

We are going to talk about the tax bill we are doing today. We are going to talk about the Supreme Court and immunity to the President. We are going to talk about AI and what has been accomplished there. And KOSA and COPPA, we are going to talk about that. And last but not least, I have to talk about and I will talk about the Veterans' Administration and our hospital, the Northport hospital, on Long Island.

TAX RELIEF FOR AMERICAN FAMILIES AND WORKERS ACT OF 2024

Mr. President, today, the Senate has a chance to move forward on the Tax Relief for American Families and Workers Act.

Democrats are ready to vote yes to advance bipartisan legislation today. The question is, Will Senate Republicans join us to give Americans a tax break or will they stand in the way? The tax bill passed the House with an overwhelming vote of 357 to 70. It won majorities of both parties. It was led in the House by the Republican chair of Ways and Means, Congressman SMITH, hardly a liberal. So we know this is a good and broadly bipartisan bill. For people who say that this is not bipartisan, go look at the House.

Everyone in Congress is on board except Senate Republicans. Unfortunately, it seems like Senate Republicans plan to vote no today. Even House Republicans managed to unite long enough to pass this bill.

With great respect to Senate Republicans, it is never a good sign to be more obstructionist than Republicans in the House.

Senate Republicans love to talk about how they are the party of family and business, so it is very odd to see them come out so aggressively against expanding the child tax credit and rewarding businesses with the R&D tax credit. But that seems to be what they are doing.

Instead of jumping at the opportunity to get this tax bill done, some Senate Republicans are organizing against tax relief. You heard that right. Senate Republicans are organizing against tax relief. Some of them were passing out leaflets at their lunch yesterday smearing the bill.

Here is one of the nonsensical arguments Senate Republicans made against this tax bill: Don't you dare pass it, they said, because, God forbid, it actually helps American families and then Democrats will get some credit.

Can you believe that? Does that sound like a pro-family party? I don't think so.

Instead of focusing on the election, Republicans maybe should focus more on the fact that this bill actually helps families. If the bill becomes law, half a million kids would come out of poverty. Sixteen million kids from low-income households would see benefits increase. Business owners that invest in R&D and buy new equipment would see more money coming back to them,

leading to more jobs, good-paying jobs. And the housing crisis in America would ease—one of our biggest crises, housing costs—by expanding the low-income housing tax credit, something I deeply cared about and urged to be put in the bill. I am glad it is there. And, of course, communities devastated by natural disasters—we have seen so many of them across the country in the last few weeks—they get greater relief.

So thank you to all my colleagues who worked hard on this bill: Chairman WYDEN for his leadership, everyone on the Finance Committee as well as Senators BROWN and CASEY and BENNET and CANTWELL and HASSAN and so many others.

The ball is now in Senate Republican court. Senate Republicans can either choose bipartisanship and get this done now or they can choose partisanship and leave families hanging out to dry.

Mr. President, I just want to note, this so often has become the MO of our Republicans in the House, Senate, and the Presidency. When we do something good and strong that Americans support in a bipartisan way—that most Republicans support—they say don't pass it because it will benefit Democrats in the election.

Donald Trump has said it repeatedly on border. We have seen it recently on crypto. We have seen it on so many other issues. That is not the way to help the American people. That is not the way to govern.

SUPREME COURT

Mr. President, on the Supreme Court and the immunity, their awful immunity provision for Presidents, including Trump, all of us in school were taught that there are no Kings in America. There are no Kings in America.

But 1 month ago, the MAGA Supreme Court effectively placed a crown over Donald Trump's head. They ruled that the President of the United States is, in essence, above the law; that the President is immune in sweeping ways from accountability for "official acts."

One month ago, I said I would work with my colleagues on legislation to reverse the damage of the Court's bewildering ruling on immunity. Today, I am pleased to announce Senate Democrats are taking the next step.

Today, along with 33 of my Democratic colleagues, I am introducing the No Kings Act. This legislation is as simple as the name it bears. It reaffirms that Presidents do not have immunity from violations of criminal law and removes the Supreme Court's jurisdiction to hear appeals related to Presidential immunity, which the Constitution explicitly empowers Congress to do.

