

But I really want to thank my Republican colleagues who have done a great job in highlighting all of the ways they want to cut health programs and give the ultrarich yet another pay-day. I am impressed at how effectively Republicans are making the argument on Democrats' behalf because, while Democrats want to help average Americans, a group of House Republicans is working right now with former Trump Budget Director Russell Vought to carry out a budget outline with drastic cuts that would harm tens of millions of people. Vought is a hard-right guy. He hates government even when it helps people.

According to the New York Times, Republicans in the House are considering proposals that would cut hundreds of billions from everything from the FBI to things like Pell grant eligibility and even Medicaid.

I recently saw—catch this, Madam President. I recently saw one House Republican frame spending cuts as a matter of courage. That is what one House Republican said. Well, there is nothing courageous about taking SNAP benefits away from hungry kids. There is nothing courageous about cutting national security or constricting Pell grant eligibility. There is nothing courageous about cutting housing and funding for police and firefighters while doing nothing—nothing—to get wealthy Americans to pay their fair share. How dare Republicans say it is courageous to make those cuts.

Finally, the ball is now in Speaker MCCARTHY's court. Today is March 9, and there is still one big question all of us are asking: Speaker MCCARTHY, where is your plan?

The debt ceiling must be raised soon. House Republicans say they won't do it without painful cuts to our country, which Democrats fiercely reject, but to this day, Americans have no idea where Republicans truly stand on Federal spending cuts, whether it is dealing with the debt ceiling or proposing a budget itself. All we have are various proposals like Mr. Vought's, which, if passed, would wreck our country and do huge damage to working families.

Speaker MCCARTHY, again, where is your plan? Where is your plan in regard to the debt ceiling? Where is your plan in regard to the budget?

The President has done his job by showing where Democrats stand. Speaker MCCARTHY needs to come clean with the American people and spell out precisely what cuts he plans and explain how these cuts will put the pain on average families.

FOX NEWS

Mr. SCHUMER. Now, Madam President, in terms of FOX News, most Members of this Chamber were present the day the insurrectionists attacked the Capitol on January 6. We saw it with our own eyes. I was within 20, 30 feet of these hooligans. One of them allegedly screamed out "Let's get him,"

pointing at me. Thousands of Trump supporters broke through police barricades, assaulted officers, and smashed through windows to enter the building. Our offices were ransacked. Staffers hid behind closed doors and beneath conference tables, trembling in fear for their safety.

My point is this: Those of us who were here on January 6 know the attack was a violent insurrection, including Speaker MCCARTHY. The Speaker has now had multiple chances to denounce FOX News for lying to the American people about January 6, but instead of speaking out against FOX's lies, the Speaker is sticking his head in the sand, saying he hasn't watched Tucker Carlson's broadcast.

MCCARTHY gives Carlson the tapes. He knows how inflammatory and dishonest Tucker Carlson is. He knows how dangerous this is. And he doesn't even take the time to watch the segment? That is unacceptable. It is outrageous. For Speaker MCCARTHY not even to watch the spoiled fruits of his labor shows a callousness and unconcern far beneath the dignity of the Speaker's office.

Senators, thankfully, from both sides of the aisle have called out FOX News for lying. Leader MCCONNELL has acknowledged FOX News's lying. The Capitol Police chief, in sticking up for his own officers, has called out FOX News for lying. Every leader on Capitol Hill has done the right thing by calling out FOX News's lies except for Speaker MCCARTHY.

By remaining silent, Speaker MCCARTHY is empowering Tucker Carlson's lies. The Speaker is outing himself as a January 6 denier, in complete accord and in line with Tucker Carlson. It is a shame.

RAIL SAFETY

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, on the railroads, this morning, Norfolk Southern's CEO, Alan Shaw, will testify before the Environment and Public Works Committee, where he will be held to account for his company's pattern of negligence when it comes to safety regulations.

My questions to Mr. Shaw remain the same: Why did Norfolk Southern spend years lobbying for looser regulations to prevent accidents like this, particularly when Donald Trump was President? Despite seeing a record \$3.3 billion in profits last year, why did Norfolk Southern prioritize billions in stock buybacks instead of investing in safety equipment or in their workers? What is Norfolk Southern doing to prevent future accidents like the one in East Palestine? And God forbid another one happens, how will Norfolk Southern ensure communities get the resources they need to respond to them?

