

There have been some terrible laws passed by Congress in relation to those having been allowed in this country. The reality is we have acknowledged from the beginning of America as we know it that immigrants have been a part of our present and are a part of our future, and now we face the same reality again without the benefit of having an update in the laws, which the Republican leader voted against.

I recall specifically the work of Senator BENNET from Colorado. He did a remarkable thing, something that people didn't think was really possible. He managed to bring together all of the interest groups on the issue of legal immigration for those working in agriculture. He managed to find an agreement among all of these groups as to the humane and sensible treatment of these individuals. If that would have passed, it would have changed the circumstances we have today—circumstances wherein we do not have nearly enough legal immigrants to work in the agricultural sector of America. It is estimated that one out of two—50 percent—of all of the ag workers today are undocumented. We still eat the food that they pick and harvest, and we still take advantage of their hard work in the meat processing plants. Yet the reality is that we know, in our heart of hearts, that they are not being treated in a sensible, reasonable, humane way.

Senator BENNET, time and again, has shown leadership on this issue as he did with the Gang of 8. Once again, we find ourselves, because the bill failed in the previous Congress, without a guiding law on standards of immigration.

There were other things said by Senator MCCONNELL this morning which I want to make reference to as well, particularly as to the busing of those currently in the United States, as new, legally recognized immigrants, to various cities around the United States.

Governors from the States of Texas, Arizona, and Florida have been busing those who have been crossing the border and who are legally recognized to stay here until further hearing to communities like New York, Washington, Chicago, and even to Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts. The thing that we have got to keep in mind is that these Governors do not call local officials first. They don't even contact the Governors of these States where they are sending these people. So they arrive, helter-skelter, in unpredictable numbers and conditions, and the local officials are expected to take care of them.

Listen to what Senator MCCONNELL had to say in describing what I have just told you.

He said:

Out of desperation, a few Governors along our southern border are now giving some Democrat-run States and cities just a tiny, tiny taste of what border communities have been enduring literally for years.

What he is trying to say to us is this is an act of political spite. It is a polit-

ical stunt by these Governors. And what are they using to make their point? Innocent people—here legally in the United States—who are being shipped off, many times, with deception and promises that will never be kept in terms of opportunities for them in these various places.

Senator MCCONNELL went on to say:

All those cities combined have had months to accept between them approximately 1 day's share of our Nation's illegal immigration.

Immigrants—about four dozen—were given secure transportation, according to Senator MCCONNELL, “to the wealthy, liberal destination of Martha's Vineyard, filled with millionaires' mansions”—so-called sanctuary destinations.

Do you see the point that is being made here? These people are being bused without any warning as to where they are going to end up—where their final destinations may be—simply to make the political point that the Democrats have to be reminded of the Republicans' position on immigration. We are doing this at the expense of many innocent people, and we are doing this in a dangerous fashion.

I will tell you that I visited the Salvation Army center in Chicago, IL, about 10 days ago, and I met with these families and individuals. Little children are involved in this calculation.

Why is it that whenever the Republicans want to make a point on immigration, it always ends up being the children who are the pawns, whether they are kids in cages or forcefully removing children from their parents or in this case, busing them off with their parents to communities they have never heard of? Why does it always involve families with small children? You would think there would be more sensitivity on the Republican side to that reality.

Then Senator MCCONNELL made a statement which I want to correct. He said the Biden administration has been flying and busing illegal immigrants around the country on a regular basis. This is not true. We checked again this morning with the Biden administration. They are not exercising that right.

What we have going on are the transfers of those who are not in legal status back and forth between various facilities and the transfers of unaccompanied children, with escorts, to places like Chicago and other cities where, for decades, they have been cared for until their legal status is resolved. But this statement that the Biden administration is guilty of busing people back and forth is not true at all. I think the record should be clarified, and I hope the Senator from Kentucky will do so when he receives the first opportunity.

The Biden administration has said: We have the authority to do it, but we have not exercised it and will not unless we confer with Congress and also notify local officials as to whether anyone will be moved.

Now, there are circumstances and have been in the past that I know of personally on the border of Texas and Mexico where people had come and been released. They found they had credible fear. They asserted it. They have legal status, and they want to go to a specific location where they have friends and family. In those cases, there is help given to them to reach those destinations. But it is not the current situation where the Governors of Florida, Texas, and Arizona are deceiving these people onto these buses and sending them to places they have never heard of and not letting those who are in their destinations even know what it coming.

