

of safety and security standards on social media platforms. Senator BLUMENTHAL and I worked together on this. We heard testimony from parents, children, and industry experts. We exposed how platforms prioritize growth over maintaining even the most basic checks on predatory and dangerous content.

This Congress, we have the opportunity to put guardrails on these companies through the passage of the Kids Online Safety Act. It is a strong, bipartisan bill that will make a real difference for children and their families.

I would like to remind my colleagues that it took us far too long to engage on this issue. Indeed, when the Acting President pro tempore and I were in the House, we were leading the way in getting our colleagues to address these issues.

I think we are at the point that we can say now that this has to be done. We can't afford to wait and let AI systems be put in place without having protections for the American people. So, in recent months, we have held several hearings on this issue. Most recently, we examined the impact on intellectual property rights. In June, we fielded several firsthand accounts of how this technology could be weaponized against basic human rights. Senator OSSOFF and I led that hearing.

We have yet to truly dig into the dangers of allowing China to outpace us through the use of AI, and I think it is time that we catch up.

When it comes to tech, we have done our best work when we have listened to the people and have worked with people who are closest to the issue. The Kids Online Safety Act came to be because we listened when parents spoke out about how impossible it was to protect their children in the virtual space.

Years ago, when the House Energy and Commerce Committee was crafting what would become the 21st Century Cures Act, I worked with Tennessee's healthcare innovators to include provisions that made the law more responsive to the rapid growth of the healthcare technology industry. We had similar conversations in the runup to the passage of the Music Modernization Act.

So I would encourage my colleagues to start engaging with us on this issue before it gets away from us. Listen to what creators and engineers have to say about AI's effects on their industries.

There is no turning back the clock on AI just as we learned that there was no turning back the clock on social media and that there was no turning back the clock on the World Wide Web. AI is here to stay—it is going to drive innovation—but that doesn't mean we have to accept innovation at any cost.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, first, I just want to indicate also that there

is a lot to think about here when we are looking at artificial intelligence. There are a lot of very serious questions we have to figure out.

I am really pleased that we are seeing this bipartisan initiative in the Senate, with Senator SCHUMER, our majority leader, coming forward, but also with other colleagues who are really helping us go through briefings and are really looking at all of the questions, because it is really serious in terms of the questions. It is something we have to deal with as this is not going away. Certainly, there is a lot we have to figure out in all of this.

MICHIGAN

Mr. President, I come to the floor today first of all to say that, as everybody in this Chamber knows, I am extremely proud to be from Michigan. We are the State of innovation. We built the automobile, the automobile assembly line, and the American middle class as a result.

In Michigan, we make things and we grow things. Just take a look at recent headlines: Ford chose Marshall, MI, as the site of a new battery plant. It is expected to create 2,500 jobs when it opens in 2026.

In June, I was at the groundbreaking for a new UL Solutions battery lab in Auburn Hills. Their work is going to improve the batteries that go into electric vehicles like my Bolt, which I love.

Hemlock Semiconductor, a proud Michigan company that manufactures products used in the semiconductor and solar industries, is expanding its plant by creating an industrial park that will create 170 new jobs, and I expect a lot more jobs will be coming after that.

We are also attracting businesses from Europe and around the world. This spring, Norwegian company Nel Hydrogen announced that it is going to build a manufacturing plant in Michigan that is going to create more than 500 jobs.

Exciting things are happening—and not just in Michigan. All around the country, all across the country, manufacturing facilities are opening, small businesses are launching, and folks are headed to work at good-paying jobs. This past month, 209,000 jobs were created—209,000 jobs were created last month—which means there have been 13.2 million jobs created since President Biden took office. This is in less than 3 years. It is in less than 2½ years—in about 2½ years, I guess.

We are announcing an unemployment rate that is 3.6 percent. It has been under 4 percent for the last 17 months in a row—17 months in a row. There have been 13.7 million jobs created in about 2½ years, and this is coming out of a pandemic and all that surrounded it with supply chain breakdowns and all of the challenges. Yet, because of what we are doing, we are seeing the strength in the underlying economy. That is the longest stretch in over 50 years, when we look at the unemploy-

ment rate—the longest stretch in over 50 years—50 years.

