

Crapo	Kennedy	Rosen
Cruz	Kim	Rounds
Curtis	King	Schatz
Daines	Lankford	Schiff
Ernst	Lee	Schmitt
Fetterman	Lujan	Schumer
Fischer	Marshall	Scott (FL)
Gallego	McConnell	Scott (SC)
Gillibrand	McCormick	Sheehy
Graham	Moody	Sullivan
Grassley	Moran	Thune
Hagerty	Moreno	Tillis
Hawley	Mullin	Tuberville
Heinrich	Murkowski	Warner
Hoeven	Ossoff	Warneck
Husted	Padilla	Wicker
Hyde-Smith	Paul	Young
Johnson	Ricketts	
Justice	Risch	

NAYS—28

Baldwin	Hirono	Sanders
Bennet	Kaine	Shaheen
Blumenthal	Kelly	Smith
Blunt Rochester	Klobuchar	Van Hollen
Cantwell	Markey	Warren
Coons	Merkley	Welch
Duckworth	Murphy	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murray	Wyden
Hassan	Peters	
Hickenlooper	Reed	

NOT VOTING—2

Lummas	Slotkin
--------	---------

The motion was agreed to.

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”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the joint resolution.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (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”.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CURTIS). The Senator from Maine.

(The remarks of Ms. COLLINS and Ms. BALDWIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 830 are printed in today’s RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

Ms. BALDWIN. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

NOMINATION OF ELBRIDGE COLBY

Mr. SCHMITT. Mr. President, I rise today to argue for a swift and decisive confirmation of Elbridge Colby as Under Secretary of Defense for Policy.

It is common today to hear leaders in the foreign policy establishment talk of upholding the rules-based international order and promoting liberal values and norms. What is much less common is to hear anyone talk about tangible, concrete American interests. Mr. Colby is a welcome exception. He believes that America is a real, concrete nation and people with real, concrete interests and that the fundamental purpose of our foreign policy is to protect and advance those interests.

For the past 30 years, American foreign policy has lurched from disaster to disaster. To be a friend of the reigning consensus is to be an advocate of the same failed ideas that led us to spend trillions of dollars and countless young Americans’ lives for causes and conflicts that were not ours, while leaving us woefully unprepared for the ones that are.

America does not need more of the same. What America needs is a new approach, a new strategy, a new philosophy of strength for the 21st century. That is what Elbridge Colby will deliver.

No one could argue that Mr. Colby isn’t qualified for this role. He spent well over 20 years working in defense and foreign policy, serving in the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and various national security positions at different think tanks.

He served faithfully in the first Trump administration as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Force Development, where he was the lead author of the 2018 National Defense Strategy. From there, he founded a think tank, the Marathon Initiative, and wrote a book called the “Strategy of Denial” outlining his vision for confronting the true geopolitical challenge of our time: deterring—and if necessary, defeating—the threats posed by a rising China.

President Trump’s decision to nominate Mr. Colby to this position was not a mistake. It was intentional. This administration wants to carry out a fundamental and long-overdue reorientation of our Nation’s foreign policy, and Elbridge Colby is a critical component of that mission.

The media tells us that he is controversial. Why? Well, he believes that our foreign policy must prioritize our core interests, and that means that we can’t be everywhere at once, doing everything all the time. His critics say that makes him weak. In reality, it is exactly the opposite. The quickest and most certain path to weakness is to waste our blood and treasure on Wilsonian adventurism abroad as the real threats and enemies of America grow unchecked. For years, Mr. Colby has been one of the lone voices in the foreign policy establishment with a real and viable vision for American strength.

It is true that Mr. Colby believes that the Iraq war was a mistake. He does not believe that a hot war with Iran would serve America’s long-term interests. He believes that a costly and unwinnable proxy war in Ukraine is an obstacle to our ability to rebuild our military and revitalize our industrial base here at home and that our European allies must step up and do more to defend their own continent as the United States transitions to our focus in the Indo-Pacific. On all of these things, the decisive majority of Americans are on his side even if the foreign policy establishment isn’t.

The political class in this city must come to terms with the fact that the

world most of us grew up in no longer exists. President Trump intends to drag this city—kicking and screaming if necessary—into the 21st century. That is what we saw at the White House last week—a new foreign policy centered around uncompromising and unapologetic pursuit of the interests of the American people.

Mr. Colby will play a key role in that project, and I look forward to watching him serve as our next Under Secretary of Defense for Policy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

Mr. REED. Mr. President, on day one, President Trump lit the fuse on Elon Musk’s plan to hollow out the Federal Government by changing the name of an obscure technical office within the White House, the U.S. Digital Services, USDS, and called it DOGE, without congressional authorization, and giving it extraordinary reach into the operations of the Federal Agencies.

Since then, we have heard report after report about how Mr. Musk and DOGE have rammed their way into Agencies not to make smart decisions, not to improve efficiency, not to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse, but to disrupt, denigrate, and demoralize.

And along the way, DOGE has made incredible blunders such as firing and then scrambling to rehire employees at the National Nuclear Security Administration.

Let me repeat that. Mr. Musk and his minions fired the people who keep nuclear weapons safe, and then someone realized, fortunately, within a few days that they had to come back.

And here is another example: Musk and his hackers made the CIA send an unclassified email with the names of its recent hires. Boy, if I was in the Russian Security Service, I would love to get a list—which they did—of everyone who is going into the CIA.

