

pay their taxes, try to do the right thing by their children, and try to save a little money for retirement. That is whom these new regulations are going to hurt. All these folks want is for their dishwashers to work. They want to spend less time on dishes because they want to spend time with their families. They don't want to have to hand wash the dishes every night. That is what they bought a dishwasher for.

Now, surely, the regulators who are proposing this know that, and that is why they are going to downplay—they already are—the dishwasher regulations. It is why they are going to act confused when Americans wonder if the Federal Government is coming to unhook their gas stoves next.

We have heard officials from the Biden administration say: If you like your gas stove, you can keep your gas stove. Not true. I am sorry; it is just not true. This administration is willing to regulate and try to control every aspect of American life. There are people in this administration who believe that. Why? To avoid empty criticism from the looney left—the looney left, which often ignores science and always insists on more control.

Don't listen to what politicians do or say. Don't. Never listen to what a politician says. You can listen to them, but you have got to compare it to what they do. What you do is what you believe; everything else is just cottage cheese.

President Biden and his administration are saddling Americans with harmful—maybe even hateful—regulations because they care more about what the activists say on TikTok than they do about the quiet suffering of everyday families in America all over this country.

They have a blind spot for the lives and concerns of ordinary Americans, and it is why this administration is more worried about dishwashers and gas stoves than the fact that the average Louisiana family is paying \$740 more a month—not a year—because of inflation. It is why they will kill American jobs, while continuing to buy solar panels and new dishwashers from the polluters in China. It is why they will give rich people tax credits to buy electric cars. How many poor people do you know driving electric cars? It is why they will give rich people tax credits to buy electric cars while people in rural areas in rural America struggle to pay for a full tank of gas and can't even dream of buying a used car because the used cars cost 30 percent more since President Biden took office.

All this is virtue signaling. To some, it may be it amusing, but it is not free. There is no free lunch, and you don't get one now. It costs money—money that Americans don't have—and it causes them pain that they don't deserve, Mr. President.

The new rule on dishwashers isn't yet settled. There is still time for my colleagues at the Department of Energy to scrap this rule and walk away from

this fallacious nonsense, and I hope that they will.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.
The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

SOUTHERN BORDER

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I wanted to come to the Senate floor this afternoon to talk about a scandal of incredible proportion.

Since President Biden became President of the United States, 300,000 unaccompanied children have been encountered at the border and then placed with sponsors inside the interior of the United States—300,000.

Ordinarily, there would be a process by which Health and Human Services would attempt to contact those minor children, in the custody of those sponsors, for a wellness check 30 days after they were placed with them. The New York Times has documented that at least 85,000 of those 300,000 children cannot even be reached—no response to the phone call or any other outreach.

So under the Biden administration's policies, an untold number of minor children have been placed with sponsors in the interior of the United States, and the Biden administration can't tell you where they are; the administration can't tell you what their condition is, whether they are being sent to school, whether they are being recruited into gangs, whether they are being sexually or otherwise physically assaulted, or whether they are being neglected. They simply don't know.

Now, I know it takes a lot to get people's attention these days because there is so much competing for our attention—so many different types of outrage. But the fact that this hasn't been front page news for a long time now or hasn't motivated the Biden administration to actually do anything to change this situation leads me to the conclusion that President Biden simply doesn't care. He doesn't care. He doesn't care what happens to these children. If he did care, he would do something about it, but he doesn't, apparently, care.

These are some of the most vulnerable individuals encountered at the border. They come to the United States, not in the care of their parents, but in the care of transnational criminal organizations, the cartels—the coyotes, as they are called—who treat them like a commodity. They don't treat them like a human being. They treat them like a commodity because the only thing these cartels care about is cold, hard cash.

This is a huge cash cow. And it is not just the children. It is the other 5 million migrants encountered at the border, as well. All of them pay these criminal organizations to transport them here to the United States.

I mentioned previously that when I went to Yuma, AZ, with a bipartisan group of Senators, that Border Patrol sector chief greeted us by saying: Welcome to the Yuma Sector. It is a sleepy little agricultural community.

He said: We encounter people from 176 countries, speaking 200 languages.

So people are literally being transported around the world to show up at our border and claim a right to be admitted, and the Biden administration continues to roll out the welcome mat and not deter illegal immigration by people who cannot qualify, whom we know will not qualify for any legal relief.

The children, particularly, endure a dangerous and long journey to our country, and they are often exploited en route. We heard from one of the witnesses in the Judiciary Committee yesterday about them being particularly vulnerable to sex trafficking, but we know they are subjected to violence and other forms of exploitation as well.