I expect Mr. Shaw to answer these questions. The American people expect Mr. Shaw to answer these questions. And we expect a candid, frank, and honest discussion about the dangers of

rail companies like Norfolk Southern maximizing profits at the expense of everything else, even people's safety.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, finally, on the nominations front, today will be a busy day on the Senate floor.

Later this morning, we will confirm Daniel Werfel to serve as Commissioner for the IRS. Mr. Werfel's confirmation will bring important benefits to the American people because when the IRS is better staffed, more Americans can benefit from the tax credits—significant tax credits—we approved last year through legislation like CHIPS and Science and the IRA and other legislation as well.

First, Republicans wanted to cut IRS agents, which hurts the American people because they have to wait longer in line to get help with filing their taxes, and it lets the rich get away without paying their fair share of taxes.

No ultrawealthy American should ever pay less on a percentage basis than a nurse or a cabdriver. This nomination, plus the addition of IRS agents in the bill, will make it far more likely the wealthy will pay their fair share. As we know, under Donald Trump, auditing the ultrawealthy went way down, while people on the EITC, the earned income tax credit, who were making about \$40,000 a year, were being audited over and over again.

It also makes it more likely that when Americans need help, they won't have to wait hours or days or weeks to get in touch with an IRS agent.

We will also confirm today two more exceptional judges: James Edward Simmons, Jr., to serve as district judge for the Southern District of California, and Maria Kahn to serve on the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. Both Mr. Simmons and Ms. Kahn are remarkable legal minds, with impressive résumés. Their confirmations will strengthen our Federal courts and help restore Americans' trust in an independent and impartial judiciary.

I look forward to getting these three nominees confirmed, and I thank my colleagues from both sides of the aisle for their bipartisan support.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Daniel I.

Werfel, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Internal Revenue for the term expiring November 12, 2027.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Alaska.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES L. BUCKLEY

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I am honored, so honored, to say a few words this morning about Judge James Buckley—a statesman; a patriot; a member of the World War II Greatest Generation; a senior Reagan State Department official; a DC Court of Appeals judge; a former Member of this body, the U.S. Senate; a friend; and a shining example of a good, meaningful life lived in full.

It is not very often that you get to say happy birthday to your hundred-year-old mentor on the Senate floor, but today, I get to do that to one of my mentors.

Judge Buckley has been a mentor and role model to me and so many other people who worked for him or worked with him over the past century.

So, Judge, I hope you are watching. I hope some of your family members are watching. I want to wish you a happy hundredth birthday from the U.S. Senate. We have this wonderful card here signed by dozens of U.S. Senators—Republicans, Democrats, Independents—here on the Senate floor on your hundredth birthday, right now. We are going to deliver this to you soon.

For those watching, who is this remarkable American statesman? There is a wonderful Wall Street Journal op-ed in this morning's Journal entitled "Jim Buckley's Century of Service." I encourage all of my Senate colleagues to read it.

He was from a very large and famous Connecticut family with many prominent brothers and sisters—10 of them. It is quite large. His younger brother was the conservative intellectual William F. Buckley.

James Buckley—Judge Buckley, as I like to call him—served his country in so many ways: as I noted, first, heroically, as a World War II Naval officer. He served in many battles, including the Battle of Okinawa, which was the bloodiest battle in U.S. Navy history.

He served as a U.S. Senator from New York and Under Secretary of State in the Reagan administration, a judge on the Federal court of appeals for the DC Circuit right down the road, commonly referred to as "the second-most important court in the land."

Think about that. That is service at the highest levels of three different branches of government—the only living American to do that and the oldest Member of the U.S. Senate, former Member.

In every position, Judge Buckley, throughout his life, brought integrity, a fierce intellect, and a compelling commitment to American exceptionalism.

I have known Judge Buckley for 30 years. He is a man of faith, class, dig-

nity, and humility. He has never stopped serving his country. Even into his late nineties, he was still at work writing a very well-received book on public policy just a few years ago called "Saving Congress from Itself."

