

dangerous is defending open borders and a broken asylum and parole system, even at the risk of urgent assistance to our partners in Ukraine, Israel, and Asia.

The Biden administration's open borders will rank among its biggest national security failures, plain and simple. But if Senate Democrats refuse to take border security policy changes seriously, they will also be wrapping American weakness up as a Christmas gift to Russia, China, and Iran.

Borders are an essential element of national security. They are not extraneous. We must secure and defend sovereign borders beginning right here at home. If we fail to uphold this basic, fundamental responsibility, America and our friends around the world will pay dearly.

BIDENOMICS

Mr. President, now on another matter, President Biden is on the road today, and he is facing an uphill battle to convince the American people that Bidenomics is somehow working. For months, the President has been touring the country with a rosy assessment of the economy on his watch. He has been telling working Americans what the administration's obsession with radical climate policy is doing for them. But by overwhelming margins, the American people haven't been buying what the President is selling. The polls continue to show that for millions of families, Bidenomics is just a code for higher prices, shrinking paychecks, and lower quality of life.

The entire Nation watched in realtime as the Biden administration's war on domestic energy drove the price of gas and home heating through the roof. Taxpayers watched Washington Democrats turn their hard-earned dollars into subsidies for blue-State liberals' favorite electric cars and home appliances.

Here is how one analysis put it:

The typical American household must spend an additional \$11,434 annually just to maintain the same standard of living they enjoyed in January of 2021.

An extra \$11,000 a year just to stay afloat. But the Biden administration's latest tactic appears to be publicly congratulating itself that prices on some everyday staples were actually rising slower than the record paces that were set during their time in office.

The President himself has even wagged his finger at American growers, manufacturers, and retailers to "stop the price gouging" now that "inflation has come down."

Well, the Bidenomics strategy apparently depends on working Americans ignoring the reality they live in every day. The White House seems to be counting on middle-class families to forget about the 40-year-high inflation they spending binge helped create. They want the country to set aside the average food prices that have risen 20 percent since President Biden took office.

Well, it doesn't look like the American people have any intention of suspending their disbelief about Bidenomics. And who on Earth would blame them?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore (Ms. DUCKWORTH). The Senator from New York.

ISRAEL

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I am here once again to highlight the stories of the people who have been and continue to be held hostage by Hamas. I am so happy to hear that several of our hostages, whose families I have worked with, have been finally returned. They include: 4-year-old Abigail Mor Edan, whose parents were both murdered in front of her eyes and who now faces the horrible process of healing from the many traumas she underwent; Danielle Aloni and her 5-year-old daughter Emilia. They had been visiting Danielle's sister Sharon, her brother-in-law David, and their 3-year-old twins Emma and Julie on the day of the attack, when all of them were taken captive. Sharon, Emma, and Julie have also just been released, but David still remains in captivity.

I am so grateful that members of another family I have worked with have also been released. They include 67-year-old mother Shoshan, sister Adi, Adi's two young children Naveh and Yahel, Aunt Sharon, and Sharon's 12-year-old daughter Noam.

It has been heartening to see these families reunited with their loved ones, to see the joy and the indescribable relief, and I am grateful to the Biden administration for making these reunions possible. But, of course, many, many more people still remain in captivity, including Emma and Julie's father, David, and Naveh and Yahel's father, Tal.

These families have already endured the worst traumas imaginable, and yet now they have still been ripped apart, with no idea when they will see their fathers and brothers and sons again. Tal is a 38-year-old who reads a lot and loves to explore new topics as well as exercise and play sports. He and his family like to travel in the desert areas in southern Israel and spend time near the Sea of Galilee.

David is a talented 33-year-old actor who lived with his family in Nir Oz. He and his family woke up on the morning of October 7 to the sound of bombs and sought refuge in their home's bomb shelter. But when Hamas set fire to their house, the shelter filled with smoke and forced them out to meet the terrorists.

