

Donald Trump claims he is a “leader on fertilization, IVF”—whatever that means—but his MAGA Justices overturned Roe and cast women’s reproductive care into chaos.

Yesterday Donald Trump did it again, totally reversing himself, claiming that he will reverse the cap on State and local deductions. But Donald Trump must be suffering from selective amnesia because he was the one who took away people’s SALT deductions in the first place. His tax bill did it—a dagger aimed at blue States that want to spend a little more to help people with housing and healthcare and education and transportation.

All of a sudden, now that he is on Long Island, Donald Trump’s selective amnesia kicks in, and he totally reverses himself on SALT. But we know Donald Trump. We know what his MO is. He is going to do nothing. He is simply trying to escape the anger of many families he upset when he placed those caps, which affect so many middle-class people, particularly in higher cost areas like Long Island.

So he shows up in Long Island. Oh, he says he has changed his mind. And we know he will do nothing about it. Then, when some of his more rightwing people go to him and say “You can’t do it,” he will say “OK.”

So this is not only an empty promise, but it shows the hypocrisy of Donald Trump. For Donald Trump to pretend he has found religion on eliminating the SALT caps 2 months before an election, speaking in Long Island, is comical, is unserious, and it shows the lack of integrity that this man has. His promises carry about as much weight as Monopoly money.

Remember, the SALT cap was one of the key parts of Donald Trump’s own tax law. Congressional Republicans pushed the cap; he signed it. Donald Trump’s own Treasury Secretary, Steve Mnuchin, called SALT a subsidy for States like New York, even though for decades New York paid tens of billions more in taxes than we received from the Federal Government. To this day, SALT caps remain in place because extreme Republicans have blocked any attempt to fix this defective policy.

I have been a loud proponent of eliminating the SALT cap from the start. As long as I am leader, I will do everything in my power so that when these caps expire at the end of next year, they will not come back.

Double taxing hard-working owners on Long Island, in the Hudson Valley, and across New York and many other States as well—largely blue States—is plainly unfair, and it could not have come up at a worse time than the last few years, with so much chaos caused by COVID and the economic turmoil it unleashed.

So for families frustrated by the SALT cap, so many on Long Island—firefighters, police officers, construction workers, who make good salaries—they have Donald Trump and congress-

sional Republicans to thank for their pain.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. President, now on the shutdown, we have less than 2 weeks now before September 30. If the House and Senate do not act by then to extend government funding, the government will shut down, and there will be no ambiguity that will be a Republican shutdown.

My friend the Republican leader said yesterday that if Republicans shut the government down, “It would be politically beyond stupid for us to do that, because we’d”—meaning Republicans—“get the blame.”

Leader MCCONNELL is absolutely correct. A Republican shutdown would be beyond stupid for Republicans, and they would get the blame because it is only Speaker JOHNSON who is headed in that direction to assuage his hard right, the Freedom Caucus people, who hold his speakership in, shall we say—who say it is questionable whether he should be Speaker if this happens.

Nevertheless, Republicans are no closer to preventing a shutdown today than they were at the beginning of September. For the last 2 weeks, Speaker JOHNSON and House Republican leaders have wasted precious time on a proposal that everyone knows can’t become law. His own Republican conference cannot unite around his proposal.

Today, the House is expected to vote on the Speaker’s CR, and it is expected to fail. I hope that once the Speaker’s CR fails, he moves on to a strategy that will actually work: bipartisan cooperation. It is the only thing that has kept the government open every time we have faced a funding deadline. It is the only thing that works this time too. Bipartisan, bicameral cooperation—that is what works. That is what we are willing and happy to do. And the clock is ticking.

If Republicans keep squabbling and careen us into a shutdown, the consequences will reverberate across the country. A shutdown harms the economy. A shutdown causes costs to spike as supply chains buckle and lending slows down. Federal safety programs could come to a halt, making our people and our communities less safe.