A few years back, I suggested that he present his book to us at one of our Republican lunches. In so doing, I explained to the judge the way in which we have lunches here in the Senate. Three times a week, we get together. There is the Tuesday policy lunch; there is the Wednesday—what we call—Steering Committee lunch; and then there is the Thursday lunch, more informal, hosted by members of our conference who can brag a little bit about their State and feed us great food from their State. So I suggested to the judge, come by the Wednesday Steering Committee lunch and share with us your new book. And I noted, you know, you may know, Judge, that the Steering Committee was initially set up a long time ago by a group of more conservative Senators but is now pretty much attended by all Republican Senators for lunch. Was he familiar with the Steering Committee, I asked the judge.

In typical, James Buckley humble fashion, he said quietly: Why, DAN, yes, I believe I was one of the cofounders of the Steering Committee.

Of course, you were, Judge. Of course, you were.

Anyway, we all had a great, very memorable lunch here in the Senate with Jim Buckley, where just in an hour, so many of my colleagues learned so much from him, which is what he has been doing his whole life.

I got to know Judge Buckley when I caught a lucky break 30 years ago and was hired by him as his fourth law clerk—kind of a law clerk intern—when he was a DC Circuit Court of Appeals judge right down the road and I was in my final year at Georgetown Law School. This was an incredible experience for me.

As most know, and I already mentioned, the DC Circuit is considered the second most important court in the country and, of course, is known as a feeder court into the U.S. Supreme Court for law clerks, but particularly for judges. Just look at all the former DC Circuit judges who went on to be Supreme Court Justices: Burger, Scalia, Ginsburg, Thomas, Roberts, Kavanaugh, and Jackson.

As a Georgetown law student, this internship was a very exciting opportunity for me, and I saw up close in Judge Buckley an example of principled jurisprudence that was anchored in the text of Federal statutes and the Constitution that recognized and emphasized the limits on Federal judiciary and agency powers and that understood the importance of federalism and the separation of powers in our constitutional system of ordered liberty.

These were lifelong lessons for me, and I continue to use them daily right here in the U.S. Senate.

I enjoyed this job so much and was learning so much that I pretty much quit going to many of my law school classes.

For the young people watching, especially law students, don't do that. That was a dumb idea. My very low grade in my evidence class was evidence of this.

Judge Buckley, back then, tolerated me in his chambers 30 years ago, but he really developed a special bond with my then-girlfriend, Julie, who is now my wife of over 28 years.

Julie and the judge had a small-world connection concerning the great State of Alaska that was quite remarkable.

In 1971, there was a very important bill being debated right here in the U.S. Senate called the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, what we call ANCSA. That bill became the world's largest land settlement for indigenous people ever, anywhere in the world. Right here in America, 44 million acres of Federal land went to the Native people of Alaska. And Jim Buckley, then a first-term U.S. Senator in his first year, became a big supporter of Native rights in Alaska. It was curious, interesting. What was going on there?

He was a conservative Republican and believed in property rights, and ownership, and free enterprise, and fee simple lands for the Native people, which was what ANCSA was all about—much different than the lower 48, where the system of reservations and land held in trust by the Federal Government does not work well.

There was something else going on there, the Alaska Native leaders went to Washington in force to lobby different Senators. Senator Buckley was lobbied by a beautiful 36-year-old brilliant Alaska Native leader named Mary Jane Fate, who just so happened to be my wife's—then my girlfriend's—mom. So the judge and my girlfriend, Julie, figured that out, put two and two together, that her mom was one of the big reasons in terms of lobbying that he got interested in the ANCSA legislation and was a strong supporter of that.

Of course, that cemented their relationship and our relationship, and Julie and I and the judge have been great friends ever since. I do want to thank him, again, on behalf of the people of Alaska for being such a strong supporter of that legislation, which literally changed the history trajectory of our State for the better 51 years ago.

A few years ago, I was asked by the outstanding organization, The Fund for American Studies, to give an address about honorable leadership—honorable leadership—and I made my entire speech about the life and example of James Buckley.

Honorable leadership and upholding the highest values of ethical service, which is what the life of Judge Buckley epitomizes, is not always easy.

For example, as a U.S. Senator, Judge Buckley was one of the first Members of the Senate Republican caucus to call on President Nixon to resign