The MAGA Supreme Court's decision on Presidential immunity was the very antithesis of the kind of accountability our Framers envisioned. It just goes to show you what a morass the Supreme Court is in right now. They are in a mess. They are in an ethical morass and in a substantive morass.

Ethically, the MAGA Supreme Court is suffering a huge crisis of confidence with the American people because Justices accept lavish gifts, vacations, and cars from hard-right wealthy people who are then paying different groups and lawyers to lobby for what they want. And then the Justices turn around and ram through scores of hard-right decisions.

The two have been, sometimes, all too close to one another in time. Substantively, the MAGA Supreme Court is taking the rights away from Americans at every opportunity—like a woman's right to choose and others—siding with the big special interests against the average person.

And, again, the MAGA Supreme Court is undermining our Constitution and throwing out centuries of precedent by anointing Donald Trump and future Presidents as Kings above the law. And make no mistake about it, we have a very strong argument that Congress, by statute, can undo what the Supreme Court does, that it does not require a constitutional amendment.

The bottom line is this: No democracy can hope to survive if it cannot ensure accountability. And if the Supreme Court can no longer be trusted to serve as its own check on ethics or on following precedent and helping the American people, Congress must use all its tools to restore trust and accountability to the highest Court in the land.

KOSA-COPPA

Mr. President, 2 days ago, the Senate overwhelmingly passed two of the most important updates in decades to Federal laws protecting our kids: the Kids Online Safety Act, or KOSA, and the COPPA.

I repeat: It passed the Senate overwhelmingly. This was a good bipartisan thing; 91 votes were in its favor.

I then called on the House to take these bills up, to keep the momentum alive, to do right by the parents who worked so hard to get these bills done. But this morning, it has been reported that House Republicans will refuse to take these bills up.

I hope these reports are not accurate. Just 1 week ago, Speaker JOHNSON said he would like to get KOSA done. I hope that hasn't changed. Letting KOSA and COPPA collect dust in the House would be an awful mistake and a gut punch—a gut punch—to these brave, wonderful parents who have worked so hard to reach this point.

So let me repeat what I said earlier this week: When the House returns in the fall, KOSA and COPPA must be a priority. These parents and kids across America deserve better. I hope House Republicans change course swiftly and take KOSA and COPPA up.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. President, now on AI, or artificial intelligence, it has been 2 months since the Bipartisan AI Working Group I formed with Senator HEINRICH, Democrat, and Senators YOUNG and ROUNDS, Republican, published our roadmap for

AI policy. I am happy to report that the Senate is making important progress on drafting AI legislation already.

Just yesterday, under the magnificent leadership of Chair CANTWELL and Chair PETERS, both the Commerce and Homeland Security Committees marked up and approved important bipartisan AI bills. These bills will help American workers to be AI ready, while helping innovation lead the way in new technologies.

Yesterday, Senator KLOBUCHAR also brought two bipartisan bills to the floor to protect our elections from deepfakes in political advertising. Sadly, these bills were blocked, but I hope we can find a path forward.

And, last week, the Senate unanimously passed the DEFIANCE Act, a bill to combat the spread of sexually explicit AI-generated deepfakes, an awful thing that is inflicting so many Americans, particularly, young kids and young girls, in particular.

So in the last 2 weeks, there are at least five very good AI bills that have seen some movement in the Senate. All of them have bipartisan support. Together they represent a good mix of the two approaches. I have always said we need with AI two things: to promote safe innovation, on the one hand, but instill commonsense guardrails, on the other.

This is the recipe for strong AI legislation: safe innovation, strong innovation, balanced with sound guardrails. And I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for working together and look forward to more of this in the weeks to come.

VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTERS

Mr. President, now let me talk about the VA and Long Island's only VA medical center—the Northport VA. Right now, Long Island's only VA medical center, the Northport VA—and many other VA medical centers across the country—are being threatened by the MAGA Republican plan known as Project 2025.

This is a picture of the Northport VA. It is the only VA on Long Island, serving over 100,000 vets across Nassau and Suffolk Counties. I know how good it is because my father, who passed away 2 years ago, got good treatment at the VA. He was a World War II vet.

And Long Island has so many vets, so many people who served their country who are getting older now. They desperately need that Northport VA for their healthcare. If Republicans take power, the Project 2025 plan is just itching to become law, and it would have a disastrous impact on the VA and create chaos for vets, not just across Long Island but across America, especially those now receiving health benefits that we fought so hard to win.