What is the right thing to do? The right thing to do is what we did 8 years ago: a bipartisan approach to fixing the immigration system. Instead of exploiting it for political purposes, let's fix it.

We have done that. We passed legislation on a bipartisan basis even in this evenly divided Senate. The CHIPS bill—this important semiconductor chip production bill—was a bipartisan bill. The infrastructure bill—the biggest highway program in the history of the United States since Dwight Eisenhower—was a bipartisan bill. The gun safety bill—a controversial issue, just as controversial as immigration—we passed that on a bipartisan basis. We can do it, but we have to stop exploiting these people who are here with children. We have to do it by stopping exploiting this issue and work together on a bipartisan basis, with give on both sides. That is how we can reach a bipartisan solution.

I am ready to do that. In the Senate Judiciary Committee, we would start as soon as we have Republicans of good will willing to sit down with Democrats and work together. But continuing to exploit these people and the children and these families is just plain wrong. It is not consistent with American values. It doesn't reflect well on our Nation.

I hope that the people who are inspired to do this—the Governors in Florida, Texas, and Arizona—will think twice about these kids and their families before they try it again.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote scheduled for 2:30 p.m. occur at 2:15 p.m.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA). The Republican whip.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, last Friday, President Biden said the following during his speech:

And we have a process in place to manage migrants at the border. We're working to make sure it's safe and orderly and humane.

“[S]afe and orderly and humane.”

I have to ask, has the President visited the border lately? Oh, that is right, he hasn't. In fact, other than a driveby by the border when he was a candidate for Vice President—and by “driveby,” I mean his motorcade literally drove by—the President has never visited the border. Never. Although I have to say that even reading the news should be enough to make it clear to the President the situation at the border is neither safe, nor orderly, nor humane.

In case the President isn't clear about what is happening at the border, let me just read from one news story from last week. This one was from NBC News:

A new surge of migrants . . . is overwhelming the Border Patrol and shelters in El Paso, Texas, where nearly 1,000 have been released near bus stations over the past week in hope that they will find their own way to their next destinations in the U.S.

Here is the title of another grim news article from last week: “Texas border town requests refrigerators to store migrant bodies after drownings overwhelm mortuaries.”

“Texas border town requests refrigerators to store migrant bodies after drownings overwhelm mortuaries.”

Yet another news outlet reported:

El Paso County Sheriff sounds alarm over Border Patrol overwhelmed due to migrants.

That article goes on to say:

Sheriff Richard Wiles stated Thursday, “This incident raises a law enforcement concern because Border Patrol is so overwhelmed, undocumented immigrants may be released into communities with minimal or no screening.”

Does any of this—any of this—make the situation at the border sound safe or orderly or humane? I don't think so.

The Biden administration has been characterized by recordbreaking waves of illegal immigration across our southern border, and I mean “record-breaking” quite literally.

In fiscal year 2021, U.S. Customs and Border Protection apprehended more than 1.7 million individuals attempting to cross our southern border illegally—the highest number of apprehensions ever recorded. As for fiscal year 2022, well, we exceeded last year's record-breaking number of apprehensions in June. The final count of apprehensions for fiscal year 2022 will be well over 2 million. Those numbers only count migrants who were actually apprehended. CBS News reports that there were “an estimated 660,000 successful unlawful border entries that did not end in an arrest in fiscal year 2021, according to unpublished [Department of Homeland Security] figures”—660,000.

I don't have to tell anyone except maybe congressional Democrats and the White House that these kinds of numbers have resulted in scenes of near chaos at the southern border. Shelters have been overwhelmed. Border facilities have been overwhelmed. The Border Patrol has been overwhelmed. Who can forget the scene of 10,000 migrants camped under the bridge in Del Rio, TX, last September?

Just in case anyone is thinking things at the border have substantially calmed down, here is yet another headline from this month, this one from the Dallas Morning News: “Overcrowded processing center has Border Patrol releasing more migrants on El Paso streets: Migrants are being released from facility filled at 3 times its capacity.”

That is from the Dallas Morning News—“3 times its capacity.”

Over the past few months, the Governors of Texas and Arizona have been sending some illegal immigrants to places like New York City and Washington, DC, and there has been a predictable outcry. But what is so striking about this situation is how upset these places seem to have become when dealing with just a tiny fraction of the situation that border communities and border States have to deal with on a daily basis. Washington, DC, declared a state of emergency. The New York City mayor was outraged.