They also cut staff from the Federal Aviation Administration and the National Weather Service who prevent and warn every American of travel and weather dangers. It goes beyond that. Agricultural interests listen daily to the reports, the accurate reports of the Weather Service, so they can plan their crops, so they can plan everything—and that is being withered away. And I think the ultimate goal is to privatize it, which is not the best way to go.

These actions don’t just reflect incredible incompetence; they are dangerous. They undermine national security and increase risks for American citizens.

In any other setting, blunders like these would be grounds for firing, but Musk and DOGE operate with arrogance, impunity, and zero transparency. Millions of Americans are asking: Who are these people?

As the ranking member of the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Subcommittee, the subcommittee that ostensibly oversees the

budget for the White House, USDS, and DOGE, I am asking the same question. Because Congress, like the American people, is being kept in the dark.

As appropriators, we typically work together on a bipartisan basis—no matter which party is in the White House—to get information, to conduct oversight, to ensure that Federal dollars are spent in accordance with the laws passed by Congress. But now, without authorization from Congress, DOGE is recklessly slashing its way through virtually every Federal Agency, from the Office of Personnel Management to Treasury to HUD to State to USAID to the Department of Defense and more.

It is vital that we understand what DOGE is and isn't. While Elon Musk tells us and the American people that DOGE is "maximally transparent," it is not. We still do not have answers to fundamental questions like: What is the scope of DOGE's work? How many people work at DOGE? And who are they? Do they also hold jobs outside the Federal Government? What are their financial holdings and potential conflicts of interest?

Do they have allegiances to foreign governments? Will DOGE respond to requests under the Freedom of Information Act? What are its plans to reform Agencies? Who is DOGE firing and why? And many, many other questions.

And, unfortunately, when DOGE shares information, it is frequently wrong. As the New York Times reported, five of DOGE's biggest claimed savings were deleted from its website because they were inaccurate.

This includes a canceled USAID contract for \$650 million, which was counted by DOGE three times; a canceled Social Security contract was erroneously listed as being worth \$232 million, instead of the actual \$560,000; and a canceled ICE contract was listed as saving \$8 billion instead of \$8 million.

If you are going to name something the Department of Government Efficiency, don't you owe it to the taxpayers to actually do a good job? On top of having zero accountability, DOGE's legal authority to operate is dubious.

DOGE has, essentially, taken over the USDS, which was originally established to help Federal Agencies more adeptly utilize technology to serve the American people. Over the years, USDS helped establish everything from Direct File, which helps taxpayers file their taxes for free, to direct-mail COVID tests to a successful online passport renewal program.

DOGE is now using the hollowed shell of USDS to illegally undo the American Federal Government, moving from Agency to Agency, cutting congressionally appropriated Federal spending, priorities, and even dismantling entire Agencies.

The bottom line is that DOGE, without congressional authorization and without direct funding from Congress, is acting to undermine the Federal Government. And, frankly, contempt

to the U.S. Congress as a constitutional body who creates the law.

The President's challenge in the Constitution is to enforce the laws, not to circumvent the Congress of the United States. Based on press reports, DOGE appears to be populated by a mixture of unelected billionaires, tech executives, and unvetted, inexperienced people, including an individual who was found to have posted racist tweets.

This gang is being granted access to America's most sensitive data like your bank accounts, your Social Security accounts, and, it would seem, a host of classified intelligence. And how are they using this information? How are they protecting this information from our enemies? Is it being shared with outside entities? Is DOGE simply being used to give Mr. Musk, his companies, and his billionaire friends an advantage when competing for government contracts?

We simply don't know what this gang is doing inside the government. Every single day that passes without transparency and congressional access to information about DOGE's funding, staffing, and scope of work is a moment too long.

With the current continuing resolution due to expire on March 14, we have big decisions to make. My hope is that these decisions can be made on a bipartisan basis informed by the facts, but we cannot responsibly fund the government if we do not understand how DOGE has infiltrated it, made it less efficient and less responsive to taxpayers, and, essentially, has circumvented the constitutional responsibilities of the U.S. Congress.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following Members be permitted to speak prior to the lunch recess: Myself, for up to 15 minutes; Senator MURRAY, up to 10 minutes; Senator CANTWELL, up to 5 minutes; and Senator BRITT, for up to 10 minutes.

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

JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, as everybody knows, tonight, President Trump will give an address to a joint session of Congress. I look forward to attending the President's address, and I am happy to welcome my friend Abraham George, who will join me as a guest tonight.

In addition, three other Texans will be joining the President tonight as his guests. Alexis Nungaray from Houston, TX, is an angel mom who lost her lovely 12-year-old daughter Jocelyn. Jocelyn was tragically murdered by two illegal immigrants who, just weeks before, were apprehended and released by the Biden administration.

Next from Texas, Roberto Ortiz from Weslaco is one of our brave veterans who has served nearly a decade in the

U.S. Border Patrol. Roberto's courage in the face of danger has been tested repeatedly as he has been shot on multiple occasions by cartel members while on the line of duty near the Rio Grande River in my home State.

