

son alive? Is he dead? Is he OK? Is he wounded? Viciousness of Hamas—the viciousness.

As for Itay, he was taken hostage and tragically murdered by Hamas on the border of Gaza on October 7. After months of fighting for his return, Itay's family learned that he was also murdered that terrible day.

This is the depths of Hamas' cruelty. For months, they refused to even acknowledge that Omer and Itay had been murdered. They kept these families in anguish, in the dark. What a horrible feeling to wonder if your child is alive or dead. Hamas knowing it, dangled cruelly the possibility of maybe they are alive when they weren't.

The families wondered over and over again: Are our children alive? Are they dead? And, of course, tragically, their worst fears happened. What Omer and Itay's family have endured is beyond comprehension.

I am inspired by their perseverance, by their resolve to keep calling for the safe return of remaining hostages, even though their loved ones are gone, and for the return of the bodies of their loved ones, which is essential by Jewish law.

There is no time to waste. I will continue working for as long as it takes to finally bring every last hostage and the remains of the hostages no longer with us home to us. It is an honor to welcome all my guests to the Capitol.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, tonight President Trump will take the podium, and he will have a joint address to Congress, and, clearly, to the Nation.

I just heard the minority leader of the Senate come to the floor and talk about President Trump's promises. Well, let me talk about those promises—promises made, promises kept by President Trump.

He has only been in the office now for 7 weeks, and he has a very strong record of accomplishment in those 7 weeks. What did he promise he would do? He said he would cut wasteful Washington spending. Well, that is a promise that he has kept.

What we are seeing is the most comprehensive audit of Federal spending of money in history. This administration already, in just these short weeks, has identified \$55 billion of savings.

President Trump promised to secure the border. Well, he has kept that promise as well. He immediately began deporting criminal illegal immigrants. They are here in the country illegally, and they were criminals—heinous crimes. We are talking about murderers, rapists, drug dealers. The word got out around the world. Illegal border crossings in February dropped to an alltime low.

President Trump said he would unleash American energy. He has kept that promise as well. On day one, President Trump declared a national energy emergency. Now, this is going to unlock America's full energy potential. He withdrew from the Paris climate accord. Did it once before, but Joe Biden put us back in.

What we saw in the Biden administration is they applied handcuffs to American energy producers and American energy production. President Trump said: No, we are not doing that. He has opened Alaska's vast amounts of energy for the American people.

He pulled the plug on Biden's electric vehicle mandates. He reopened 625 million acres of offshore drilling. Remember, Joe Biden, in the final days of his administration, with his midnight regulation to ban that exploration for American energy.

President Trump promised to protect women who participate in sports. He kept that promise. The Trump administration marks the return to common sense.

We have seen that return to common sense, also, Mr. President, in here in the U.S. Senate because we are determined to get America back on track. There is no time to waste.

One measure of our rapid start is the historic pace with which we have been able to confirm members of President Trump's Cabinet.

Senate Republicans have now confirmed 20—20—members of President Trump's Cabinet. We confirmed President Trump's Education Secretary just last evening. So compared to previous Presidents, this is a remarkable pace. More confirmations than President Obama had at this point in 2009; more confirmations than President Biden had in 2021. It surpasses the timeline of any President in recent history.

President Trump's nominees are strong. They are smart. They have a history of success, and that history is going to continue now that they are members of the Cabinet.

Our success has had a direct impact on President Trump's agenda. With his team in place, President Trump has been able to execute effectively and efficiently.

The Senate has also acted decisively to secure the border. Within days of taking office, Senate Republicans passed the Laken Riley Act. The Laken Riley Act is named after a young nursing student in Georgia. She was murdered by an illegal immigrant. She was just out for a jog. We named the bill in her honor. The Laken Riley Act saves American lives. It requires illegal immigrant criminals to be deported. It was bipartisan legislation. And 12 Democrats voted with us to pass this legislation, and it is now law of the land.

The Laken Riley Act sends a clear message that tragedies like this never be allowed to happen again in the United States of America, that the era of open borders is over.

Senate Republicans mean business. After years of crises, we are now securing the border. The numbers tell the story. We are deporting illegal immigrant criminals on a daily basis, and we are also working with the House of Representatives on our shared agenda. We are delivering on the promises that we made to the American people. We are going to secure the border, we will restore peace through strength, we are unleashing American energy, and we are going to stop the Democrats' oncoming freight train of a \$4 trillion tax increase.

