support the needs of pregnant women facing discrimination in the workplace.

Recently, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions reported bipartisan legislation that would prevent employers from forcing pregnant workers out of a job or denying them reasonable accommodations in the workplace. In the House, a similar bill also passed with strong bipartisan support, and the Senate should do the same.

Mother's Day is just around the corner—happy Mother's Day to my mom of 93—Mother's Day is just around the corner, so I call on my colleagues to finalize strong bipartisan legislation that will make a meaningful difference

in the lives of millions of working pregnant women.

I yield the floor.

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

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

NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, it is National Small Business Week, a week that is set aside to honor the contributions that small businesses make to this Nation.

Small businesses are an essential part of our economy. Ninety-nine percent—99 percent—of South Dakota's businesses are small businesses, and almost 60 percent of South Dakota employees work for small businesses.

Nationally, small businesses make up most of the businesses in this country and are responsible for 62 percent of net new job creation.

And small businesses are not only an essential part of our economy, they are also an essential part of our communities—doing everything from creating gathering spaces for community members to supporting local charities and sponsoring local sports teams.

During National Small Business Week, I would like to be able to report that small businesses around the country are thriving. But the truth is, while some are doing well, a lot of small businesses are having a difficult time right now, not because of COVID, as Democrats might like you to think, but because of inflation. Inflation, which has hit American families hard, is also creating major difficulties for small businesses.

Now, when I talk to small business owners in South Dakota, one of the first things they tell me is how inflation is affecting their businesses.

In a recent survey from the National Federation of Independent Business, 62 percent of small businesses reported that inflation is having a substantial impact on their businesses, and 84 percent reported that they are experiencing lower business earnings due to inflation, and it is no surprise.

Inflation has driven up the final price of goods and services. It has also driven up the cost of raw materials.

The producer price index, which measures wholesale costs to sellers, hit 11.2 percent in March—its highest level ever recorded.

And small businesses are struggling with high energy costs, which affect everything from production to the transportation of finished products to the cost of keeping a storefront open.

Farms and ranches, which make up a substantial part of South Dakota's small businesses, are seeing huge price increases in the cost of essential inputs, like fertilizer, while the price of diesel, which powers farm equipment, reached an all-time high this week.

Agriculture is already a challenging industry by its very nature. Many farmers and ranchers in South Dakota, for example, are currently dealing with a severe drought, and inflation is making things a lot worse, especially right now in the midst of planting season.

We all know how we got here. Democrats came into office last year mere weeks after Congress had passed a fifth bipartisan COVID relief bill totaling more than \$900 billion, and meeting essentially all of the current pressing COVID needs.

It was abundantly clear that we were not in immediate need of trillions more in government spending.

But that didn't matter to Democrats. Now that they were in charge, they were eager to take advantage of the COVID crisis to begin implementing their Big Government vision.

And so in the name of "COVID relief," they pushed through a massive partisan \$1.9 trillion piece of legislation filled with unnecessary spending and handouts to Democrat interest groups.

And the result was entirely predictable.

The definition of inflation is too many dollars chasing too few goods and services, and that was exactly the situation that Democrats helped create.

Democrats flooded the economy with unnecessary government money and the economy overheated as a result, and there is no clear end in sight.

It is small wonder that, after months and months of high inflation and anti-growth policies from the Biden administration, our economy shrank in the first quarter of this year.

Unfortunately, there is no easy solution to the inflation crisis Democrats helped create.

One essential thing, of course, is to do no more harm, and that means no more excessive government spending and no bloated Build Back Better tax-and-spending spree, a spending spree that some Democrats are still—still—advocating for.

Another essential thing is to unleash American energy production, and that includes conventional energy production.

I am a strong supporter of clean energy. I come from a State that, in 2020, derived 83 percent of its energy generation from renewables.

But no matter how much Democrats and the President might wish it were otherwise, the fact of the matter is that our Nation is nowhere close to being able to eliminate our reliance on traditional energy sources. Clean energy technology is simply not advanced to the point where we can replace all conventional energy production with renewables. And cutting off investment in clean, responsible oil and gas production will do nothing but drive up energy prices for American families, farms, and businesses.

