

That is why they think the country is heading in the wrong direction.

We may actually even see inflation getting worse. That is because Democrats have now poured jet fuel on the fire of inflation. They did it twice this past month. First, they passed this incredibly expensive spending bill. Then a few days later, Joe Biden announced a very unfair \$500 billion taxpayer-funded handout to people with college loans. It is a one-two punch to families who work, pay their taxes, and pay their bills; who, when they sign their name to a loan, expect to pay it back.

That is not what we are getting with Joe Biden. Nope. What we are getting are actions that are going to cause more inflation.

According to Wharton School of Business in their budget model, Democrats' spending bill is going to increase inflation not just for a week, not just for a month, not just for a year but for at least 2 years. And that is something, apparently, Joe Biden is proud of. Even Democratic economists admit the student loan giveaway is going to increase inflation.

So let's name names. Former Obama economic adviser, Jason Furman, called this "gasoline on the inflationary fire that is already burning." This is Obama's economic adviser. He called it "reckless."

Former Obama and Clinton economic advisor, Larry Summers, said:

Student loan debt relief . . . increases inflation. . . . It will also tend to . . . rais[e] tuitions.

Raise tuition; is that what the Democrats are for? Hey, let's raise tuition. We are for that. That is what Larry Summers says is going to happen as a result of these positions by the Democrats in this Chamber and in the White House.

Joe Biden continues to make life more expensive, more unaffordable, and more painful for American families. To bring down costs, Republicans propose doing the exact opposite of what the Democrats are doing today.

We need to produce more and spend less. We need to produce more of lots of things. Energy is part of it. We need to unleash American energy. We need to lower costs all across the country by producing more American energy right here in the United States, not going hat in hand to Saudi Arabia, not going hat in hand, as Joe Biden did just a year ago, to Russia—to Vladimir Putin's Russia. Just a year ago, Joe Biden was saying: Please send us more oil. Oh, and he wants the same from Iran and Venezuela. We have it here in the United States. We need to unleash it.

For the last 20 months, Democrats have waged an all-out war against American energy. We need more energy, not less. What we need less of is less Washington redtape. So far Joe Biden has issued more than \$200 billion in punishing regulations in just 20 months. It makes it more expensive to create jobs here at home.

Finally, we need to stop this reckless Washington spending. The Biden inflation crisis started the month after Democrats passed their first spending bill. The first spending bill added \$2 trillion to the debt; the college loan giveaway, another half trillion. It is all going to make inflation worse. And people at home are furious.

So despite what the liberal pundits may say, Democrats have nothing to celebrate. A poll from writers last week showed Joe Biden still has an approval rating below 40 percent. Three out of four Americans say this country is on the wrong track under Joe Biden and the Democrats.

According to one poll, a full majority of Americans say America's best days are behind us. It is a record, a record high that people think the best days are behind us.

America is in a crisis right now. From our economy, to our border, to crime in our communities, Joe Biden's liberal policies have failed working families across America.

So I disagree with those who say our best days are behind us. I believe the best days for America are always ahead of us. It is the control of Washington that needs to be put behind us.

You know, Joe Biden gave a political speech the other day, flanked by marines, in Philadelphia. He told the American public it was a policy speech. It was not. He intentionally misled the American people and tried to lie to the American people because, if it had been a policy speech, he would have actually addressed the issues that are keeping Americans awake at night—the issues that they care about, the pain that they are suffering.

He never mentioned once the words: prices, inflation, gas, the border, crime, cartel, fentanyl, or debt. He never mentioned those. No. The President closed his eyes to all of those things that he has done that are causing massive pain to the American people. But he looked down his nose at tens and tens of millions of Americans who are struggling to get by and the American economy that this President and the Democrats have intentionally undermined.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

TENNESSEE

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I think we all enjoyed being in our States during August. And during the time I was there, I wrapped up what I do each year, which is to visit with each of our 95 counties. And this is truly a listening tour for me, being able to talk with our citizens, to talk with our elected leaders. And I would leave those meetings so encouraged and think, I could not be more impressed with the things that are being done in these communities.

I would go to the next community and again would be just as impressed. Tennesseans are working hard. And this year has been a difficult year for everyone. But I want to focus on our

local leaders today because they are the ones who are keeping these communities afloat. And they have done it in spite of everything that Washington, DC, and the Democrats are doing to them.

I thought it was interesting that yesterday the majority leader opened the Senate by reciting a laundry list of the Democratic Party's accomplishments. Now, he put quite a spin on this.

Back home in Tennessee, the people that I work with every single day are seeing this laundry list for what it is and how it affects them. There is hundreds of billions of dollars for the Green New Deal giveaways, and there are Big Government power grabs; there is crippling regulatory overreach; billions more have been spent on this student loan forgiveness program. Indeed, it could end up being a trillion dollars. And there are attacks on our fundamental constitutional rights.