You would hope that once these children arrive at the border, they would be safe. I think that is our obligation, to make sure they are safe.

But over the last few years, we have seen mounting evidence that shows that tens of thousands of these migrant children who show up at our border without a parent or legal guardian are placed with sponsors and are essentially lost by the administration. Again, they don't know where they are. They don't know what is happening to them.

And, of course, we all should be concerned that they are being taken advantage of in a multitude of ways and being damaged in ways that we don't want to even imagine.

In August 2021, Bloomberg reported that Federal law enforcement was investigating unaccompanied migrant children who had been released to labor traffickers. This is kind of like modern-day slavery. The reporting uncovered situations where dozens of children were released to the same sponsor—dozens of children to the same person. You think that would have raised some questions, and maybe they tap the brake a little bit and investigate further—apparently not, because this same individual then exploited them for labor in poultry processing facilities. It is impossible for me to understand why the administration wouldn't see the warning signs.

About a year later, Reuters reported on another deeply concerning discovery. Federal and local officials were struggling to locate a dozen migrant children in Houston. They simply lost them. The Health and Human Services refugee office conducted an emergency review and found that 57 migrant children had been reported missing in Houston since the year prior—lost by the Biden administration.

As bad as those two reports are, the story does not get any better. Recent reporting by the New York Times has

confirmed that these aren't just the exception. These are part of a deeply disturbing trend, and it shows what bad things can happen to innocent children when their own government doesn't even care.

Of course, many of these are migrant children so, technically, I guess, the United States isn't their government. But we owe them a duty while they are in our country to protect them from the predators and the exploiters—the traffickers.

In February, the New York Times published its first story detailing widespread exploitation of migrant children. It includes countless stories of unaccompanied migrants who are working dangerous jobs that violate child labor laws: a 15-year-old girl, for example, who packages cereal at night in a factory; a 14-year-old boy working on a construction job; a 13-year-old day laborer; children working at meat processing plants, commercial bakeries, and suppliers for automakers. These are not after-school jobs. These are grueling and dangerous full-time jobs that are meant not for children but for adults.

Two months later, the Times published another story that detailed the extent to which the Biden administration officials knew about these abuses and chose to ignore them—willful ignorance.

The Health and Human Services Department received warning after warning that some of these migrant children were at risk. These warnings came through government staffers, outside contractors, and on the Department's own hotline established for that purpose. But not only were whistleblowers ignored, many were silenced, pushed out of their jobs. They were retaliated against for trying to protect these vulnerable children. These concerns made their way to the highest echelons of the Biden administration.

Health and Human Services Secretary Javier Becerra was aware of the credible reports of trafficking abuse but continued to push for the expedited placement of migrants with sponsors, with no regard for the dangers that presented.

At one point, he reportedly told his employees:

If Henry Ford had seen this in his plants, he would have never become famous and rich. This is not the way you do an assembly line.

So here is the highest level government official, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, a member of President Biden's Cabinet, who considers placing vulnerable migrant children in a dangerous situation, as he regards it as an assembly line.

Then-Labor Secretary Marty Walsh was aware of the situation as well. Last year, the Department's investigators identified major instances of child labor violations that took place in auto parts factories and meatpacking plants. Former Secretary Walsh even confirmed that the Department in-

cluded details about these situations in its weekly reports to the White House. So at least Secretary Walsh was appearing to do his job by reporting this to the top-level officials at the White House.

Until last month, Susan Rice served as the Director of the White House Domestic Policy Council, where she oversaw virtually every aspect of domestic policy matters, including the placement of migrant children. When the border crisis reached a fever pitch during the summer of 2021, Ms. Rice's team received a memo from Health and Human Services managers about possible labor trafficking. Two people confirmed that Ms. Rice was told about the contents of the memo, but the White House now disputes that claim.

High-ranking Biden officials saw clear warnings that children were in danger and chose willful blindness. They did nothing to rescue these children from a dangerous situation or to prevent more young migrants from meeting the same fate.

In the wake of these damning reports, we have yet to see a thorough investigation or explanation of how this happened. How could the administration fail these children so badly over and over and over again? How could they not act on credible reports that children were being exploited?

This is a disgusting failure of leadership, and it is dangerous. We need to get answers and accountability, and we need to fix it, something the Biden administration apparently does not care enough to do. If they did care, they would fix it. But they obviously don't care.