Unleashing American energy production, on the other hand—including, I might add, production of oil and nat-

ural gas—could quickly result in relief for families and businesses and help ease our inflation crisis.

Unfortunately, the President has made his hostility to conventional energy production very clear. He set the tone on day 1 of his administration when he cancelled the Keystone XL Pipeline, an environmentally responsible pipeline project that was already underway and that was paired with \$1.7 billion in private investment in renewable energy to fully offset its operating emissions. The Keystone Pipeline was set to be what they call "net zero"—net zero—when it comes to emissions.

The President also immediately froze new oil and gas leases on Federal lands. And while his administration is finally conducting sales for new onshore oil and gas leases after being ordered to do so by a Federal judge, it has reduced the land available for such leases and substantially increased the royalty rate, sending a loud and clear signal to American energy producers that the administration is reluctant to collaborate with them.

Meanwhile, the Securities and Exchange Commission has proposed requiring publicly-traded companies to comply with costly new climate-related disclosures that would likely discourage investment in conventional energy production.

In short, the Biden administration is creating a recipe for sustained high energy costs and a lot more pain for American businesses and families.

But I and my Republican colleagues will continue to do everything we can to unleash conventional energy production here at home and drive down energy prices for Americans.

I am grateful for all that small businesses contribute to our economy, and during this National Small Business Week, and every week, I will continue to work to mitigate the harm of Democrats' inflation crisis and advance policies that make it easier for our small businessmen and -women to continue to drive the American economy forward.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Texas.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I know we are used to having a lot going on here in Washington, DC, but this week seems like we have been hit by a whirlwind of activity—a war in Europe, COVID-19 still lingering in parts of the world, and then the Supreme Court found itself the victim of an unauthorized leak of a draft opinion, which has created a lot of furor and anxiety and misinformation.

One of the things that it has demonstrated is the need to protect the independence of the Court.

Justice Antonin Scalia used to say that you can read the constitution and bill of rights of a lot of countries around the world, and they look great on paper. He mentioned that of the old Soviet Union, for example. But he said

they are just words on paper without an independent judiciary to enforce them, and he was right.

Whoever leaked this draft document obviously intended to create a lot of public pressure—indeed, coercion—on the sitting Justices to either change their minds or to somehow garner a political issue that they would be able to use to divert the American people's attention from things like inflation, crime, the border, and the challenges to our national security and world peace.

We have to get to the bottom of this, and I am confident that Chief Justice Roberts will pursue that until the person who leaked it is identified and held accountable.

But this spotlight on the Court, along with the reaction—the public reaction that we have seen has raised another important issue, and that is the physical safety and security of the Justices themselves and their families.

In our increasingly polarized climate, the Justices have been villainized and subjected to violent threats. People have even published their home addresses so they can show up and protest on their home, on their property, on their lawns.

This decision, which is actually a nondecision because the Supreme Court hasn't handed down its decision—but the leaker has accomplished his or her goal, I suppose, by creating this hostile environment for the Justices and their families.

But, unfortunately, there are even people in this Chamber who have contributed to that environment.

In 2019, the Democratic leader went to the Supreme Court steps and threatened two Supreme Court Justices by name. He said:

You have released the whirlwind—

By the way, this was the day that the abortion case was argued in the Supreme Court.

The senior Senator from New York, the majority leader, said:

You have released the whirlwind, and you will pay the price. You won't know what hit you if you go forward with these awful decisions.

And he named Justice Gorsuch and Justice Kavanaugh by name.

Now, to have the senior Democrat and Senate majority leader from this Chamber lobbying threats at sitting Justices on the Supreme Court if they did not rule in a way he wished is dangerous.

We have wondered before about the impact of some of the irresponsible rhetoric that occasionally occurs around here on vulnerable minds and people who might be tempted to act based on that incitement, based on that rhetoric. But to have this come from the majority leader himself is just irresponsible.

This is the branch of government, which is supposed to be the adults in the room, to operate in a way that is respectful, even with our differences, and the Supreme Court is the branch