

his remaining 5 months as majority leader, he didn't bring a single fiscal year 2025 appropriations bill to the floor. So it is absolutely rich for him to be coming down to the floor now to call for a short-term CR—another short-term CR—to negotiate fiscal 2025 legislation. He had his chance for months.

I am no fan of continuing resolutions. In fact, I intend to do my very best to ensure that, from here on out, the government is funded through appropriations bills that proceed through regular order. But at this point, our best option is a continuing resolution to fund the remainder of fiscal year 2025 and clear the decks for the fiscal year 2026 appropriations process to begin, because, while the Democrat leader may have forgotten, given his decision to ignore regular-order appropriations last year, it is almost time to start considering fiscal year 2026 appropriations bills.

And I fully intend for us to consider them on the floor. My goal is to schedule floor action for every fiscal year 2026 appropriations bill that comes out of the committee, where they can be debated, amended, and passed for further negotiation with the House.

And that, of course, will require cooperation from Democrats. But I hope—I really hope—the Democrats will remember this situation, and others that we have been placed in, and work in partnership with Republicans to restore the regular-order appropriations process.

Continuing resolutions are never the preferred option, but thanks to the Democrat leader's decision to abandon the fiscal year 2025 appropriations process, the continuing resolution we have before us is the best option we have to fund the government for the balance of this year.

So it is time for the Democrat leader to acknowledge that it is his decisions that put us here and urge his colleagues to accept the situation and vote to fund the government rather than let it shutdown at midnight on Friday. If he doesn't, he will have the American people to answer to.

SENATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, Senators have been seeing a lot of each other lately—in fact, too much, some might say. The Senate is hopefully about to wrap up its 10th consecutive week in session—the Senate's longest in-session stretch in over 15 years—10 weeks that includes late nights, weekend work, and even an all-night session. We have a lot of accomplishments to report back to our constituents when we are back in our States next week.

The Senate has confirmed 21 members of President Trump's Cabinet, and we have done it at the fastest pace since 2001. That is right. The Senate has gotten through hearings, markups, and floor votes on 21 Cabinet nominees at a record pace. As a result, President Trump has more of his Cabinet in place

today than any President since George W. Bush. We have also confirmed a lot of sub-Cabinet officials and a new FBI Director. Senate committees are continuing to hold hearings and send more of the President's nominees to the floor for a vote.

The Senate Republican majority has also been working to execute our legislative agenda. At the top of the priority list is securing the border.

The first bill we sent to President Trump's desk was the Laken Riley Act, which ensures that criminal illegal immigrants are detained when they are arrested for certain crimes and not returned to America's streets. Senator BRITT led the debate on this bill on the floor, and we had an amendment process that made this bill stronger by adding Senator ERNST's bill, Sarah's Law, and elements of Senator BUDD's bill, the POLICE Act.

Senate Republicans also passed a budget resolution to unlock the process to provide resources to carry out President Trump's border agenda. We have already seen border crossings plummet in response to President Trump's border security measures. Criminal illegal immigrants have been arrested and deported from cities around the country. But to continue these efforts and maintain a secure border will require additional resources, and we are determined to deliver.

We are also working to address the fentanyl crisis by passing the HALT Fentanyl Act. The HALT Fentanyl Act would permanently classify fentanyl-related substances as schedule I drugs and provide law enforcement with the critical tools to go after the people who are bringing this poison into our country and killing Americans. I expect that we will pass this bill soon.

Senate Republicans are also working to eliminate some of the Biden administration's burdensome regulations. As part of our promise to unleash American energy, we passed Senator HOEVEN's resolution to block the Biden natural gas tax, and we also passed Senator KENNEDY's resolution overturning a rule that would have stifled energy development in America's waters. To promote financial freedom, we passed resolutions from Senators RICKETTS and CRUZ to protect America's financial privacy. There will be more regulatory relief to come.

It has been a busy couple of months, and we have gotten a lot done. We could have done even more if Democrats hadn't repeatedly chosen to use the filibuster. That is right. A few short months ago, when Democrats were in the majority, they were making plans to destroy the filibuster. Now that they have been in the minority for 10 weeks, they have already used the filibuster three times.

What are the bills that they blocked? Well, first, there was the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act—a bill that simply requires doctors to give a baby born alive after a failed abortion the same medical care that

any other baby would receive. Then there was the ICC sanctions bill, which would have supported our ally Israel and protected American servicemembers abroad. Just last week, every Democrat joined a filibuster against Senator TUBERVILLE's bill to keep biological men out of women's and girls sports. Now Democrats are threatening yet a fourth filibuster—this time to shut down the Federal Government tomorrow.

I have to say, it is funny how Democrats' opposition to filibuster changes with the prevailing winds.

I promised last year that 2025 would be a busy year, and these past 10 weeks are just the beginning. Republicans are working to deliver for the American people, and we are just getting started.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR EN BLOC—S. 1008, H.R. 1156

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I understand there are bills at the desk due a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The leader is correct.

The clerk will read the bills by title for the second time.

The senior assistant executive clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1008) to provide equitable treatment for the people of the Village Corporation established for the Native Village of Saxman, Alaska, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 1156) to amend the CARES Act to extend the statute of limitations for fraud under certain unemployment programs, and for other purposes.

Mr. THUNE. In order to place the bills on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I would object to further proceeding en bloc.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bills will be placed on the calendar.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 41.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of Christopher Landau, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of State.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant executive clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 41, Christopher Landau, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of State.