And, finally, Elliston Berry from Aledo, TX, is a 15-year-old victim of computer-generated deepfakes. I applaud Elliston for her courage in joining us here tonight and for using her voice to speak out against the dangers posed by new technologies.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. President, President Trump has rightfully turned the page on a wide array of President Biden's disastrous policies, from reforming our runaway spending through DOGE, the Department of Government Efficiency, to prioritizing investment in semiconductors and manufacturing, to bringing our hostages held in Gaza back home to their families. But perhaps one of his most significant accomplishments thus far—and it has only been about 6 weeks—has been when it comes to border security, something near and dear to my heart and the heart of my 31 million constituents who call Texas home.

Border security played a significant role in the mandate that the President got last November. The past 4 years were marked by President Biden's failure to enforce the law and to secure our border. And this was, without a doubt, a crisis—a humanitarian and public safety crisis—of the former administration's own making. This was truly a manmade crisis.

Starting from the campaign trail, President Biden invited the massive wave of migration by promising a "surge to the border" for asylum seekers. Can you imagine a President inviting a surge to the U.S. border of asylum seekers? This is one promise that, unfortunately, he kept.

But President Biden's failures went far beyond just his rhetoric. In the early days of his Presidency, President Biden basically reversed every policy President Trump had put in place, including the "Remain in Mexico" policy, which has been remarkably effective. In other words, people seeking asylum need to remain in Mexico while their claim is being processed.

And the truth is, only about 15 percent of people who claim asylum in America who appear in front of an immigration judge ultimately are granted asylum. They meet the legal criteria; whereas, the other 85 percent do not.

The Biden administration also halted construction of President Trump's border wall and instead used Federal funds to store already-paid-for wall materials. So not only did the taxpayer pay for those materials, they had to pay for the storage of those materials when they weren't used for their intended purpose.

As the border crisis continued to evolve for the worse, President Biden ended title 42, the COVID 19-era policy that was our last line of defense to keep a lid on the migrant crisis when

President Biden refused to enforce other laws.

After undoing the successful Executive orders made by the first President Trump administration, President Biden then decided to circumvent Congress and attempt to make illegal immigration legal using temporary programs that were never intended for that purpose. His Department of Homeland Security created the CBP One app—short for Customs and Border Protection—an app for your phone which allowed migrants to literally schedule a visit to a point of entry so they could then claim asylum and then enter the country.

Another Biden-Harris administration program allowed up to 30,000 migrants a month to enter from four countries—Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. So that was 360,000 migrants who were basically told, if you come, you can stay in the United States. But they were conferred a temporary status that left them all in legal limbo.

Let's not forget the Biden White House cooking the books on illegal immigration by abusing the parole system. "Parole" is a word that people who are familiar with the criminal justice system understand. But this is different. In immigration terms, parole means simply you were released into the United States even if you didn't claim a right to be able to stay—for example, a right to asylum. You are just simply released as a border control measure to avoid bad publicity at the border when people were sleeping in the streets and lines were stacking up.

Of course, we know what the tragic consequences of these misguided policies look like—a crisis of mass illegal immigration, human trafficking, drug trafficking across our southern border.

Approximately, 100,000 Americans die each year as a result of drugs that come across the southern border—approximately, 70,000 from synthetic opioids, like fentanyl, which is the leading cause of death for young people between the ages of 18 and 45. During all 4 years of the Biden administration, a number of illegal migrant encounters with CBP totaled over 10 million. That is basically 10 million people showing up and saying let me into your country, and the Biden administration said: Come on in.

But on top of that, there were about 1.7 million "got-aways." "Got-aways" are people who were evading law enforcement who appear on some sensor—a camera or some other sensor—and evade law enforcement. Of course, now we know they are freely roaming the interior of the United States.

Let me ask you this. If you know that you could show up at the border and be allowed to enter—basically, ushered into the country—why in the world would you evade Border Patrol? Well, I think the simple answer is these are people who knew that they would not be able to enter because of criminal records because they were transporting drugs or engaged in some other illegal activity. Yet they made their way into the interior of the United States.

Fentanyl, which I mentioned a moment ago, was manufactured from Chinese precursor chemicals, smuggled through the open border, which has taken tens of thousands of lives. And the people in Texas—the 31 million people that I am honored to represent—have felt the burden of President Biden's disastrous border policies most acutely because we are closest to the problem. We are ground zero.

Governor Abbott, our outstanding Governor, and the Texas Legislature filled the gap when the Federal Government refused to do its job along the border. An international border is the responsibility of the Federal Government, not the State government. But what is the State supposed to do if the Federal Government says: "We don't care about the law. We are not going to enforce it. It is up to you"?

Well, Governor Abbott and the Texas Legislature stepped up, and they spent roughly \$11.1 billion to fill the gap that should have been filled by the Federal Government. For that reason, I am insisting that Congress fulfill Governor Abbott's request to be reimbursed \$11.1 billion that the State taxpayers had to spend, that rightfully should have been the expense of the Federal Government and Federal taxpayers all across the country.

There can be no doubt that this historic crisis was the direct result of President Biden's policies. That is one of the reasons why I believe not only did he not run but that Vice President Harris lost the election. It was a rejection of those open-border policies.

I am looking forward to hearing the President discuss tonight the incredible strides his administration has made in just about 6 weeks since his inauguration. Nowhere is that success more apparent than when it comes to border security.