If the Republicans shut the government down, tens of thousands of children across the country could immediately lose access to Head Start. Nearly 7 million women and infants and children could lose nutrition program benefits. Food safety inspections would be jeopardized. Some members of the military could be asked to work without pay. Border security—something very important that our Republican colleagues talk a lot about—could be thrown into chaos, increasing wait times at ports of entry. Frontline border personnel would have to do their jobs without pay.

America does not want another Republican shutdown. America cannot afford another Republican shutdown.

And make no mistake, if Republicans don’t work with Democrats in a bipartisan way, if the four leaders can’t come together because the House Republicans are so adamant, Americans will blame Republicans—particularly those in the House—for shutting the government down.

VBA SHORTFALL

Mr. President, now on the VBA shortfall, last night, the House passed legislation through a voice vote that would ensure that veterans get their well-deserved benefits for October. Passed by voice vote in the House—that doesn’t happen too often on significant and important legislation.

Well, we want to pass it through the Senate quickly. The need for action is urgent. Without this mandatory funding for veterans’ benefits before September 20, the VA will be unable to issue compensation and pension benefit payments to as many as 7 million veterans and their survivors. We can’t let that happen, so we must act, and we will.

REMEMBERING BRIAN GRIFFIN

Mr. President, one final note—a sad note on Brian Griffin. Earlier this week, Senate Democrats lost a longtime member of our beloved family, Brian Griffin.

If you have been around the Senate long enough, you certainly knew Brian. He started his Senate career as a page, worked his way up through the cloakroom—I remember him being there and always being helpful—and served as a top aide for Senator Byron Dorgan.

Many in our caucus came to know Brian well and considered him a dear friend. His family is in our thoughts and in our prayers.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative 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.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, in the weeks since Washington Democrats made Vice President HARRIS their nominee, the American people have had their hands full in trying to figure out where her campaign stands on the issues on the top of their minds.

They have got serious questions about her role in everything from the runaway spending that gave them the worst inflation in 40 years to the open borders policies that have invited the worst humanitarian and security crisis the southern border has ever seen. Thus far, they haven’t received many answers.

The problem is that the Vice President doesn’t have a record. She has

campaigned for President once before and worked hand in hand with President Biden for 4 years since. Instead, the problem is that, on issue after issue, Vice President HARRIS has, at one time or another, played both sides. Well, working families want to know, this time, what side she is on.

Take energy policy. Back in 2019, then-Senator HARRIS went on record, saying:

There's no question I'm in favor of banning fracking.

Fast-forward, after 4 years of undermining exploration of abundant American energy, the Harris campaign says her policies as President would be different.

During her time in the Senate, our former colleague cosponsored the Zero-Emission Vehicles Act, a bill that would require car manufacturers to sell only zero-emission vehicles after 2040. These days, her campaign avoids getting pinned down about whether she would seek an electric vehicle mandate.

Then-Senator HARRIS also went on the record in support of the Green New Deal, including its make-work programs and job guarantees. These days, as the Biden-Harris war on American energy rages on, the Harris campaign conveniently reveals that she no longer supports this resolution, and, apparently, there is no policy too small for the campaign to walk back, not even the Vice President's stated support for—get this—a Federal ban on plastic straws. According to the campaign, that has been reversed as well.

Well, micromanaging fountain drinks is one thing, but as millions of Americans contend with the business end of the Biden-Harris climate and economic agenda, they ought to know precisely where the Democratic Party's nominee stands. Policies matter. They can quite literally be the difference between affording gas and groceries and going without. Voters are fed up with flip-flops, and the Vice President ought to come clean.

FOREIGN INVESTMENT

Now, Mr. President, on another matter, I have noted frequently that America's resolve and willingness to lead are being tested by a dangerous world. How we respond has everything to do with preserving the peace, prosperity, and security America and our allies have enjoyed for decades.

Today, I want to talk about how the free and uninterrupted flow of goods, people, and ideas has fueled American prosperity.

We all know that trade is important for American workers and American jobs, but the benefits of trade run far deeper than exports of American-made goods, services, ideas, and values. Trade is a two-way street. When we engage in the global market, we open our own doors to new sources of economic strength—to lower prices and more choices and to good-paying jobs from foreign companies that set up shop here at home. For 12 straight years,

America has been the top destination for foreign businesses to invest their capital—investments that do a lot of good in big and small towns alike.