While I am in no way dismissing the challenges of dealing with thousands of illegal immigrants, let me just put this situation in perspective for a minute. Washington, DC, a city of around 700,000 people, has received somewhere around 9,400 migrants over a span of 5 months. New York City, a city of around 8.4 million people, hasn't even received as many as Washington, DC. Compare that with the situation in Eagle Pass, TX, a town with a population of just 29,000, which sees 10,000 migrants a week—a week.

For a party that likes to pride itself on compassion, the lack of compassion Democrats and the White House display on this issue is really astounding. Even after catching a tiny glimpse of what it is like to deal with an influx of illegal immigration, Democrats have apparently zero compassion for the border communities in States that have to somehow manage the arrival of thousands of illegal immigrants on a daily basis, along with all the logistical and security challenges that involves.

There are real security challenges. Certainly, many of the migrants crossing our southern border illegally are simply looking for a better life—even if they are trying to circumvent legal pathways to enter—but there are also a lot of potentially dangerous individuals coming across our border and passing through border communities: gang members, drug traffickers, human smugglers, and other criminals. In 1 recent week, Border Patrol agents in the Rio Grande Valley Sector along the southern border arrested 21 gang members, 2 sex offenders, and 3 migrants with prior convictions for various crimes.

The White House and Democrats don't just display a lack of compassion for border communities; they also display a real lack of compassion for the individuals attempting to enter our country illegally. There is nothing compassionate about an immigration

policy that encourages individuals to come here illegally, with all of the risks that entails.

Earlier, I mentioned a border town that was seeking increased morgue facilities because it was dealing with the bodies of so many individuals who had drowned while attempting to enter this country. Deaths at the southern border have surged under the Biden administration, undoubtedly because the administration's lax immigration policies and obvious lack of concern about securing the border have encouraged individuals to attempt to come here illegally.

According to Department of Homeland Security numbers that have been reported, 748 migrants have died at our southern border so far this fiscal year. That is a lot of lives lost, Mr. President—a lot of lives. Mr. President, one illegal immigrant speaking to a news outlet this month said of the border:

It's open, not closed. The border is open. . . . Everybody believes that the border is open. It's open because we enter, we come in, free. No problem.

That is the message that President Biden's immigration policies have conveyed, and the longer that he continues with his de facto open-border policies, the more individuals who are going to be encouraged to attempt the dangerous journey across our southern border.

Mr. President, the massive spending package, the so-called Inflation Reduction Act, the Democrats shoved through the Senate last month contained hundreds of billions for Democrats' Green New Deal priorities, like tax credits for wealthy Americans to buy electric cars and more than \$80 billion for environmental justice priorities. There was also, of course, an \$80 billion funding infusion for the IRS, a majority of it allocated for more IRS audits and increased enforcement, including the hiring of additional IRS agents. Nowhere in that bill were there any resources for addressing the crisis that has been raging for more than a year now at our southern border.

During debate on the bill, Republicans gave Democrats five opportunities to vote for amendments aimed at providing resources to secure the border. Democrats rejected all of them. Apparently, Democrats are willing to spend a lot of time and effort and government money on their Green New Deal and finding new ways to collect taxpayer dollars to help fund their Big Government spending plans, but when it comes to protecting Americans and ensuring a humane situation at our southern border, Democrats just can't be bothered.

I heard the Democratic whip down here, just now, talking about that there just needs to be a comprehensive immigration bipartisan approach to this and blaming Republicans for them not being able to do anything to address this issue. And I just have to say that, one, the Democrats control all of government in Washington. They have

the House, the Senate, and the White House, and, to my knowledge, they have not attempted to bring an immigration reform bill to the floor of the U.S. Senate. Furthermore, the President reversed all of the policies from the previous administration that affected the border when he took office.

Now we have got a situation at our southern border that is just nothing short of appalling, and if the President really had any interest in making the process at the border “safe, orderly, and humane,” as he said the other day, he would make securing our southern border a priority, and it is not. Unfortunately, given his record so far, I think it is more likely that we will see the scenes of chaos and human suffering continue.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes prior to the scheduled roll-call vote.

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

INFLATION

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, since the Biden administration really likes to celebrate things, I rise today on the 1-week anniversary of their party last Tuesday for their so-called Inflation Reduction Act.

Last Tuesday, most Americans and, certainly, most West Virginians weren't in a celebratory mood. West Virginians started their day with news that inflation rose to 8.3 percent in August, while President Biden and his party and climate activists began setting up for their Inflation Reduction Act party at the White House.