After 4 years of record highs, CBP is now facing record lows. The Border Patrol tells me: Now we can do our job. We are not relegated to changing diapers or transporting migrants from one facility to another. We can actually keep out the worst of the worst and enforce the laws when it comes to border security.

As soon as President Trump was elected, even before he took office, the migrant flows began to subside. That is called deterrence. If you know the law is going to be enforced and you know you are not going to be successful making your way into the country, why would you spend thousands of dollars in order to pay off a cartel member to smuggle you up to the border?

During November and December of last year after the election, encounters were at their lowest levels between the ports of entries—the lowest levels since August of 2020. In the first 2 weeks of January, Customs and Border Protection encounters were nearly 50 percent lower than they were at the same point in January 2021—50 percent lower. During the latter half of the month, when President Trump actually took office,

apprehensions fell by a staggering 85 percent compared to the same period in 2024.

You know, the statement is often said: Elections have consequences. One of the most important consequences of President Trump's election on November 5 was we are now reestablishing border security. And the people of this great country are safer for it.

During the entire month of January, there were less than 1,500 apprehensions a day, a nearly 40-percent decline from December of last year. And just 1 week ago, Customs and Border Protection hit a 15-year low of only 200 encounters in 1 day at the southern border. These numbers are pretty impressive, but they are not at all surprising. They are a direct result of the deterrent effect created by President Trump and Secretary Noem's policy changes. Migrants know that a Trump administration means our laws will be enforced.

If you can make your way into our country using legal means, by all means, do so. As I mentioned earlier, our country is the most generous in the world when it comes to legal immigration. We naturalize about a million people a year. So if you have a desire to come to America, do it through legal means, not through illegal means.

Instead of rolling out the welcome mat like President Biden, President Trump started his second administration by turning the traffic light red instead of green. On day one, President Trump declared a national emergency—which it was—at the southern border, giving him greater flexibility to implement his Executive orders. He reinstated the "Remain in Mexico" policy and ended President Biden's disastrous catch-and-release policies.

Secretary Noem, our new Secretary of Homeland Security, began her tenure in the President's Cabinet by sending a clear video message to migrants that she intends to enforce the laws that prevent illegal immigration. But she didn't stop there. Under President Trump and his administration, ICE arrests—Immigration and Customs Enforcement—ICE arrests have increased more than 600 percent, which include arrests of criminal migrants which have doubled. They returned to a commonsense, case-by-case approach to humanitarian parole, which had been abused under the Biden administration, where it was used as a way to have mass releases of migrants at the border who had made no legitimate claim to be able to stay. They were just released.

Secretary Noem has also clawed back the \$80 million a month spent by FEMA to house illegal migrants in luxury hotels in New York City. That is where your tax dollars went—to put people who had no legal claim to stay in the United States in hotels in New York City to the tune of \$80 million.

These policies are welcome. They are good news to my constituents in Texas and I believe to people across the country.

There is a reason why Secretary Mayorkas, the former Secretary of Homeland Security who was responsible for implementing the border security measures of the Biden administration—there was a reason why he was impeached by the House of Representatives. He simply did not do the job he had sworn to do. Well, Texans have had to bear the brunt of open borders for 4 years, which includes rampant crime and deadly fentanyl.

I look forward to working with President Trump and Secretary Noem to continue the important work they have begun to keep Americans and Texans safe.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, no one wants a shutdown—well, actually, no one except Elon Musk, who recently said that sounds great, or Donald Trump or Russ Vought.

That is why I have been at the table this entire time ready to pass a bill that protects key investments and makes sure that Congress—Congress, not Donald Trump or Elon Musk—decides whether or not our public schools or our lifesaving cancer research gets funded.

Unfortunately, Republican leadership told their Members last week to walk away from the negotiating table—which raises the risk of a shutdown—in an attempt to pass a clean yearlong continuing resolution that would actually give Trump and Musk exactly what they want, fewer restraints and more power over Federal spending so they can pick winners and losers as they see fit, which would hurt all of our constituents.

Nonetheless, I am urging Republican leadership to come back to the table, if they are willing to do that, and work with us on full-year funding bills, the type of work we do together every year and prevent a shutdown while we do that.

We cannot stand by and accept a yearlong power grab CR that would help Elon take a chain saw to programs that families rely on like yours or keeps our Agencies together, that keep our communities safe.

We actually have a job to do here, Republicans and Democrats, to be a voice for our constituents, to advocate for the funding they need, and to get support back to our communities.

I heard my House Republican colleagues say they will not restrict a Republican President's powers. I want to be clear. What I am asking for is to work together to make sure, as we write and negotiate these full-year spending bills, that our laws get followed. I welcome and I want everyone to know I am open to any and all ideas about how we can work together to do that.

I am confident we can get this done. I am ready to pass a short-term CR immediately to take down the risk of a

shutdown so that we can finish our negotiations and write our full-year spending bills, which is our job to do. Today, on a topic I believe appropriators actually on both sides of the aisle would agree with, we need far more information and transparency and accountability from the Trump administration in order to write these bills because here is one big problem: How are we supposed to fund the government when many of our Agencies today are not responding to our questions and we have no picture—clear picture—of what is actually or who is actually in charge of many of our Agencies?

It is clear as day there have been a lot of dramatic changes made across the government. Agencies are being illegally shuttered; workers are being fired by the thousands—again, often in direct violation of laws we have passed—and hundreds of billions of dollars in Federal programs and grants have been frozen, unfrozen, and frozen again. We have had contracts that have been recklessly canceled, some accidentally and then restarted, not to mention the workers who were fired and rehired.