Following the second New York Times report, I wrote a letter to Chairman DURBIN of the Judiciary Committee that was cosigned by every Republican. We urged him to invite these three Biden administration leaders who failed to act in the face of these warnings to testify in front of the Judiciary Committee. That included Secretary Becerra, former Labor Secretary Walsh, and former White House adviser Susan Rice.

The Judiciary Committee, on which I am privileged to serve, is charged with oversight of the Unaccompanied Children Program, and we have a duty to ensure that these children are treated humanely. We need to know who made the decision to loosen vetting requirements for sponsors and why those decisions were made. We need to hear from the current and former administration officials who knew about the widespread abuse of migrant children and yet chose not to act. We need a thorough explanation of how the Department is changing its policies, assuming it is, to prevent more children from being placed with dangerous sponsors. And we need to know how those responsible for these grotesque abuses will be held accountable.

But in the Judiciary Committee hearing yesterday, we didn't get any of that information. None of the officials

that I mentioned that we requested actually testified. They didn't show up. So not only have they neglected the cries of these vulnerable children to do something—anything—they didn't even care enough to show up at the Judiciary Committee yesterday to explain why they failed to act in the face of these cries for help. We didn't hear from a single current or former Biden administration official. There was not one witness on the five-person panel who could shed light on the decisions that caused so many of these migrant children to be exploited.

If our Democratic colleagues are as disturbed as I am about what I described, I hope they will join Republicans in a bipartisan push to get Secretary Becerra, Secretary Walsh, former White House domestic policy adviser Susan Rice to testify under oath before the Judiciary Committee and before the rest of the country.

These senior administration officials saw the warning signs, and they chose to ignore them. They continued to press for the rapid placement of these children with sponsors, and they didn't apparently care enough to make sure that they could track where these children were and what was happening to them. Now they need to explain their decisions on behalf of the Biden administration to the Senate.

I can't imagine the Biden administration doing a worse job responding to this border crisis than it has.

If you set out to design a system that would fail, it would look something like the current policies of the Biden administration. By refusing to secure the border, the administration has allowed criminal organizations to smuggle fentanyl and other deadly drugs into the country. It has enabled more than 1.5 million "got-aways" to evade Border Patrol and slip into the United States.

And it has released hundreds of thousands of migrants before we had sufficient information about who they were, where they were going, and when they needed to report to court. Migrants in some cities reportedly wait as long as 10 years to present an asylum claim in front of an immigration judge. And we know that only maybe 15, max 20 percent of them will be able to legitimately show a right to asylum.

So the 80 to 85 percent have had to wait in line for 10 years—or the 15 percent or so with valid claims have had to wait in line for 10 years because of the 80 to 85 percent who can't qualify; but they have gummed up the system so bad by the sheer volume of cases, even people with legitimate claims can't get heard. And now we are seeing how the administration looked the other way and allowed migrant children to be exploited on American soil.

So my question is, how long will we have to go before our colleagues join us in demanding a change? Because failure to do something is, in fact, a choice. Are we going to choose to let

this exploitation of these migrant children continue when the U.S. government who placed them with these sponsors doesn't even know where they are, whether they are getting a good education, whether their healthcare needs are being attended to, or whether they are being recruited in gangs, sex-trafficked, exploited, neglected?

I started out by saying I don't believe the Biden administration cares; but I do believe Members of this body care. And it is within our power to change it. That is a choice, in and of itself.

Now, some of my colleagues like the chairman of the Judiciary Committee said, yeah, we need to get together and talk about comprehensive immigration reform, but we have had those conversations the entire time I have been in the U.S. Senate. We cannot leverage these innocent children for other unrelated measures.

The same problem with the fentanyl and drugs coming across the border. People say, well, we need to do something. Well, we can't do it until we do comprehensive immigration reform. The DACA population, the Deferred Action on Childhood Arrival, these young people who came here as children who now are in a box canyon not of their making because President Obama overreached and created a program without working with Congress.

Each of those problems, I think, deserves to be addressed on its own merits. But you can't tell me that you are serious about solving the problem if you say, well, we can't do this, we can't fix those problems until we deal with all of the immigration issues as a whole, because I don't see that happening anytime soon. Meanwhile, these children will be languishing, being exploited, and worse.

The young people who are uncertain about their future because they received this Deferred Action on Childhood Arrival, but now it has been held illegal, unconstitutional by a Federal judge in the Southern District of Texas—and the families that are grieving because their loved ones took a pill they thought was relatively innocuous, but it was contaminated with fentanyl, and their son or daughter lost their life—do you want to tell these people to keep waiting? Just wait until we pass a massive immigration reform bill containing other matters. You wait. They shouldn't have to wait. And we shouldn't let the neglect and the willful blindness of the Biden administration prevent us from doing our duty, Republican and Democratic Senators alike. It is within our power to do it. But doing nothing is a choice too. And I hope that is not a choice we will make.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PETERS). The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I would ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business.