Yes, indeed, the way Tennesseans see it is that Joe Biden and the Democrats are putting together the pieces for what they call their transformation, their great socialist experiment. But in Tennessee, local leaders are really working around the clock to keep that vision from coming to be and to keep their communities from falling apart.

And as I visited with these 95 counties, they gave to me one message that came through time and again, repeatedly. They don't like what they are seeing from this socialist agenda that is being pushed forward here in DC. Indeed, they would talk about their worries and their fears. They would talk about the impact of 9 percent inflation and \$5-a-gallon gas.

Now, that may be CHUCK SCHUMER's version of success, which he really helpfully laid out yesterday as to what he thinks are successes and achievements, and that depends entirely upon his ability to spend somebody else's money on things that the American people have repeatedly said they do not want and they do not need. That message came through every one of our 95 counties.

Now, in Tennessee, when we talk about success, you hear about something different. You hear about growth. You hear about investments that companies are making in our State. And we have earned this the hard way. And, indeed, the rest of the country is noticing. Tennessee is one of the most well-managed States. It has no State income tax. And you have got Ford Motor Company and SK Innovation that have seen the potential in our State, specifically in Haywood County. And they have invested billions of dollars.

When I was in West Tennessee last month, I visited their Blue Oval City project site where, in just a few years, they will have a brandnew manufacturing hub that will create thousands of jobs and grow the local economy by millions and millions of dollars.

The people at Lone Oaks Farms in Hardeman County are working to make

certain that there is a great workforce. And they are developing STEM education programs. When I visited them, they were hard at work planning for the new 4-H Development Center, where students will learn how to be good stewards of Tennessee's natural resources.

Across the State in Blount County, I was so happy to officially welcome Smith & Wesson to Tennessee. Now, see, they have moved their headquarters and their manufacturing facility down from their old home in Massachusetts. And they are certainly pleased with the Southern hospitality and the good business working environment that they are seeing in Tennessee.

The largest Buc-ee's in the Nation is coming to Kodak, TN. Also, over on the east end of the State, the Techstars Accelerator Program is thriving in Knoxville. Red Stag set up a new logistics hub in Sweetwater. And we have a brandnew emergency clinic in the Upper Cumberland.

This is the sort of laundry list that I would hope and wish that my Democratic colleagues would be proud of. From one end of the State to the other, Tennessee is drawing investment, no thanks to this White House, to President Biden, and the Democrats that run the House and the Senate. It is our local leaders that are doing the heavy lift, in spite of what Washington, DC, is throwing at them every day.

But with that said, these local leaders deserve the respect and support from the Democratic Party. Even a bare minimum promise to not sabotage their hard work would be welcomed by them. But across all 95 counties, the message I received, as I said, was pretty much the same: They are worried. They are very worried. They are fearful. But they are not letting themselves get caught up in what the Democrats are doing.

Yes, they know the Democrats have a socialist-style agenda that they are pushing. That is the Democrats' vision for the future. In Tennessee, our counties are not going to let the Democrats destroy their hope for a better future.

They know that since the day the Democrats took power, Joe Biden and the Democrats have done everything they could do to seize control and remake a vision for this country into their image, where the elites, the select few—the Democrats—control the power on all the levers, and they can dictate to the States how they are going to live, what they are going to accomplish, what they are going to do.

Tennesseans are suffering the consequences of these policies in the form of record-breaking inflation, obscene fuel and energy costs, rising crime and drug use, and the overall sense that they have been abandoned by the Federal Government. That is how they see it.

The overwhelming issue right now is inflation, inflation, inflation. It is the top concern in all 95 counties. It affects

every county budget, and it affects small business.

In Fayette County, I got to speak to Joey Hays of Dyer Foods and some of the truly resilient workers at one of his local grocery stores. We should all be grateful for people like the workers at Dyer Foods. They didn't have it easy during the pandemic, and it hasn't gotten any easier now than it was during the pandemic because more of their paychecks are being eaten up by inflation. Interesting, isn't it? Inflation is outpacing any wage growth.

Many Tennessee counties that have managed to pull themselves out of distress status lost all traction when inflation skyrocketed. And now, guess what? They feel like they are back at square one because of decisions that had been made in Washington, DC. No fault of their own, mind you, decisions that are made here.

Dayton City Manager Tommy Solomon told me he saw the price of pipe go up 200 percent. They had to stop some of their water projects because they couldn't afford to buy the supplies. That is right. The pipe was up 200 percent.

Hamilton County Mayor Coppinger told me the worker shortage has made the inflation-driven problems even worse. They have raised salaries, and they still can't fill critical roles, especially in public health.

In Rhea, Bledsoe, McMinn, Marion, and Grundy Counties, inflation and supply chain issues are wiping out farmers. Most small farms in these counties only planted about half their normal crop due to fuel and fertilizer prices. Their businesses—these small businesses—are drying up.