It is incredibly chaotic, and it makes it much harder to write our legislation that actually responds to these latest developments when programs are switching on and off again like a 2-year-old who is playing with a light switch and when the number of people and programs illegally terminated remains unclear. It is much more difficult to write funding bills for Department programs when we have no idea what the Department is actually doing or what the actual plan is for next year or if it is actually they or, perhaps, DOGE making the plans in the first place. We are seeing decisions made and reversed and made and ignored—made by people who have no authority to make them, and yet they are seemingly being implemented.

It is not just the whirlwind of decisions that is causing this chaos; it is the complete lack of transparency and accountability surrounding these decisions from Trump and Musk that makes it all but impossible to get a straight answer.

When we have questions that urgently need answers, like: Why has this energy program been frozen or when will the NIH grants start up again or which VA contracts have actually been scrapped or how many workers have been pushed out? then it helps if we know who is actually in charge.

When our constituents have problems that require solutions quickly or they will have to close a business or lay people off or lose their family farms, then it matters that we can get the right person on the phone to get things resolved.

Yet, when there is information we urgently need so we can write our funding bills and avoid a shutdown, like Agencies' priorities or unexpected challenges or just the basic nuts and bolts of stuff—to say nothing of the in-

formation we need to address the very extraordinary circumstances and decisions of the past few weeks—it is totally unclear who we should actually be talking to if we want answers that actually reflect the reality of what is happening. It is totally unclear who is actually making these decisions and who is actually in charge. Appropriators have now sent over 30 letters to Agencies since January 20, asking just to understand Agency actions, and that is to say nothing of the efforts from me and my staff to get answers to our emails and our calls, but the answers have been few and very far between.

What is more, just because we hear something from someone who should know and just because we hear from someone who should be in charge, we have found that it does not mean it is actually true. There has been more than one time in the past few weeks when we have been told one thing only to see the reality is entirely different. Like, for example, when the OMB funding freeze was implemented and we were told it wouldn't affect Head Start, except that it did affect Head Start. Providers in my State were locked out of that payment system for days even after the funding freeze itself was rescinded.

It seems like the only thing that has been consistent about the last few weeks is that every time there has been chaos, every time I see actions that fly in the face of laws we have passed—not to mention common sense—or contradict what I have heard from Agency leaders, DOGE has been at the center of it. We have seen DOGE absolutely trample the authority of Congress and other Federal Agencies, including officials Congress confirmed.

For example, while Secretary Rubio instituted a recklessly broad and illegal freeze of all foreign assistance funding, he publicly announced exceptions for a limited set of programs, including lifesaving aid, the basic idea being that we probably shouldn't let HIV spread rampant, and we probably shouldn't let food grown right here in America rot in ports while children starve. Causing mass death through pointless negligence is not really a good strategy for bolstering our global reputation. It is cruel, and it is self-defeating.

So, as Secretary of State, he made the exception, but DOGE had other plans, because on the rare occasion that what was left of USAID staff who had not been sidelined was able to clear these payments through the Agency's interim leadership—surprise—DOGE staffers would veto those payments anyway. Keep in mind, we know about this not because DOGE disclosed it or State disclosed it. We know only because of reporting.

That is not how this works. Congress and the American people we represent should not be out of the loop, especially given the serious stakes here and the serious questions that remain, like: On what authority did they veto those

payments? Whose orders did they use to overrule the Secretary?

I, for one, would very much like to know, because while the Secretary is guilty of plenty of attacks on his workforce and programs, it certainly seems like the Secretary of State got steamrolled on numerous occasions without even knowing it. If that is the case, who are we supposed to talk to with questions about States' funding needs—the Secretary or the two DOGE minions who actually have their hands directly on the levers of power here?

And let's not forget about what happened at Treasury. DOGE wanted access to our most secure systems. Agency officials told them no, and then the Agency officials were told they are fired. That sent a chilling message to our Federal workers: You stand up to DOGE at your own peril.

It is not just Treasury. DOGE has been worming its way into Department after Department, making a beeline for the most sensitive systems, including ones storing my constituents' sensitive financial data, and bulldozing over anyone who stands in their way for any reason. We don't even know who all of these people are or whether they even have security clearances. They have even had people fired for denying them access to classified material beyond their security levels. That is how completely unchecked their power has become. We have incredibly little insight into what they are actually doing with those sensitive systems. We have seen DOGE claim they can only view some data. That is already deeply concerning, but there are also plenty of indications they have been given more power at times. They are interested in tinkering around with some of these systems, too, or are unaccountably blocking payments like we saw at USAID.

Let's talk about the Defense Department because, first, Secretary Hegseth was saying he wanted to revive the "warrior spirit" at the Department, but now he is telling employees to reply to DOGE's weekly emails. He is firing thousands of defense personnel, and he is asking every corner of DOD to propose major cuts.

So, as an appropriator trying to write full-year bills that fund our military, which is it—major increases or major cuts? And who do I ask about Department needs? Is it up to the Secretary or up to DOGE? Who at DOGE is even steering this ship? We need to know this kind of thing, and we really needed to, like, know yesterday because we have a deadline coming up for funding the military.