Democrats oppose all of these things. They want to raise American public taxes by \$4 trillion. Mr. President, we are going to stop that. President Trump is only 43 days in this office in his historic Presidency, an incredible comeback victory—the comeback king, as I call him from his ability to win this election. He won 312 electoral votes, every one of the battleground States, and this President has not wasted a second, a minute, an hour, or a day in office because he knows how important it is to act quickly.

He is doing that. He is solving the urgent problems facing our Nation, what American people elected him to do, what the American people expect, and it is what the American people are seeing. So the President is working with the House and the Senate, all of us working together to get America back on track, and we are going to deliver what the Americans have asked for: safety and prosperity for the people of this great country.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. 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 Senator from Illinois.

JANUARY 6 PARDONS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I have been honored to serve in the U.S. Senate for a number of years, and I carry with that service a great number of memories. But there is one that is particularly personal that I will never forget. The year was 2021, and the day was January 6.

The Senate Chamber was filled with Members who were witnessing a meeting required by our Constitution, where the Vice President presided over the Senate where the Presiding Officer is sitting. We gathered here and counted the electoral votes to determine who was the President as a result of the 2020 election. It is a fairly routine undertaking, but there is some solemnity to it because the Constitution requires it.

And I can recall that episode because it was a hectic day. It was the same

day that President Trump, leaving the Office because he lost that election in 2020, had called a rally down at the end of the Mall. Thousands of people showed up, and they decided to march on the Capitol at the President's urging and invitation.

It is not unusual in this town or even in this building that protesters would gather to state their purpose, as they are entitled to in a democracy. But this was different. The group that was coming up here was not protesting or gathering for speeches. They had some other intent, and we weren't sure what it was.

I can recall it was a few minutes after 2 in the afternoon on that day. Vice President Pence was sitting where the Presiding Officer is, and in the midst of the proceedings, some group—I believe now that it was the Secret Service—came in and literally physically removed Vice President Pence from where the Presiding Officer is sitting, leaving the chair empty while we were in session. It was a startling moment: What is going on here?

In a few minutes, a representative of the Capitol Police stood at the podium where the Presiding Officer is sitting and made an announcement.

Now, for those that don't know the Capitol Police, they are our security force. They are the ones that keep us safe as we do the duties of our government, and they protect everyone in the building—tourists, staff, everyone. They literally risk their lives for us.

So one of them came and stood before us in uniform and said: There is a group approaching the Capitol, and we ask you all to stay in your seats. This is going to be a safe place here in the Senate Chamber. Others will join you along the walls, and don't worry about it. We are all going to be safe in this building.

It wasn't 10 minutes later that another Capitol policeman came before us and said: Plans have changed. Everyone evacuate the Chamber as quickly as possible.

We went outside and saw through the windows the demonstrators with their signs coming toward the Capitol. Some were beating at the windows, and some were approaching the Capitol from different directions. And we were spirited off to another office building on Capitol Hill where we were protected.

That is a day you will never forget—I will never forget. I have been coming into this building since I was a college student at Georgetown, years ago. This is a special place to me. It is not my office building. It is the U.S. Capitol Building. It carries with it not only a history but a significance as a symbol.

It means something to have a mob take over the Capitol, as happened that day, pushing Members of the House and Senate to hide in broom closets and to leave the building for their own personal safety. I never dreamed that would happen in the United States of America, but I lived it. It happened, and the American people know it hap-

pened because the videos are quite graphic. They tell the story of what was going on that day.

At the end of the day, many of us were in different places, watching as C-SPAN broadcast the rioters coming into this Chamber, spiriting, going through my desk—not just mine but many others—posing for pictures in the Presiding Officer's chair. It was a scene that was sad, tragic, infuriating.

I thought to myself, at the time: What if we had just heard a notice that at the Houses of Parliament—the House of Commons in Parliament—in London, England, the door had been beaten down and a mob had overtaken the Members of Parliament?

You wouldn't believe it. That doesn't happen. This is a civilized country. England—it couldn't happen there.

Well, it didn't. It happened here. As a result of it, the Department of Justice took those people, those violent rioters, seriously and prosecuted almost 1,600 of them of wrongdoing—some of them very serious sentences, some just trespassing. But they were all taken seriously and treated appropriately. They answered under the law for their conduct that fatal day.

So what happened when this new President came to office?

He decided: That isn't what happened at all on January 6. These tourists, these demonstrators, were assaulted by the police.

He ignored the fact that 140 law enforcement officials were injured on that day protecting this building and the people in it. He ignored the fact that three or four people died shortly thereafter because of that experience. He decided that the people who needed our sympathy were the rioters and not the police. And so the President, in one of his first acts of office—President Trump—signed the pardon of some 1,600 individuals.