Project 2025 has a fancy website. It has a fancy book. It has a lot of glitter, but this plan is far from gold—far from gold. It is a pile of corroded ideas that have never become law because of how unpopular they are, including under-

mining the VA. And deep in this plan is a mandate to defund the Northport VA on Long Island. The plan would also slash veterans' benefits.

It seems to repeal the PACT Act, which we just passed overwhelmingly—bipartisan—that said that our veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan and were exposed to burn pits and got cancers and other illnesses could get help from the VA. This plan—this Project 2025—is so intent on slashing all government plans so the very rich who represent this plan can pay fewer taxes. It is outrageous—outrageous.

Now, when faced with questions on these proposals, MAGA Republicans are running away, claiming they don't know anything. MAGA Republicans even announced they fired the guy who authored all this dreck. But, sorry, you can fire all the people you want. These are the goals.

It was put together by lots of Donald Trump's former employees and has, as one of its leaders, somebody who wants to slash—slash—all kinds of government programs up and down the line because the very rich people that they seem to represent don't want to pay any taxes. They don't care about the rest of us.

So MAGA Republicans, again, they can fire anyone they want. We know the goals. This revealed it. They were proud of this Project 2025 until it was revealed that it had so many bad things in it.

So I am sounding the alarm on this little-known project for all the Members of this Chamber and pledging that, under my majority, the VA will not be depleted, veterans' benefits will be protected, and the Senate floor will not consider programs and proposals that undo years of bipartisan progress on veterans affairs, healthcare, and on funding our hospitals.

The plan would revive the effort to shut down Long Island's Northport VA. This is what Project 2025 says:

[The Senate Veterans Affairs Committee lacked the political will to act on the White House's nominations of commission members, and this ultimately led to termination of the AIR—ASSET AND INFRASTRUCTURE REVIEW. The next Administration should seek out agile, creative, and politically acceptable operational solutions.

Those here in this Chamber should know exactly what AIR was: a plan—a hard-right plan—to defund the VA system.

Well, we bipartisanly said no way, and we saved our VA hospitals.

Project 2025 doesn't just want to revive AIR but implement it. Defund the VA hospitals—that is what it says.

Look, over 9 million veterans are enrolled in the VA healthcare system, meaning that these proposed cuts and policy changes will affect a massive amount of people. But for Northport and the vets of Long Island, it would be the end of care as they know it. They would have to travel to New York City for basic care or more complex care. The waiting lines and the waiting

lists—veterans have to wait long enough for healthcare—would get even greater. And, as I said, it is over 100,000 vets—vets I have stood with, vets I launched a petition with. I will not—will not—let this VA close or be defunded.

So for all of you here, look close. Which one of your critical VA hospitals does MAGA want to shutter?

Project 2025, a bunch of bad ideas that hurt working people, veterans, and others who served this country. MAGA fired the guy who ran it, but they still are intent on the plan—still intent on decimating and closing this great hospital. Make no mistake about it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent I be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes prior to the scheduled rollcall vote.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TAX RELIEF FOR AMERICAN FAMILIES AND WORKERS ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today, as the Senate prepares to leave town for the August State work period, the Democratic leader has decided to squeeze in one more vote that isn't ready for prime time. To our colleagues on the Finance Committee—and to anyone paying attention in recent months—it has been clear that the Tax Relief for American Families and Workers Act that Chairman WYDEN wrote with the House needed some serious revisions in order to earn 60 votes here in the Senate.

We don't need a vote today to tell us that is still the case. Colleagues on this side of the aisle have serious unresolved concerns. They don't like how more than 90 percent of the supposed benefits of the bill, as written, come as a \$30 billion expansion of cash welfare, instead of relief for working taxpayers.

They are concerned about how it would weaken the work requirements tied to those benefits under current law. For a bill with the potential to so seriously impact working Americans, one might expect its proponents to engage seriously on resolving obstacles to bipartisan support.

You might have expected the chairman of the Finance Committee or the Democratic leader to provide regular order, to schedule a markup, to give this bill a shot at actually passing the Senate, but, alas, you would be wrong. Of course, months without progress on