Many other businesses, including large manufacturers, are being stonewalled by regulators from the EPA with no explanation as to why they are making the decisions that they make.

Do you know what? Unfortunately for small business manufacturers, there is no end in sight to what these regulators in this administration will do.

Meanwhile, while all of this is happening, the border is open by order of the White House. The drug mules are streaming in, and drug use is spiking. Every single sheriff—every one of them—that I spoke to in Southeast Tennessee, told me that fentanyl is their No. 1 issue, and I can tell you that it is an issue in other areas of the State as well.

In Grundy County, Sheriff Shrum told me about what happened to one of his deputies who accidentally came into contact with a dangerous amount of fentanyl. He started the day trying to save a life, but by the end of that day, it was his colleagues from the sheriff's department who were saving his life and giving him a dose of Narcan.

This is what our first responders and our local law enforcement are facing because Joe Biden and the Democrats

and this DHS are refusing to secure the southern border. Two million plus and counting, about three quarters of a million known got-aways, but they will stand up there and tell you: Oh, the border is closed.

Law enforcement in our State does not believe that, and I don't either. This is a shame.

Crime is on the rise, but rather than supporting police officers, Joe Biden and the Democrats are obsessed with undermining, defunding, and disbanding police departments.

In Tipton County, I was truly blessed to meet Deputy Gene Molder and his family. Deputy Molder was shot in the line of duty last March while he was trying to help a group of people escape a violent hostage situation. Thank God, he is all right now, but people are outraged at the leftist rhetoric that is clearly designed to increase violence against law enforcement.

Tennesseans aren't asking for much. They don't want a Federal Government to make their decisions for them. They don't want a handout. They don't want centralized control. Honestly, they wish that they could just be left alone when it comes to Washington, DC, and what they are doing out. They want you, the Federal Government, to get out of the way so that they can fulfill their vision for the future—prosperous, safe, secure.

This President's socialist agenda won't help them do that because prosperity, freedom, independence, liberty, equal treatment under the law, equal justice for all is not what is at the top of their to-do list. It won't help Hamilton County hire workers or the Dayton Public Works Department buy pipe. It certainly won't help farmers in Rhea County grow the food you eat, and it won't help police officers keep their communities safe and secure.

These local leaders in the great state of Tennessee know better than anyone here in Washington what they need us to do in order to help them get things done, and that message came through clear as a bell in 95 counties. What did they tell me—that message I heard all across 95 counties? Please secure the border and support law enforcement, repair and secure our supply chains, keep taxes low, and develop a business-friendly attitude, and, above all else, stop the out-of-control Federal spending.

I know this administration has made a name for itself telling people what they can and cannot do. But I will tell you that this is a power struggle that you are not going to win, at least where Tennesseans are concerned.

The Democrats have an agenda, but in Tennessee I have met with some of the most wonderful people in this country. They have a vision for what they want the future to be. They want it to be focused on hope, on opportunity for all, and I want to thank every single Tennessee leader, law enforcement officer, business owner, and citizens who gave me their time, who talked with

me and who offered their advice this past year. Their wisdom is what guides my decisions here in Washington. I only wish that my Democratic colleagues would take their words to heart as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I will proceed with my trusty, battered "Time to Wake Up" chart and my—I don't know—280-something speech.

For once, I can start with some good news, which is that the Democrats, at last, passed a climate-focused reconciliation bill this year. This is a huge step and essential, given the cascade of harms climate change is already inflicting: wildfire in Yosemite National Park, billions of dollars in flood damage; Europe broils in heat wave; extreme heat led to "brutal" rise in sea temperatures; dangerous heat hits United States; emissions rising of methane, glacier tragedies; Houston slogs through brutal heat; climate change is forcing massive wildlife migration. Wherever you look, you see the news of what is happening—heat waves, droughts, wildfires, collapsing glaciers, rising seas, record carbon dioxide and methane concentrations in the atmosphere.

It is a bombardment of hard evidence that the Earth is fast becoming less hospitable for human life. The costs of our political negligence are high and rising.

My friends across the aisle like to fixate on the price of gasoline, which undeniably affects family budgets. But climate change imposes costs on American families much worse than gasoline prices. Climate change causes effects that raise insurance premiums, snarl supply chains, reduce crop yields, sicken people, and damage cars, homes, and businesses.

A lot of thoughtful groups have quantified this damage. The International Monetary Fund estimates this "climate tax" on American families at over \$5,000 per year based on their calculation that we subsidize fossil fuel by allowing them to get away with doing all this pollution and harm for free to the tune of \$660 billion every year. That is the International Monetary Fund—5,000 bucks per family from climate change harms.

