

States face a common issue—navigating the complex BEAD process. NTIA's functional requests are akin to building a plane while flying it without having the necessary instructions to be successful. NTIA has provided either no guidance, guidance given too late, or guidance changing midstream, all with a lack of appreciation for State operations and costs and the needs of our telecommunications providers.

Another official from another State described BEAD as—and I quote again—"the most burdensome Federal program" she has ever imagined. The most burdensome Federal program she has ever imagined. And worse yet, ever had to manage.

Given all this, I suppose it is no surprise that not only has broadband not reached even one household through the BEAD program, but construction projects haven't even begun. Current expectations for the start of construction on various BEAD projects range from sometime next year to sometime in 2026–2026. We are already at 1,044 days since this program was enacted. Not a single dollar has been allocated out of the \$42 billion.

Well, if this is what things look like with Vice President HARRIS as broadband czar, I shudder to think what things would look like if she were in charge of the entire Federal Government.

This isn't the first time I sounded the alarm on the implementation of the BEAD program and the burdensome and extra legal requirements the Biden administration—the Biden-Harris administration, I should say—has imposed. I have been joined in this by Commerce Committee Ranking Member Senator CRUZ, who shares my concerns, as well as other committee Republicans who share those concerns as well. I would like to see some of my Democratic colleagues taking a closer look at BEAD implementation and broadband implementation more generally.

As the BEAD program makes very clear, you can throw a lot—a lot—\$42 billion a lot—a lot of taxpayer money at a problem and still not get results. I would like to see the Commerce Committee conduct a lot more oversight of the programs and Agencies under its jurisdiction.

It has been more than 1,500 days since the last Federal Communications Commission oversight hearing at the Commerce Committee—the committee, the principal committee of jurisdiction over the FCC.

In fact, we haven't had a single FCC oversight hearing since Democrats took control of the Senate back in 2021. And despite the ongoing failure of the BEAD program at the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, we haven't held a single hearing on NTIA yet in this Congress. While I understand that highlighting the failure of the Biden-Harris administration's signature broadband initiative is probably not high on Democrats' priority list, our obligation to the American people and our concern

for the millions of Americans without broadband access should put BEAD oversight at the top of the Commerce Committee's agenda.

Mr. President, the BEAD program's failure certainly highlights the fact that Vice President HARRIS has been no more effective as broadband czar as she has been as border czar. It also points to a larger problem—larger problems—with progressivism, like big promises, poor results, and the prioritization of liberal social fantasies over the needs of the American people. I suspect that if "Broadband Czar" HARRIS becomes President HARRIS, the BEAD program will not be the last disastrous government program we see on her watch.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mrs. BRITT pertaining to the introduction of S. 5150 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mrs. BRITT. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

#### FARM BILL

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the dire state of our American farm economy and our farmers.

American farmers and producers are the backbone of our Nation's agricultural economy and food security. Despite their critical role in our lives to feed, clothe, and fuel not only the United States but the entire world, our farmers are struggling to survive, and that is an understatement.

The current state of the agricultural economy is bleak and on the verge of collapse. We have problems all over the world. We have problems in our country. There is nothing more important—nothing more important—that we should be addressing than our food supply here in this country.

Costs for farmers are rising. Commodity prices are falling. Our farmers cannot break even, much less make a profit. According to the USDA, net farm income this year is projected to decline 4.4 percent from 2023—decline. That is a disaster.

This follows a shocking—listen to this—a shocking 19.5-percent decline in 2022. Not one business in this country can survive with this kind of decline, and our farmers and our farms are no different.

This means producers' income has plummeted 23 percent in just 2 years—23 percent. These figures represent over \$40 billion in lost revenue for America's hard-working producers. This is the largest 2-year decline ever in our farm income—ever in the history of this country.

Right now, our row croppers, especially, are facing considerable financial hardship. According to the American Farm Bureau Federation, row croppers had a \$27.7 billion decline in cash receipts since last year.

In Alabama, my State, our producers are yielding bumper crops of cotton, peanuts, corn, and soybeans; and yet they can't profit due to rising costs of production. Our catfish producers are in the same boat. Rising input costs and falling fish prices are threatening to put them out of business.