The highest number of Americans age 25 to 54 are now in the workforce—the highest number—since May of 2002.

The percentage of women who are working set a new record for the third month in a row.

Wages are up. Inflation is going down. It is down at the lowest level in 2 years. We have got more to do, but it is going in the right direction.

This is Bidenomics in action. This is not by accident that all of this is happening. We are growing our economy from the middle out and bottom up, not the top down. It is the opposite of trickle-down economics. It is the opposite, not giving everything to those at the top—the very wealthy—who can then take their dollars and go anywhere in the world and be able to invest in a race to the bottom on jobs, which is what we have seen for decades, which, by the way, got us the supply chain problems, when over half of the chips going into our automobiles and other electronics were made from one company in Taiwan.

We are now turning that around. We are making smart investments in America, including in our infrastructure—rebuilding America—in manufacturing, in clean energy, and actually making sure we are saying: If you want those tax credits that we want to support you to create those jobs, you have to make it in America. You have to make it in America, not just take the dollars from America and then put them somewhere else. You have to actually make it in America. That is what we are doing.

We are empowering American workers through higher wages and better training and more support for unions.

We are lowering costs for the things that Americans need, starting with prescription drugs, by the way, capping the cost of insulin per month at \$35 for our seniors and people on Medicare. We are laser-focused to do more, by the way, to make that cap for everybody who is on insulin, and on all the other changes to bring down healthcare costs and prescription drug costs. We are laser-focused on taking on the drug companies to be able to do that.

We are making sure small businesses have the support they need. I am excited that we have seen the largest number of Black small businesses being created in the last couple of years. We are seeing so many more opportunities for entrepreneurs, for small businesses across the country, which are so much a part of the backbone of our economy. We are seeing that as well.

We are basically seeing what we call Bidenomics because it is growing the middle class. It is aiming at the American middle class. It is saying we want to support you, but the jobs have to be here in America. We want to rebuild and invest in America for the future and in all of our technologies, from high-speed internet to our roads and

bridges and airports and rails and all the other things that will allow us to be leading the pack in a global economy and competing. We want to bring those jobs home.

Then we are laser-focused on lowering costs for folks. If that means taking on the oil companies or taking on the drug companies, so be it. But we are laser-focused on bringing down costs.

That is what Bidenomics is all about. Bidenomics, the opposite of trickle down—the opposite of trickle down.

Meanwhile, what are our Republican colleagues doing? Unfortunately, the same thing they have been doing for decades. By the way, they have never met a problem that a tax cut for the wealthy wouldn't solve. I remember so many times, when the economy was doing well 20 years ago: Oh, we should do a tax cut for the wealthy.

And then, when the economy was down, and when we had Wall Street crash: Oh, we should do a tax cut for the wealthy.

It doesn't matter what the problem is, the solution is a tax cut for the ultrawealthy of the country, with the idea that it will trickle, trickle down. Unfortunately, what has happened with that is it never trickled down, at least not for the people in Michigan. Of course, they are waiting for it to trickle down.

But it did blow up the deficit. It did blow up the deficit. In fact, 25 percent of all of the debt accumulated by the country ever was in 4 years of President Trump. Twenty-five percent of all of the deficit and debt created ever in the country was under 4 years of President Trump.

And the 2017 Trump tax giveaway exploded the deficit. That is why that was happening. It exploded the deficit by nearly \$2 trillion and gave the ultrawealthy massive tax breaks.

So we have come out of this manufactured crisis around the debt ceiling, taking the country to the edge of default, and all the talk about how much debt we have, and then, as soon as that gets resolved and President Biden brings everybody to the table and there is a bipartisan agreement not to have our country crash and default because of, unfortunately, the manufactured antics on the other side, what happens next? Our Republican colleagues have a new tax package. After talking about the debt and the deficit, they have turned around again and want another tax cut for the wealthiest and the largest corporations. In fact, Big Oil will get another \$10.5 billion tax break under their latest tax cuts, on top of the embedded tax breaks that have been there for 100 years with Big Oil.

These tax breaks are supposed to help folks get started in the industry—and I think they are pretty much established in our country, after 100 years of this. But, no, a \$10.5 billion tax break, in addition now, is what is being proposed in the House.