They are not alone, of course. Resources for the Future, which is a well-regarded, well-trusted calculation shop, has just looked at what the social cost of carbon should be, and they pegged it at \$185 per ton of carbon emissions. Right now, the nominal social cost of carbon left over from the Obama administration is \$51 per ton. Resources for the Future has done a more rigorous calculation and puts it at \$185 in harm per ton of carbon emitted.

What does this all add up to? Well, you can go to corporate consulting firm Deloitte, which is a corporate con-

sulting firm. We are not talking about, you know, Green New Deal folks here. This is a corporate consultancy. They say that inaction on climate change could cost the world's economy \$178 trillion over the next 50 years.

Now, the bad news is climate change harms could cost \$178 trillion. The good news is if we got after this and behaved responsibly, you could gain \$43 trillion in economic development in that same time period. So if you put the two together, that is a \$220 trillion swing depending on decisions that we make today. So it kind of matters to getting this right, and we are not yet getting this right.

The reconciliation bill, good as it is, won't decarbonize our economy in time without a lot more action. The bill likely takes expected emissions reduction from around 25 percent, which we are assuming right there—that is our baked-in number—and it raises it to about 40 percent. So it is a 15-percent increase in emissions reduction, from 25 percent to 40 percent. So that is good. That is good, but it still leaves much to do, because, remember, net zero is the target, and if you have reduced by 40 percent, that still leaves 60 percent that is work to be done.

So soon we are going to need another bill, and the contours of such a bill, if it is going to be effective, are pretty clear.

There is bipartisan interest in a carbon border adjustment, which would make American manufacturing more competitive and reduce carbon pollution worldwide. We export pressure against carbon pollution with a carbon border tariff.

There is also bipartisan interest in commonsense permitting reform to safely and quickly build out the clean energy infrastructure of the future. My coastal State needs it for offshore wind. The Presiding Officer's Mountain State needs it for transmission lines to connect to the grid the capacity we have for solar and wind.

And the fossil fuel industry at least pretends to be interested in a price on carbon emissions. Now, that is just pretense. They put their whole political operation into effect to make sure none of that happens, but it is a good sign. It is a step on the path when they have to pretend to support a price on emissions. That is a step on the way to actually supporting a price on carbon emissions.

I will do everything in my power to do all of those things. But let's be clear. It would be much easier if corporate America were not a wall of opposition to serious climate bills.

And it is not just the fossil fuel industry. Banking, insurance, retail, tech—pick your industrial sector. You name it—in this building, useless on climate. Or worse, there is a huge spread between what they tell their shareholders and their customers and the public and what they send their emissaries into Congress to tell us.

And until that is solved, until corporate America aligns what it is telling

the public with what it is doing in Congress, legislation is going to be tough to do.

So that leaves the executive branch, and that is what brings me to the floor today, because there is a lot that the executive branch can do under existing executive authorities. And in this recent article, the White House said they were going to get started:

Biden Prepares More Actions to Cut Emissions.

Regulations from the E.P.A. and elsewhere will help the president meet his aggressive climate goals.

"The president has not chosen to just look at Congress, he's chosen to recognize that he has presidential authorities and responsibilities under the law to keep moving this forward."

Well, he sure does, and there is plenty of room to do different things and new things.

So what can be done by executive action?

Let's go through the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions since that is our target. The No. 1 source—by the way, these 11 sources of carbon pollution amount to almost 70 percent of our carbon emissions. So if we can tackle these, we are making a big dent in that remaining 60 percent left undone.

So cars and light trucks is the largest category. It generates almost a fifth of total U.S. carbon pollution.

The EPA and DOT restored Obama-era greenhouse gas emission standards. So now go further, as California has. Start with model year 2027 and begin a ramp-up to 100 percent zero-emission vehicles by 2035.

There is authority for this under the Clean Air Act and the 2007 Energy Independence and Security Act. And, by the way, when you double your car's energy efficiency, doubling your fuel economy is exactly the same thing as cutting oil prices and gasoline prices in half. So push in that direction.

And, by the way, getting off of fossil fuel for cars and light trucks will help us get off the Big Oil treadmill of cartel prices that are set with the help of foreign despots in Russia, in Saudi Arabia, in Venezuela, outside the rule of American law. But Americans have to pay because our oil industry goes along with the international cartel instead of charging market-based prices. We just saw them do that and reap record profits. So there is a lot to be done on cars and light trucks.

Coal-fired powerplants is the next biggest one. Coal-fired powerplants belch carbon pollution, but also a lot of other pollutants. So if you regulate for health against those other pollutants, you get a lot of cobenefits with carbon pollution.

Among the worst is fine particulate matter, which is also known as soot or, more technically, PM 2.5. It is the leading cause of the estimated 100,000 to 200,000 air pollution-related premature deaths each year. So it is causing real harm.

And then you add in coal ash, which is the toxic sludge left after you burn