John Thune, Katie Britt, Bernie Moreno, Mike Rounds, Tom Cotton, Markwayne Mullin, John Barrasso, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Rick Scott of Florida, John Hoeven, Roger Marshall, Thom Tillis, Jim Justice, Tim Sheehy, James Lankford, Joni Ernst, John R. Curtis.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of William Pulte, of Florida, to be Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency for a term of five years.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday, it was reported that Elon Musk and DOGE have been pressuring the Social Security Administration to cut phone services—phone services—that millions of Americans rely on to help get their benefits from Social Security.

DOGE knows that all their claims of massive fraud within Social Security are nonsense. So what do they do? They are trying to cut telephone services that help the elderly and disabled people get their benefits. How cruel. How mean. Why? So some billionaires can get another tax break. That is appalling.

What DOGE is doing to Social Security is not government efficiency; it is cruelty—cruelty. It is a direct attack on some of our most vulnerable people—seniors and the disabled.

Social Security support lines are vital for seniors who struggle to get out of the house. Many seniors don't have the ability to drive themselves to an in-person local office, many of which are closing. If they can visit an office in person, guess what. DOGE is working on closing the local offices too. It is almost as if cruelty is the point for DOGE.

Elon Musk and DOGE are trying to drive Social Security into the ground, to make it so dysfunctional, so they can scream about fraud and justify cutting benefits. And for what? Giving billionaires another tax break.

Remember what Elon Musk said a few days ago:

Most of the federal [government's] spending is entitlements. So that's the big one to eliminate.

Imagine the cruelty of the richest man in the world—he is trying to sell his Teslas on the White House lawn—telling tens of millions of seniors that he wants to eliminate their benefits, that their checks are part of one big scam.

Elon Musk is utterly clueless—clueless—about what it means to rely on that \$1,100 check that seniors need for their food or their medicines. He has no empathy, and that lack of empathy will create immense suffering for people who aren't as fortunate as he has been.

That is why DOGE has already pushed to close Social Security offices. They are getting ready to fire 7,000 Social Security employees, and this is just the beginning. If DOGE keeps going, people could see their benefits disappear.

Are my Republican colleagues fine with these attacks against Social Security? Do they support closing Social Security offices? Do they agree with Elon Musk that Social Security is a scam? Why are they silent as Elon Musk and DOGE try to take Social Security apart?

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Republican whip.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor, the minority leader has just spoken on the floor of the U.S. Senate, and I would like to begin today's comments by quoting the Senator from New York.

Here is a quote, Senator SCHUMER says:

Shutting down the government over a policy difference is self-defeating.

He went on to say:

It accomplishes nothing but pain and suffering for the country and incurs an enormous political cost to the party shutting it down.

When did he say those things? Well, he said them in 2019. Well, they are as true today as they were then. Apparently, he has forgotten those things. He has forgotten the enormous suffering for the country that is caused and the political cost to the party shutting it down.

So who would be the party shutting down the government if we shut down at midnight tomorrow night? Well, according to this morning's—and as the Presiding Officer knows, I come to the floor often with a newspaper article. Today's Washington Post: "Democrats Prepare to Reject a Bill to Avert a Shutdown."

It is the Democrats who would be shutting down the government. Now, that is the Washington Post, clearly someone that so often sides with the Democrats.

What about the liberal New York Times, what are they saying this morning?

"Specter of Shutdown is Growing As Democrats Resist Funding Bill."

They resist funding the government. It is the Democrats who are doing this.

And then there is a picture of Senator SCHUMER in today's Wall Street Journal. So we see the Washington Post, the New York Times, and now the Wall Street Journal: "Schumer Signals Block of Funding Bill."

Let me go back, "It accomplishes nothing," he said in 2019, "but pain and suffering for the country."

That is what the Democrats want: the American people to suffer now, pain and suffering, because they don't want to fund the government. They want to shut it down.

As he said, it "incurs enormous political cost to the party shutting it down." And that cost should be imposed to the party shutting it down, and the party shutting it down are the Democrats in the U.S. Senate.

In less than 48 hours, government funding expires, and Senator SCHUMER and his party are on the verge of shutting down the Government of the United States. The deadline is looming. The Democrats now face a crucial choice: Pass the bill that has already passed the House of Representatives, fund the government, or shut it down. There is no magical third option for the Democrats or for the country.

We are on the brink of, once again, a Democrat shutdown of government. Why? Because they refuse to accept that President Trump and the Republicans won the election. They hate the fact.

Heard a lot of talk about how we got here. Let me set the record straight, because this shutdown has been driven and directed by the Democrats. The Presiding Officer remembers last year when the Democrats were in the majority. Senator SCHUMER was the majority leader, Joe Biden was in the White House, President. And last year, the Senate Appropriations Committee, chaired by a Democrat, passed 11 of 12 appropriations bills.

Like, I am so grateful for the work of Senator SUSAN COLLINS of Maine, vice chairman of that committee, worked hard, and led Republican efforts to get each of those bills done on time, through the committee, and they produced results.

Each of the bills passed the committee, bipartisan appropriations bills, strong bipartisan support, some unanimous; and these bills were all passed last summer. Last summer.

From the time they passed the final one of those bills—and let me just point out, I have the list of them: July 11, they passed Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, Agriculture,