A multitude of factors that producers have no control over are impacting their bottom lines, and I want to talk about one of them. This miraculous, this world-saving Inflation Reduction Act that we passed a few years ago was supposed to save our economy—supposed to save a lot of workers. Do you know what it has done to our farmers? It has almost put us out of business.

The Inflation Reduction Act started a tax credit for imports and exports. Unfortunately, all the tax credits are going to people and countries and farmers from overseas, Brazil and China.

It was supposed to go to our farmers. No, it is not going to do that. For some reason, this administration has given all the tax credits to the farmers from other countries, and our farmers are struggling.

The Biden administration has control—has total control—over our farm economy, but you haven't heard a peep out of them—not one peep—about our farmers. And this is a disastrous year coming up.

And, right now, we are harvesting our crops, and they are bumper crops.

The issues plaguing American producers are directly linked to the harmful policies, as I just said, from the Biden-Harris administration. This includes the lack of domestic energy production, skyrocketing inflation, which comes from the Inflation Reduction Act, and endless—endless—environmental hurdles.

Let me say something about conservation and all the things that happen in our environment. There is nobody—and I mean nobody—on the face of the Earth that takes care and is more conscious of environmental problems than our farmers, because they make a living off our land. But we are putting so many regulations on them, we are closing our farms down and running them overseas. We are going to have a national security threat because all of our food is going to come from foreign countries.

Farmers are experiencing rising costs of labor and increase in prices for feed, fertilizer, and pesticides. And I am not going to sugarcoat it: America's agricultural producers are facing a very tough road ahead. It is something nobody—the media, this building, the building on the other end, the House of Representatives, nobody is even talking about it.

Folks, if we can't eat, if we don't have food to eat, we are done.

Many farmers fear that their farm loans this year will not be renewed. They have to have farm loans to put a crop in the ground. They fear cash flows drying up and interest rates continuing to rise create an uncertain future for farming operations.

Although Congress only has a few legislative days left to act, we must stop adding fuel to the Biden-Harris administrative fire. We have to quit adding fuel. We have to help the farmers.

We need to pass the farm bill that helps our farmers. Democrats are in control of that. They have been in control of it for the last 8 years.

A farm bill is for 5 years. Four years ago or 5 years ago, the farm bill was \$870 billion for a 5-year period. It runs in a 5-year period. So this past year, we were supposed to be working on the farm bill. I am on the Ag Committee. We go by the control of the Democratic Party. Our Democratic chairwoman has decided we won't do a farm bill this year. We are just throwing farmers underneath the bus.

They need help. You would think by looking at everything going on that my colleagues on the left would rather our food come from other countries—take over our farmland, control it, and do something else with it.

Producers need a strong safety net. We have to have a safety net for our farmers. Considering no farmers' risks are the same, we cannot take a one-size-fits-all approach. Remember, we have a farm bill that covers livestock, hogs, row croppers, forest, fish. There are a lot of things involved. Farmers across the country have fluctuating levels of risk, impacted by land and equipment costs, access to irrigation, and variable input requirements. Southern row croppers rely heavily—heavily—upon title I commodity programs in the farm bill, particularly the Price Loss Program and the Agriculture Risk Program. Yet Midwest producers heavily utilize crop insurance. Where there may be an overlap across regions among these programs, we must fix the entire farm safety net, not just parts of it.

Take the reference prices in commodity programs for example. Reference prices are how much the prices are in their commodity sales report. Our farmers are operating today on 2012 revenue prices—2012; 14 years later. The costs of production are 22 to 31 percent higher today than they were at that time, a decade ago, making current reference prices completely inadequate for our farmers.

We don't have time to waste. Our farmers are facing an uphill battle to remain in business, and we are going to find out pretty quick—the American people going to the grocery store are going to find out pretty quick what it is to be hungry if we don't wake up and smell the roses.

Even if a farm bill is passed today, producers wouldn't receive any commodity program support from this farm bill until 2026. Game, set, match,

before 2026 for our farmers in this country. That is help our farmers need now to survive, not 2 years later.