We have some serious questions for whoever is in charge about how the administration is approaching things. When I say "whoever is in charge," I don't mean who is in charge on paper, because it seems like there is a big disconnect. I mean, Who is actually making decisions and driving actions at our Agencies and at DOGE for that matter?

Look. First, Elon was running DOGE with Vivek. Then it was just Elon.

Then it supposedly wasn't Elon at all, but then Elon kept right on posting about hiring decisions like someone in charge and rehiring an individual who resigned after their blatant racism came to light. He kept right on doing press availabilities with the President in the Oval Office to discuss his work at DOGE like someone in charge. So it sure looks like Elon is still the head of DOGE. Even after we were all finally told, with great supposed certainty, that DOGE was actually being run by another person no one had ever mentioned, we then promptly learned, oh, she is on vacation, and the very next day, we saw Elon briefing the Cabinet on what he is doing at DOGE.

If that all seems confusing or contradictory, I don't think it is an accident as much as a smokescreen—one that seems designed to hide the obvious fact that Elon Musk is the one who is calling the shots at DOGE. All of us here in Congress really need to know that because he is the richest man in the world, with billions, actually, in government contracts on the line. He is, apparently, in charge of his own conflicts of interest. And we are just supposed to trust him? Has he recused himself from a single decision? We haven't heard anything about that.

As a steward of taxpayer dollars who wants to make sure the bills we write are implemented to help my constituents, not Elon Musk's bottom line, I would like to know: Did the owner of SpaceX recuse himself from decisions gutting NASA? Did the owner of Tesla interfere at all in the funding freezes that hurt his competition in the electric vehicle market? Does the guy who posted criticizing of Verizon's work for FAA and pitching his own company's Starlink as an alternative have anything to do with the reports the government may reverse course now on the Verizon contract? Did the guy selling satellite internet have any role in halting funds that were helping my constituents have access to broadband?

What about all of the watchdogs who have been fired—people reviewing Neuralink devices at the FDA? people at the Agency that reviews the safety of Tesla's self-driving cars? or the inspector general looking into Elon's connections to foreign governments?

Despite what Musk likes to pretend, it is not in the slightest bit transparent for him alone to be deciding what he hides and what he shares about his role in government, nor is it transparent when DOGE is posting updates that are often completely inaccurate—from getting basic math wrong to getting wrong basic timelines of what Trump did versus Biden to not understanding how our contracts work and counting the same cuts over and over and over again. They aren't being transparent. They are muddying up the waters with falsehoods and disinformation and making it that much harder for us to write meaningful funding bills in the next few days.

I mean, if DOGE doesn't even know what programs they have cut and how

much they have cut, how are we supposed to understand how these decisions hurt our constituents? How are we supposed to write legislation that rejects the cuts we find harmful or even aligns if there are areas of agreement?

We need real answers from DOGE, and we need them as soon as possible. So, once again, I am requesting that Elon Musk come before Congress for a hearing in order to be held accountable to the American people. Tell us: What exactly are you doing? Why are you firing Federal employees whose salaries are covered by fees, not by taxpayer dollars? Why are you firing our veterans by the thousands who are doing work to support our communities? Why are you planning to fire the people who make sure seniors get their Social Security checks? Who are the people who work for you? How were they vetted? What are your long-term plans for this Agency? Based on what authority are you overruling our Secretaries, directing Federal workers, and ignoring the laws we have passed here in Congress?

America is waiting. We are losing valuable time. Congress and the American people deserve answers, and we need them to do their jobs.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise to speak today on important public policy issues related to my State's economy and appreciate the opportunity to follow our senior Senator, Senator MURRAY, who is articulating the impact of some of these so important public policy issues on the State of Washington.

Trade is the lifeblood of the State of Washington and our economy. Farmers in my State export \$7.5 billion worth of agriculture products a year. That was the number from 2023—\$7.5 billion. So anytime somebody starts a trade war, I guarantee you, you are going to get our attention.

Under the President's trade war, the farmers in my State are going to be the first victims. Trump said to our farmers yesterday on Truth Social, "Tariffs will go on external products on April 2. Have fun!"

Have fun? Have fun? When retaliatory tariffs strike our farmers, just as they did in the first Trump administration, it is not going to be fun; it is going to be a nightmare for our farmers. And many of the farmers in my State worry that they will be able to farm at all.

It is not like they are going to lose farmland. There are rich people, billionaires, software executives who will buy farmland. We are going to lose farmers. I know this because we have already been through this trade war, with many of my farmers struggling to overcome the damage that was wrought during the first Trump administration.

The last time we went down this road, we lost the apple market because

of retaliatory tariffs. We had a \$120 million market that basically collapsed, practically overnight, in India. And I traveled to India and worked hard over several years to lift those tariffs, and now, we finally are back growing our exports exponentially, but the market still isn't fully recovered, and now, people are questioning what is going to happen next.

I heard from a grower in my State who said, "The alarms in ag are sounding. The band has stopped playing, and the last lifeboats are leaving the ship. We cannot endure another cycle similar to the one that was started seven years ago when tariffs were first put in place. And without meaningful, long-lasting solutions, you may very well be looking at the last generation of farm families."

That is just one of my constituents. He doesn't sound like he is having fun. These family legacies, built on generations of work, cannot be lost in a trade war. You can't get them back once they are gone.