His American family last saw him in a video shared by Hamas where he can be seen in the back of a truck with Sharon and one of the twins. A survivor who was able to escape says she spoke briefly with him and that he said to her:

I know that I left the safe room with two babies, and now I have only one.

I can only imagine what it must be like for him now to have both of his babies ripped away.

These two families, these fathers, don't deserve to be separated from their families. They don't deserve to be kept in horrific conditions, potentially with little food.

As joyful as it has been to see some of the hostages reunited with their families, we must not stop pushing for the release of all the remaining hostages. I will continue to work with their families and with the Biden administration to advocate for these individuals, and I will not rest until we get every hostage, including the nine Americans, home.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I want to speak to the issue of our southern border because I think it is a really important and relevant issue with respect to the national security package that we are considering or that we will be, I think, at some point, considering here in the Senate that deals with many of the national security crises we face around the world.

And as I think about this issue, I am always reminded that as a one-generation-removed-from-immigrant individual in this country—my grandfather came here back in 1906—I am reminded that we are a nation of immigrants.

We have had, throughout our history, a welcoming culture in this country. We are a country that is made up of people from all over the world, and I am representative of that, as I said, one generation removed.

It is also important to remember that we are a nation of laws, first and foremost. Ronald Reagan once said:

A nation without borders is not a nation.

I have heard it paraphrased that a nation that can't control its borders can't control its destiny. And I believe that to be true.

I think what we have right now at our southern border is a situation that has just run amok. It really has. You cannot defend what is happening at our southern border if you believe we are a nation of laws or, for that matter, if you believe we are a nation of immigrants because you have to have a legal way to get into this country. All countries do that, and the United States, as I said, is a very welcoming nation. If you look at the number of people who come here every year as refugees, the number of people coming to this country, you add up all the other countries around the world and the number of people they allow into their countries, the United States exceeds that, and that, to me, is a remarkable testament to the welcoming nature of this country.

But it is welcoming in the sense that it is done within the context of the rule of law, and that, first and foremost, has to be front and center as we think about this issue.

What we have right now at our southern border is essentially a huge welcome sign, a huge green light to come

across our southern border and to do it illegally. That is in direct contradiction and violation of everything that our Nation is about as a nation of laws.

And so as I talk about this issue, and we talk about it in the context of national security, it has become a national security issue because, once again, there has been another record set when it comes to the border and not the good kind, I should say, of record. This administration now has, during the month of October, seen 240,988 individuals be apprehended attempting to illegally cross our southern border. That is the worst October on record, and that is on top of the three previous months which were historic records; the month of September, 270,000 people apprehended at our southern border trying to come into the country illegally.

So the highest October number ever recorded, and those are just the individuals—I would remind people—who were apprehended. The month of October saw an average of 1,000 “got-aways” per day, individuals whom the Border Patrol saw but were unable to apprehend. That is another 30,000 people, unidentified individuals, entering our country in just 1 month, and there is no telling how many unknown “got-aways” there were during that same period. It suggests a situation at our southern border that is completely and totally out of control.

The closing of the fiscal year in September marked the third successive, recordbreaking year of illegal immigration at our southern border under the Biden administration. As the October numbers point out, the end of this crisis is nowhere in sight.

If you think about it, the problems here are really too many to count. The men and women of the Border Patrol are under incredible strain and have been for pretty much the entirety of the Biden administration. Border cities are struggling to deal with the ceaseless influx of migrants, and major cities in other areas of the country are now discovering what border cities have been going through.

Just as a point of fact, big cities, the city of New York, the mayor of New York announced that he will be freezing the hiring of police officers in New York, closing libraries, and cutting education funding—this is in New York City—to deal with the migrant crisis, absent an infusion of Federal dollars coming in from Washington, DC.

So this is creating not problems just on our southern border but for communities all across this country, including the largest communities in the United States of America. The situation we currently have in front of us is encouraging migrants to undertake the dangerous journey to our southern border, sometimes with tragic results.

So I say that our national security is in jeopardy because a border security problem is a national security problem. This isn't a matter of speculation. We know, for a fact, that dangerous indi-

viduals are attempting to make their way across our southern border every month.