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

TRIBUTE TO KENT SALAZAR

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, in the Jemez Mountains of New Mexico, there is a stunning 13-mile-wide crater that was created by a collapsed supervolcano. What is now known as the Valles Caldera National Preserve is home to a deep grassy valley, volcanic cinder cones, crystal-clear trout streams, and some of the best elk habitat in North America. The Valles Caldera National Preserve is one of the most beautiful places on the planet, but for many, many decades most New Mexicans could only peer into its edge from the side of a road. The entire Caldera was privately owned. That has since changed.

In 2000, we used the Land and Water Conservation Fund to purchase the Valles Caldera, but it took nearly a decade and a half after that to see truly meaningful public access.

One New Mexican deserves an enormous amount of credit for unlocking the Valles Caldera and its scenic hiking trails, elk hunting, and its trout fishing. That New Mexican is Kent Salazar.

As a member of the New Mexico Game Commission, Kent sought to undo a system that allowed wealthy and out-of-state hunters to purchase greater access to elk hunting than everyday New Mexicans or Americans. In the face of big money opposition, Kent pushed to establish a fair and equal lottery system that honored the principle of "one person, one chance," and he succeeded.

I have personally harvested two elk in the Caldera thanks in part to the changes that Kent made. Then, after President Obama appointed Kent to lead the Valles Caldera Board of Trustees, he quickly became a champion for transitioning the Valles Caldera to a National Park Service managed preserve.

This change has expanded public access and made it possible for many more New Mexicans—and for visitors from around the world—to experience this incredible landscape. It also protected the public's fair access to both hunting and fishing, and none of this would have been possible without the determination, leadership, and vision of my friend, Kent Salazar.

A lifelong New Mexican, Kent has dedicated himself to the idea that the outdoors are for everyone, not just for those with wealth or family connections. And from an early age, Kent found that time spent outdoors brought him a sense of renewal. And ever since, he has worked to make sure that all New Mexicans and all Americans can build a connection with nature.

For 20 years as a public administrator, Kent worked to make our land and air and water safer and healthier at the city of Albuquerque's Environmental Health Department.

An avid hunter, angler, and outdoorsman, Kent also breathed new life into the New Mexico Wildlife Federation.

The legendary conservationist Aldo Leopold founded the organization that became the New Mexico Wildlife Federation more than a century ago. But when Kent took the reins, the organization had no staff and no real driving mission. Even so, Kent saw the incredible potential if he could reinvigorate the organization; and, that, he did.

Under Kent's leadership, the New Mexico Wildlife Federation grew its membership dramatically and hired professional staff. Today, the New Mexico Wildlife Federation is one of the most influential grassroots organizations in our State. The organization has become much more active and much more effective in protecting iconic New Mexico landscapes, including the Valle Vidal, the Sabinoso Wilderness, and the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument.

The impact of Kent's leadership has also grown nationally. Three years ago, Kent was elected unanimously to serve as the chairman of the National Wildlife Federation's Board of Directors. With the National Wildlife Federation, Kent helped to lead the charge to secure permanent and dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and pass historic investments in landscape restoration as part of the Inflation Reduction Act.

And he is still helping us today as we work to pass the bipartisan Recovering America's Wildlife Act.

Kent also helped to found the Green Leadership Trust and Hispanics Enjoying Camping, Hunting, and the Outdoors, or HECHO. Through all of this, I have especially appreciated Kent's kindness and passion, his pragmatism and knowledge, his devoted focus on making the conservation movement more inclusive and mentoring the next generation of conservation leaders, the way he keeps an open mind, listens to others, and always seems to drive the whole room in a more productive direction.

Kent's name might not make it to the newspaper that often, but it should. He is one of the most effective conservation leaders of our time. Kent once said:

[I]f we get the right people involved, we can accomplish a lot, and help our communities and our future, our children.

He is absolutely right. We are all better off because Kent is involved, serving our communities, our future, and our children.

I am extraordinarily grateful to have worked with and learned from Kent for all these years, and I am honored to call him a friend.

Kent, we cannot thank you enough for everything that you have done to inspire New Mexicans and to care for our Land of Enchantment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

INDIA

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I rise to extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Narendra Modi, the esteemed Prime Minister of the Republic