I hope my colleagues will slow down on this tariff tirade. Under article I, section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, Congress has the power to set duties and regulate foreign commerce. However, Congress has spent the last 80 years delegating its tariff authority to Presidents.

You can say, okay, well, that might have been okay because previous Democrat and Republican Presidents worked to lower tariffs and to open up markets. I have voted for many of those trade agreements. But this President, I believe, is abusing this authority. He calls it an emergency. He is using the trade wars to supposedly force countries to do things like changing their border policies.

I believe it is time for Congress to start taking back some of that power and considering how we are going to protect the family farm.

We know this—that in my State, families are paying more for groceries. They are paying more at the gas pump. They are paying more for electricity bills. And they are seeing the stock market plummet because, as businesses grapple with Trump's unnecessary trade war, businesses are concerned about the long-term impacts of the supply chain and the cost of those tariffs.

The American people want to see the administration tackle inflation and the high cost of everything. When President Trump was on the campaign trail, he talked about inflation. He said, "Starting day one, we will end inflation and make sure that America is affordable again and bring down prices on all goods." Well, I don't think that is what is happening today.

The Wall Street Journal editorial board put it well this morning when they wrote: "Trump takes the dumbest tariff plunge." I agree. We don't need to be doing this.

These tariffs are attacks on groceries bought by every American. Canada is

the largest exporter of meat to the United States, while 77 percent of fresh vegetables are imported from Mexico and 11 percent are imported from Canada. So costs are going up on every American who is buying, and that means they will also buy less.

The tariffs on Canada and Mexican goods that President Trump is planning would cost American families an estimated up to \$2,000 per year. According to Anderson Economic Group, tariffs could raise the price of a new car as much as \$12,000. I am pretty sure nobody has extra money for a new car.

Housing costs—one of the biggest drivers on inflation, but President Trump's tariffs would drive up the cost of construction material, making it even more expensive to address our housing shortage, slow our new home construction, and one analysis found that tariffs could push home construction up by 4 to 6 percent over the next 12 months.

I can tell you, we already have expensive housing in the Northwest. We can't afford another 4 to 6 percent. And the tariffs also create supply chain disruptions, making it harder to find alternative sources of materials, delaying projects that are already underway, and these short-term sticker shocks will put long-term pressure on housing affordability, making the problem worse—not solving it.

Just last week, when people want to talk about GDP and where this is going, it was amazing that the Atlanta Fed was forecasting GDP growth over 2 percent for the first quarter of 2025. That is literally what this line here was discussing, that the consensus was 2 percent, and even the Fed was weighing in on that.

But we can see when we got to February, we fell off a cliff. We fell off a cliff. And why? Because now the Atlanta Fed is saying we had one swing of 5 percent in just 1 week. And now, this drop is the representation of a cliff that President Trump is pushing the American economy over.

So you can see they are going down to negative—not just zero growth, but negative. We can't afford that, and we can't afford the stock market dropping 700 points yesterday.

The only way that we can work together is that if my colleagues here will start talking about these tariff issues. We don't need to weaken our institutions here; we need to strengthen them. And our colleagues need to work together to resolve these issues.

I would say, too, that as my colleagues start to plan how we deal with these budget issues, that we should also keep in mind that some of the cuts that these Agencies have been facing are really the cuts to some of the most technical jobs the U.S. Government has.

Whether you are talking about NOAA or the National Weather Service or the National Institutes of Health or the National Science Foundation or the U.S. Department of Agriculture—they

have all been targeted for reductions. These Agencies are critical to our economic growth and to our security. And at a time when we are seeing more extreme weather events or more floods or more wildfires, why shouldn't we be investing more in weather forecasting, not less?

And when you look at NOAA workers who support our commercial and recreation and Tribal fisheries—they employ 1.7 million people, including thousands in the State of Washington. Why would you cut specialized workforce that are helping support the growth of GDP? Because you want to basically cut those technical workers at the same time you are putting on tariffs?

In 2023, the National Institute of Health awarded \$1.2 billion in highly competitive grants to the State of Washington—65 different organizations. This supported 12,000 jobs and generated \$3 billion in economic activity. But DOGE wants to cap the overhead expenses of research. University of Washington Medicine tells me that this would leave them with shortfalls and that they might have to stop clinical trials that are underway. You can't just stop medical research like it is a faucet.

Once halted, the research, the data, the clinical trials, the patients, the laboratories, the equipment, all that led to innovation—will be lost. You think you just turn that back on? You know, these kinds of ideas sound great, but they are not well thought out. It is literally throwing tax dollars away.

Tonight, my guest at the State of the Union will be Dr. Paul Lange from the University of Washington. With support of Federal funding, Dr. Lange helped develop early detection tests for prostate cancer. Because of these tests and other treatment breakthroughs, we have seen a decrease in the death rate from prostate cancer. From 1993 to 2022, it dropped by one-half—significant progress.

That is why we need research dollars to save lives. Similarly, Washington State University researchers actively test on novel drug treatment for advanced prostate cancer at Sharma Lab. If its work is disrupted, they say that "risk potentially is high, not being able to replace data, and endangering the ultimate viability of potentially lifesaving treatments."

There are lives that might not be saved because of these budget cuts. So it is time that Congress gets involved, that we fight for the science that we believe will save lives, move our country forward and grow our GDP, and help our farmers by stopping these trade wars, and putting our farmers back in charge of growing an economy for the future.