During fiscal year 2023, 169 individuals on the Terrorist Watchlist were apprehended attempting to illegally cross our southern border. This is 2023, fiscal year 2023, 169 people on the Terrorist Watchlist trying to come across our southern border—18 in the month of September, another 13 in the month of October.

Those are the people who are apprehended at the southern border. That doesn't count the “got-aways.” My assumption is, if they are on the Terrorist Watchlist, they are going to be pretty good at evading the authorities, meaning that there are people trying to come into this country on a daily basis who are on the Terrorist Watchlist.

On top of that, you have thousands of what they call special interest aliens—and those are individuals who may pose a threat to the United States who have been apprehended at our southern border over the past 2 years—thousands of special interest aliens. Again, the numbers we have refer only to those who have been apprehended.

As I said, last month alone, 30,000 identified individuals made their way illegally into our country—I should say unidentified individuals; in other words, the “got-aways,” the unknowns. Many of them may simply have been seeking a better life. That is entirely possible, but it is not only possible, but I would say likely, that some of them were dangerous individuals who should not be entering our country.

This work period, we expect to take up supplemental spending legislation to address national security priorities, notably, support for our allies like Israel and Ukraine. And one national security priority this legislation must address is border security.

As the October 7 terrorist attack on Israel reminds us, national security requires constant vigilance, and our Nation is simply not secure as long as we are dealing with a massive flow of illegal immigration at our southern border. We must get this crisis under control.

Senators GRAHAM, LANKFORD, and COTTON have been working to craft a set of border security measures for inclusion in the national security supplemental focused on the two areas in obvious need of reform: parole and asylum.

Under our current asylum system, a large percentage of individuals claiming asylum are released into the interior of the country after initial screening with court dates up to a decade later. The Associated Press reported that in March, 77 percent of individuals claiming asylum passed the initial screening.

In practice, this means that thousands of individuals who have entered our country illegally end up taking residence in our country, possibly, for a number of years, given our immigration court backlog. That is a problem.

Our parole system is in trouble as well. In fiscal year 2022, the Biden administration granted parole to 417,326 individuals. And that is because the Biden Department of Homeland Security has instituted an overly permissive application of parole, which means that, again, tens of thousands who have not been granted legal status and who may not have a case for remaining in the United States have been taking up residence in our country with instructions to report back a year or more into the future for further review of their status.

Now, given the backlog and overwhelmed nature of our parole system, this ends up being de facto permanent residence. Needless to say, this invites abuse, and individuals are availing themselves of these flawed policies to gain entry to our Nation. Any supplemental legislation must not only deal with border security generally but with our asylum and parole system specifically, if we want to get the crisis at our southern border under control.

Our porous southern border is a massive national security vulnerability. Republicans know it, and while they may not always admit it, I think my Democrat colleagues know it as well.

It is time for them to act on that knowledge and join Republicans to pass real border security measures as part of the national security supplemental.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, before I begin my prepared remarks, I just want to acknowledge Leader SCHUMER for his extraordinary, personal, compelling, and essential remarks on the rise of anti-Semitism across the country and across the planet. It was needed; it was accurate; and it touched me. So thank you, Mr. Leader.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Madam President, we are about to see the beginning of COP28. That is the annual international meeting to take climate action. This one is a little different because America finally took historic action on climate, and it is working.

And so the message that America will be bringing to this COP—COP28, which begins in Dubai tomorrow—is that we finally did it. We finally took the biggest climate action in human history. Is it enough? No.

Is it more than we have ever done before? Absolutely, it is more than we have ever done before.

And the COP is a unique opportunity for governments across the world to work together and coordinate their response to what is the greatest challenge of our time: the climate crisis. Climate change is getting worse by the year, and it is affecting more and more people in every corner of the planet, including all of us in the United States. Recognizing that, Congress took the biggest climate action in American history a year ago with the Inflation Reduction Act, in addition to setting