Senate Republicans stand ready to act on the solid bipartisan bill that the House Agriculture Committee passed earlier this year. Yet Senate Democrats and the Biden administration refuse—they refuse—to come to the table to find practical, bipartisan solutions to the many problems our farmers are facing today.

Let's don't worry about our farmers. Let's worry about Ukraine. Let's worry about people overseas, the 800 bases we have around the world. Let's don't worry about eating. We can do without eating. That is what this administration is saying.

This forces us to look to supplemental appropriations packages to help our producers if we are not going to do a farm bill, renew their farm loans, and help for next year's crops. If they don't get help this year, we are going to have huge problems. They won't be pocketing this money, if we come up with some money, to help the farmers get a loan; they will just be planting another crop.

Without immediate action to assist producers, our Nation's agriculture industry may never ever make it back from the damage we are doing to them today.

America has lost—listen to this—America has lost 150,000 farms and 25,000 farmers in our country over the last few years. What? Mr. President, 150,000 farms closed up. Why? They can't make a profit.

You been on a farm for 100 years, you and your family, but you get to the point where you say, you know, I am not passing something down to our kids who really want to farm, but we are not going to put them in harm's way. We are going to sell. We are going to get out of the business, and we are going to let somebody else worry about it. Let's let the Federal Government worry about it.

Well, we do such a good job here, we would do a great job raising our food.

We can't afford any more losses to our farmers. Our farmers are hurting. They are hurting real bad. But have you heard anybody talk about it? No. You are going to hear a lot of people complaining about it, and there is going to be an uproar in the next few years when prices double and triple what they are today because we are not going to have food. It is going to come from Brazil. It is going to come from China. It is going to come from Vietnam.

We are doing severe damage to the farmers across this country, and nobody cares.

I will continue to be the voice of our southern agricultural producers in the Senate and ensure that we have a seat at table on this farm bill upcoming. But as I just said a while ago, if we do a farm bill today, we are going to lose at least half of our farmers in this country this year—this year—if they don't get some help.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

#### BORDER SECURITY

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the crisis that we are facing today in America at our southern border.

Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS have created the worst illegal immigrant crisis in American history. KAMALA HARRIS and Joe Biden removed every successful policy that was in place during the Trump administration. KAMALA HARRIS and Joe Biden replaced them with policies that released millions upon millions of illegal immigrants into our country. The crisis, the chaos, the crime—they are all a direct result of the terrible policies by KAMALA HARRIS and Joe Biden.

Here are the facts: More than 10 million—10 million—illegal immigrants have flooded into our country. They have done that in just the last 4 years with KAMALA HARRIS and Joe Biden in the White House.

At the same time, deadly drugs like fentanyl are flowing into our communities. Each year, tens of thousands of Americans are poisoned by fentanyl that comes across our southern border.

Our communities in every State are being overrun and overwhelmed by this flood of illegal immigrants.

Let's look at the horrible scenes that are developing now in Aurora, CO, just to the south of my home State of Wyoming. This is a city where members of violent Venezuelan gangs have turned apartment complexes into hell holes. That is exactly what they have done. One residence said, "It's been a nightmare."

So how did these gangs find themselves in that situation in that location, and how did the people living in those communities find themselves in this terrorizing situation? Well, according to one report, the Harris-Biden administration, along with the city of Denver, provided the incentives. What are the incentives? Well, Denver offered illegal immigrants 2 months of subsidized rent. The source of the rent money came from Democrats March 2021 reckless tax and spending spree—\$1.9 trillion.

Stop and think about that for just a second. The same law that fueled 40-year high inflation, that caused prices to go up for families all across the country by 20 percent since Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS came into office, that same bill has now incentivized the worst border crisis in American history.

It was Vice President HARRIS who came and sat in that chair and cast the critical, tie-breaking vote right here in the Senate for that reckless spending bill. Her one single vote as Vice President, as President of this institution, the U.S. Senate, brought record-high prices and a recordbreaking border disaster.