I hope that we don't cut ARS funding that USDA depends on. I hope that we will give hope to our future constituents and the growth that we need to grow our economy instead of cutting our opportunity.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

(The remarks of Mrs. BRITT pertaining to the submission of S. 846 and S. 847 are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

Mrs. BRITT. I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:20 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. BRITT).

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"—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 151

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I come to the floor today because I am concerned about President Trump's actions to, I believe, start a trade war with our top two trading partners, Canada and Mexico.

All goods coming from Canada and Mexico, as of midnight last night—I guess midnight today—face a 25-percent tax; that is, all except Canadian energy, which is taxed at 10 percent. Trump's tariffs will make everything from gas to heating, to groceries, to lumber and more, more expensive for everyday Americans.

I think it bears repeating that tariffs are paid by consumers. They are paid by Americans, not by other countries. And what the President is doing amounts to a new tax for Americans. For example, heating oil and propane that keeps hundreds of thousands of Granite Staters warm in the winter is going to cost more. We are going to add about \$150 to \$250 to the cost of heating homes in New Hampshire.

And gas prices are going to go up. In New Hampshire, half of the fuel in our cars and trucks comes from Canada, and U.S. refineries across the Midwest use Canadian oil.

The United States imports 80 percent of its potash fertilizer from Canada, and this tariff makes farming and food more expensive.

It is unclear how the American auto industry is going to continue to operate. Ford's CEO said these tariffs will "blow a hole in the U.S. industry that we have never seen," with up to \$12,000 added to the cost of a car.

And this will make lumber and electrical equipment that we need to build housing—at a time when housing is al-

ready in short supply—it will make them more expensive and harder to find.

Those are just a few examples.

There are countless other imports that American businesses and families rely on that are going to be hit hard, and these tariffs do nothing to bring down those costs. They do just the opposite.

These tariffs could add \$1,200 to an average household's yearly cost, and we won't have to wait very long for the impact to be felt. It is already being felt on Wall Street and the stock market. Target's CEO said this morning that the consumer "will likely see price increases over the next couple of days." And for small businesses, these tariff taxes will be felt by small businesses in all of our States.

I was here, a month ago today, sharing stories from businessowners in New Hampshire who weren't sure how they were going to keep operating if specialized machinery that they can only get from Canada suddenly costs 25 percent more. Since that time, I have heard from even more people in New Hampshire, more small businesses.

Last week, I heard from a small company in Windham, NH, that makes allergen-free cookies, and they can only get certain ingredients for those cookies from Canada. The CEO built her business, which now employs 30 people, and now she can't be sure if they are even going to be able to keep going, let alone keep growing.

When I spoke with business representatives across New Hampshire last month, the theme they kept coming back to was "uncertainty." As a former small businessowner, I know that uncertainty is the most destabilizing aspect of running and growing a business. Yet that is what this administration keeps creating.

Yesterday, we learned that new orders from manufacturers dropped in February for the first time in 22 years. For the first time in 22 years, new orders from manufacturers dropped because companies can't work with this level of uncertainty.

Last Wednesday, the President was talking about Canadian tariffs going into effect April 2. The very next morning, he announced 25 percent tariffs would go into effect today. The whiplash is hard to imagine.

I spoke, last month, about a bus company, C&J Bus Lines, in New Hampshire that was worried about these tariffs and what it would mean for the bottom line. Well, the CEO moved up his delivery date to get three buses in late March before these taxes were set to go into effect, but his costs just went up more than \$450,000.

Businesses plan months, quarters, or years in advance. They need to place orders and plot out their growth in order to succeed. How can they plan when they can't even know whether their costs are going to go up 25 percent overnight? How can a developer know if they can start building the

housing that New Hampshire desperately needs if their lumber costs 25 percent more overnight? And how can a family already struggling with high costs continue to pay the rent or put food on the table if their household costs are going to go up \$1,200 this year?

I want families and businesses to know that the whims of this President are not going to cause them to break the bank on everyday items they need to get by. That is why I introduced the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes on Imported Goods Act. It is a simple change, really. It says that the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, or IEEPA, can no longer be used to place taxes on imports.

If the President needs to block some dangerous product, he still can. But if there is a real threat, we would want to stop it, not just add a tariff tax. That is what my bill does. It would stop these tariffs on goods and energy coming from Canada and Mexico, and it would give businesses and families more certainty to plan for the future and to keep their hard-earned dollars in their pockets.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 151 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Madam President, reserving the right to object, IEEPA is a powerful tool that provides the President with a range of authorities to protect our national security. With all the challenges facing our Nation, now is not the time to be limiting Presidential power, and that is exactly what Senator SHAHEEN's bill would do.

Instead, we must use every tool available to combat these threats, and we are already seeing results. As an example, Colombia accepted migrant return flights. We have seen Mexico and Canada take initial credible steps to combat fentanyl and illegal immigration. Now is not the time to tie the hands of President Trump.

Thank you, and I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate through regular order to ensure that we take every step to protect our national security.

Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I know that my colleague from Oregon wants to speak to this issue, but I just want to respond in a couple of ways.

I know my colleague from South Carolina cares about the issues that I am going to address, but he mentioned fentanyl, and that is what the President has used to justify the tariffs. He