I have come to the floor to report to you what has happened since, in the few weeks that have passed since that mass pardon by President Trump.

I want to tell you the story, today, of several of the people who were involved in January 6 and pardoned by President Trump. Last week, body camera video was released depicting a traffic-related felony arrest during which a sheriff's deputy fatally shot former January 6 defendant Matthew Huttles—not the first to be shot by a policeman after he was pardoned by President Trump.

The video footage confirmed that there was a struggle during the incident, during which Huttles, a January 6 defendant, raised an object that the sheriff's deputy believed to be a firearm. At the beginning of the traffic stop, Huttles can be seen on video stating:

I just want to let you know that I am a January 6 defendant.

I stormed the Capitol. I'm waiting on my pardon.

Investigators later recovered a load-bearing 9mm handgun and ammunition in

Huttles's vehicle. Huttles was among the 1,600 individuals involved in the January 6 Capitol riot pardoned by President Trump. Huttles had pleaded guilty to one count of entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds for his role in the insurrection. He was sentenced to 6 months in prison.

Peter Schwartz was sentenced to 14 years in prison on charges that included four counts of assaulting police officers during the January 6 attack on the Capitol. Schwartz was seen on body camera footage spraying officers with pepper spray and wielding a baton, and prosecutors allege he threw the first chair at officers, creating an opening that enabled hundreds of rioters to push back the police lines.

Prior to January 6, Schwartz had amassed criminal convictions in more than four different States for crimes including domestic violence, threatening his girlfriend, and assaulting security officers. One of Schwartz's former girlfriends, Shantelle Holeyton, a 43-year-old factory worker who has voted for President Trump three times, she says, recently told CBS News that she fears for her safety now that Schwartz has been pardoned and released. Holeyton reports that Schwartz persistently beat her during their months-long relationship until she called the police in July of 2019, alleging that Schwartz was threatening to kill her and her son.

In reacting to Schwartz's involvement in the insurrection, Holeyton stated:

He found an opportunity to go and be violent. The man thrives on violence. He thrives on people fearing him.

Another of Schwartz's girlfriends, Shelly Stallings, filed a police report in 2020 alleging that Schwartz bit her forehead and punched her in the head.

Schwartz was one of those who was pardoned by President Trump.

Jeremy Brown, one of the last January 6 defendants remaining behind bars since President Trump's blanket pardon, was released from the Federal correctional institution in Atlanta on Wednesday. Brown had not yet been released because prosecutors did not consider one of his two criminal cases to be related to January 6 and thus covered by the pardon.

However, the Justice Department has since reversed course. In April of 2023, Brown was convicted in Tampa, FL, of possessing a short-barrel rifle, a shotgun, and explosive grenades—explosive grenades—and willful retention of a national defense document, all resulting from a January 6-related law enforcement search of his residence in September of 2021. He was sentenced to 87 months in prison for those charges and released by the pardon of President Trump.

This is a horrible situation, and sadly, tragically, these are people who never should have been pardoned by the President. They attacked the police here in this building. They desecrated this Capitol. They were not the

victims. They victimized innocent people who were doing their jobs under the Constitution.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, instead of improving lives or lowering prices for Americans, we are seeing policies in the Trump administration do exactly the opposite.

The President has spent his time trying to systemically dismantle the Federal Government, creating rifts with our closest allies and now imposing restrictive tariffs on our biggest trading partners. The tariffs that he has unleashed—25 percent on Canada and Mexico as well as an additional 10 percent on China—will hurt American consumers and supply chains and undermine American manufacturing.

Illinois is the fourth largest exporter in the Nation. In 2023, our exports to Canada totaled more than \$21 billion—billion. These tariffs will hurt Illinois farmers, workers, and manufacturers, not to mention consumers. Additional tariffs on our three biggest trading partners will add to the economic strain that is already beginning to show under the new administration.

A survey of consumer sentiment published last month recorded this largest month of decline in 4 years due, in large part, to concerns about trade and tariffs. Tariffs are taxes. They are taxes the consumers of America will have to pay. These levels of concern have not been seen since the trade wars in President Trump's first term.

As Americans already struggle under the weight of high housing costs, these tariffs will make things worse. Much of the lumber used to build new homes in the United States comes from Canada, and more than 70 percent of the imports of two essential materials that homebuilders rely on, softwood lumber and gypsum, come from Canada and Mexico. With a 25-percent tariff on imported goods from those two countries, American homebuilders will need to pay more and so will the consumers.