Let's take a look at Kentucky; for example, the Toyota plant in Georgetown. The Japanese automaker has invested billions—billions—in our economy. Today, it supports nearly 10,000 jobs in Central Kentucky.

In Carroll County, a Spanish-owned steel manufacturer supports nearly 1,600 more manufacturing jobs, and it is getting even bigger. Just this year, the company announced a new quarter-of-a-billion-dollar investment. Head west to Owensboro, where close to 500 jobs are on the way thanks to the Swedish manufacturer that invested hundreds of millions into their Kentucky-based production plant.

So, in Kentucky alone, in just looking at my State, businesses from 33 foreign nations support over 116,000 jobs. These jobs aren't just benefiting the biggest cities. Roughly, 60 percent of all of our counties in Kentucky are home to at least one international business.

Now, I have highlighted just a few examples in my home State, but these aren't anomalies. They speak to a situation true all across our country: Foreign investment benefits American workers and American communities, but it doesn't happen on its own. Foreign businesses invest in America because they know they can count on our commitment to free markets and free enterprise and on our rule of law.

Turning our backs on the world means signaling that we are closed for business. It means dulling the magnet of foreign direct investment that draws capital from all over the world to our shores. When our leaders throw up barriers to foreign investment from friends and allies, they risk hurting the very communities they intend to protect. Unfortunately, that is precisely what some loud voices are urging our leaders to do, and if they succeed, our economy will be worse for it.

To be absolutely clear, this isn't an appeal to the naive globalism of the 1990s. Trade is not a cure-all for the serious challenges of competition with China and Russia, but if our adversaries' predatory trading practices and exploitations of institutions tell us anything, it is that leaving a vacuum in global markets is an invitation for further misbehavior.

Working closer with like-minded friends and allies to preserve free and fair trade and to protect critical supply chains is essential to both our security and our prosperity. When friends and allies invest in the U.S. economy and, likewise, when American companies invest in theirs, we drive growth, boost paychecks, and increase American-made exports. That is good news for Kentucky and for workers and job creators all across America.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. 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.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, throughout our Nation's history, election season has brought out the dark side of politics.

John Adams and Thomas Jefferson infamously waged smear campaigns against each other during the election of 1800. Andrew Jackson and John Quincy Adams exchanged accusations of murder and impropriety in the election of 1828, and questions about Grover Cleveland's activity out of wedlock became campaign fodder in the election of 1844—all to say dirty campaign tricks are hardly foreign to American elections.

But, today, I want to address a particularly vile lie being circulated by former President Trump and his Vice Presidential candidate, J.D. VANCE, and their supporters during this campaign, and this lie has real-life consequences.

In recent weeks, false claims have been circulating on social media that members of the Haitian immigrant community in Springfield, OH, are abducting, killing, and eating people's pets.

The former President even made this claim during his debate with KAMALA HARRIS. This claim is not only outrageous and patently false, with both city officials and law enforcement confirming they have received zero criminal reports of such conduct, but it is now becoming a safety concern for the entire Springfield, OH, community. Despite this, the former President and his running mate have continued to knowingly spread this lie.

Shockingly, in an interview with CNN this week, Senator VANCE admitted that he was willing to "create stories" to get media attention. And that is exactly what he and former President Trump have done—first on social media, then during last week's debate to an audience of 67 million Americans, and then on national news.

Think about that. A man who is seeking to become Vice President of the United States admitted that he was willing to spread vicious lies simply to get media attention.

But these lies have real consequences for Haitian immigrants in Springfield, OH, and across the country. Since this smear campaign began, there have been multiple evacuations of schools, government buildings, and medical facilities in Springfield, OH, because of bomb and shooting threats related to these lies.

I want to thank Ohio Governor Mike DeWine, a Republican and my former Senate colleague, for stepping up to debunk these lies and protect the people of his State.