Meanwhile, that same day, the U.S. stock market had its worst day since June 2020, as the White House and its fellow Democrats celebrated their green spending bill that would only extend inflationary pain, but it does expand U.S. and IRS enforcement on Americans who are struggling to afford basic necessities.

Days after the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office published an analysis that the Inflation Reduction Act would actually not reduce inflation, particularly in the short term, President Biden announces that he will do student debt cancelation that would add another trillion dollars to the deficit.

Today and tomorrow, the Federal Reserve, which is our U.S. monetary watchdog, is meeting to set new interest rates in a bid to tame inflation. The body has had to raise interest rates aggressively by three-quarters of a point. In June, Chairman Powell, who is the Chairman of the Fed, admitted that the rate increase is “unusually large” and would not be “common.” The Fed will likely raise interest rates again by the same amount tomorrow, for the third consecutive time in a row. These are the most aggressive rate increases since the 1980s, when my mortgage was

way into the teens, that Chairman Powell has plainly stated will bring “pain to households and businesses.”

We can't forget that the Democrats alone passed a bill last year that they called the American Rescue Plan, which rescued nothing and, instead, endangered our fragile economy coming out of COVID by hypercharging inflation. Democrats alone drafted and pushed forward their most recent bill, bypassing the normal committee process, and Democrats alone passed it, rejecting every Republican amendment along the way.

In short, these policies continue to destabilize every single corner of our economy. Well, how do we know this? We see some of the statistics that I talk about. Well, I know it because West Virginians have lived it, and I hear from them frequently about their legitimate concerns. A retiree from Clarksburg, WV, wrote to me recently saying that she and her husband are “struggling every month” despite having done their due diligence to save well for their retirement. She says they are trying not to dip into their 401(k)s or their TSP retirement accounts but that it is getting “harder and harder” not to do that.

As inflation drags on, the lifespan of retirement savings will continue shrinking for our seniors in West Virginia, and those seniors account for 41 percent of our population.

Another West Virginian wrote to me about the tough choices her family is making:

The economy has crumbled in the blink of an eye. My husband and I have full-time jobs and two children. I'm tearful because I sit here looking at upcoming bills and I'm having to decide to pay a bill or buy groceries.

A resident from Weston, WV, told me that his insurance premiums recently increased and, when he asked the company why that happened, they told him pointblank it was due to inflation. In the same letter, the constituent wrote:

This crazy spending has to stop.

But it is not just West Virginians who are experiencing this inflationary problem. The National Defense Industrial Association, authored in part by former Deputy Defense Secretary David Norquist, released a white paper recently that indicated inflation has cost the Department of Defense \$50 billion and estimates that it will cost an additional \$110 billion to our Nation's defense from fiscal year 2021 through fiscal year 2023.

Think about this in the face of what we are talking about in terms of trying to help Ukraine overcome this terrible invasion by the Russians.

Residential real estate has skyrocketed 43 percent in the past 2 years. In fact, this year, mortgage rates have risen from 3.2 percent to 6.3 percent, which is the highest they have been since 2008—setting all kinds of records here. So some are going so far as to predict an additional 17.8 percent rise in home prices over the next year.

A recent paper released by Goldman Sachs, aptly titled “The Housing

Downturn: Further to Fall,” warns that higher mortgage rates and reduced affordability will continue well into 2023. For first-time home buyers, that spells a death knell for their dream of owning their own home.

Again, what we are seeing in realtime are direct consequences of inflation fueled by spending. The increase in the price of groceries is unbelievable. It is unbelievable when you go to the grocery store. Over the past year, the price of basic pantry staples has continued to increase. The cost of eggs has gone up 40 percent; butter, 24.6 percent; luncheon meats, 18.2 percent. Fresh milk has increased 17.7 percent. Sugar, flour, bread, pasta, peanut butter, and cereals have increased between 15 and 23 percent. These are the things that families buy weekly to meet their grocery bill and to provide their children's breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

Simply put, elected Democrats in the Biden administration celebrated the so-called Inflation Reduction Act on a day when the Consumer Price Index on inflation increased. For the many constituents whom I talk to on a daily basis, inflation remains the No. 1 concern.

So this irony is not lost on me nor is it lost on the American public. It is not lost on millions of Americans making tough choices because of these policies, and it is painful; it is hard to watch; and in many of my constituents' opinion, it is as if the President and his party are not paying attention.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote occur now.

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

VOTE ON PAN NOMINATION

All postcloture time has expired.

Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Pan nomination?

Ms. ERNST. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH).

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 340 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Bennet	Booker	Cantwell
Blumenthal	Brown	Cardin