Their proposal would roll back clean energy tax credits that are creating

jobs. The things I listed at the very beginning as I was talking all relate to the focus on investing in clean energy and saying it has to be a production tax credit. So you don't get it unless you are making this in America, and this is key. This has not been happening for decades, and it is now happening.

They want to roll that all back—roll back all the things we are trying to do to combat the climate crisis, which is hitting us over the head every single day, destroying homes and creating havoc and costing lives. All that is happening because of excess carbon pollution that is in the atmosphere, and that has been here for as long as we have been using fossil fuels.

I wish the oil companies would take some of the hundreds of billions that they have been given on tax breaks and put it back into technology to stop pollution. That would be very helpful, if that were where they had put that. But instead what they have done is put it into funding efforts to say the climate crisis isn't real, that it is all a hoax, that everybody is making it up. And we see where we are today because it is not made up. It never was made up.

When they got the first tax breaks 100 years ago, if they had put part of that into technology to make sure that what they were doing was not polluting the atmosphere, we wouldn't even be here today talking about the climate crisis. And, certainly, Mr. President, with what is happening in your home State of Vermont, you see how it destroyed a town. It is extraordinary what is happening with the weather and all the damage.

Our Republican colleagues want to roll back all the efforts right now to try to clean up things and for a cleaner environment. They want another big tax break for Big Oil. They are going to endanger about 150,000 good-paying jobs, and, on top of that, it would balloon the deficit again by another \$300 billion just over the next 3 years.

If Republicans extend all of the Trump tax giveaways, we would add another \$2.5 trillion—"t"—to the deficit if they got what they have been proposing.

Again, we have tried trickle-down economics, with tax breaks for those at the top, slashing investments for America, and shipping good jobs overseas. That has been the strategy or the result of the strategy—not that they were saying: Oh, we are going to ship jobs overseas. No, they just let it happen by giving tax breaks to folks who did that with no accountability. That is trickle-down economics.

Now, we have what we are proudly calling Bidenomics: investments in America, empowering workers, lowering costs, and helping small businesses. And it is actually working.

Let me go back to the slide. It is actually working. When we look at just last month, there were 209,000 jobs. And every month there is a jobs report—more jobs, more jobs, more jobs. There

were 13.2 million jobs created in the last 2½ years. That is real. There are economists talking about that—good-paying jobs for people, jobs you can raise a family on; 3.6 percent unemployment rate and under 4 percent for the last 17 months, the lowest in 50 years.

It is not about just debating rhetoric back and forth. What we have is something that has never worked, which is trickle-down economics, but is used over and over and over again.

I shouldn't say it never worked. It never worked for the majority of people. It never grew the middle class. It worked for a few people. It worked for a few people really, really well, but it has not worked for the majority of Americans.

And now we are turning and saying: Let's focus on something that does—investing in America, bringing jobs home, tackling the big special interests that are causing all of our costs to go up, like the drug companies and oil companies, and bringing down the costs. And, by the way, the engine of our economy, the small businesses, let's make sure we are laser-focused on helping our small businesses.

We have tried Republicans' trickle-down economics. Surprise—it didn't work. It never worked. The wealthy keep buying bigger yachts, while everybody else is left treading water.

Bidenomics is different. It is investing in us—all of us. It is investing in our shared future. It is growing the middle class. And it is working.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

NOMINATION OF TANYA J. BRADSHER

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, Congress and our Nation have no more solemn duty than the one we owe to our veterans. They have given their blood, their sweat, and their tears for our great country. They have fought on battlefields only to come home and face new battles, like difficulty accessing healthcare and challenges in transitioning to civilian life. A lot of them face homelessness, PTSD, and, of course, we hear it all the time, in our various congressional offices, about bureaucratic redtape at the Veterans' Administration.

I have long engaged in Veterans' Administration oversight. The VA has fought my efforts tooth and nail. I won't tire. Our veterans deserve nothing less than making sure the VA delivers in an efficient way, and particularly when we find things to be wrong there.

It is because of my oversight that I placed a hold on the nomination of Tanya Bradsher to be Deputy Secretary at the VA. I urge my colleagues to oppose the nomination as well. So I am here to tell you why.

Records in my possession, as well as statements from VA whistleblowers, show that Ms. Bradsher has failed to secure our veterans' private and sensitive protected health information,