While the President claims that foreign countries will pay for U.S. tariffs, that isn't the truth, and we know what the truth is: The burden of tariffs is carried by American companies and passed on to American consumers.

Indiscriminately slapping tariffs on the goods American consumers need means higher costs, higher costs on groceries, gas, cars, while inspiring retaliatory tariffs and even boycotts on American-made products, further hurting our economy.

I understand we are probably having a rollcall. I see a number of Members coming to the floor.

But President Trump's economic chaos isn't just happening overseas. You see, right now, Congress is in the midst of doing its most basic and essential job: Funding the government. But under the direction of President Trump, instead of coming to the negotiating table to pass a serious, full-year

spending bill that serves the interests of everyday Americans, Congressional Republicans are bargaining away the well-being of working families to pay for tax breaks for billionaires.

And what is the most egregious example of this? Their plan to slash health coverage for millions of Americans who rely on Medicaid.

House Republicans have proposed \$880 billion in cuts to the Medicaid program, and Senate Republicans have similarly put this health program in the crosshairs. Why? Not because they want to lower health care costs or improve our health care system, but because they want to use Medicaid cuts as a piggy-bank for tax breaks to billionaires.

The richest man in the world, Elon Musk, can dance around on stage with a chainsaw, cheering cuts to basic health care programs, but let me explain to you what that means for working families. Medicaid covers 30 million children—nearly half of all children in America—60 percent of seniors in nursing homes, and is the largest funder of addiction and mental health treatment.

In Illinois, 3.4 million people are enrolled in Medicaid, including 1.5 million children. Under Republican plans to slash Medicaid, 775,000 adults who gained health insurance coverage under the Affordable Care Act could lose coverage almost overnight. And for other children, elderly, or disabled Illinoisans who depend on it, they may no longer be able to access lifesaving medical treatment.

Republicans are ignoring the obvious: Medicaid is a lifeline for children's hospitals and rural hospitals in their communities. In Illinois, 60 percent of our 102 counties are rural. Rural hospitals are the backbone of communities in central and southern Illinois. Rural hospitals anchor the local economy—they often are the largest employer in town. And they are a critical access point for health care. If you suffer a farm accident or face a complication with your birth, you cannot afford to drive hours to the nearest hospital.

That's why I have worked for years to improve access to health care in rural areas—working to strengthen rural hospitals and recruit more doctors, dentists, and nurses. But rural hospitals in Illinois and nationwide could be at risk of closure if Republicans put Medicaid on the chopping block. Already, half of rural hospitals in America operate in the red. And for many rural hospitals, Medicaid covers a large percentage of their patients and accounts for a large portion of the hospital's budget.

For HSHS St. Francis Hospital in Litchfield, IL, Medicaid pays for 53 percent of the hospitalizations. For OSF St. Clare Hospital in Princeton, IL, Medicaid pays for 45 percent of hospitalizations. It is 42 percent for SSM St. Mary's Hospital in Centralia, IL.

Do you see the picture? Cuts to Medicaid put rural hospitals in jeopardy.

And if rural hospitals close because of Republican budget cuts, communities will suffer. Children seeking cancer treatment won't be able to access the local care they need. Pregnant women will have to drive further to deliver their babies. And your grandparent will have to wait months to get in to see that diabetes specialist.

If Republicans push forward with their cruel and unpopular funding plan, working families will lose and billionaires will win. It is simple and devastating math. If Americans cannot access health care because funding was slashed to fund tax cuts for the wealthy, if they cannot afford groceries because of an ill-conceived trade war, know that it is because President Trump is the billionaire's president.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). The majority whip.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE RELATING TO "GROSS PROCEEDS REPORTING BY BROKERS THAT REGULARLY PROVIDE SERVICES EFFECTUATING DIGITAL ASSET SALES"—Motion To Proceed

Mr. BARRASSO. I move to proceed to Calendar No. 11, S.J. Res. 3.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 11, S.J. Res. 3, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Internal Revenue Service relating to "Gross Proceeds Reporting by Brokers That Regularly Provide Services Effectuating Digital Asset Sales".

VOTE ON MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

Mr. BARRASSO. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Michigan (Ms. SLOTKIN) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 70, nays 28, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 101 Leg.]

YEAS—70

Alsobrooks	Boozman	Collins
Banks	Britt	Cornyn
Barrasso	Budd	Cortez Masto
Blackburn	Capito	Cotton
Booker	Cassidy	Cramer