

It was a double dose of Democrat hypocrisy. Democrats who had campaigned to abolish the filibuster enthusiastically embraced it now that it served their purposes. And Democrats who had decried the evils of government shutdowns now embraced shutting down the government.

One Senator, for example, who just last March called shutdowns “as devastating as they are stupid,” voted for a shutdown 10 days ago.

Another Democrat, who last February noted that “even a partial shutdown could disrupt supply chains, hurt small businesses, risk travel delays, and increase food prices for millions of Americans,” that Democrat also voted to shut down the government.

Democrats are changing their positions so abruptly, it could give you whiplash. The only thing that doesn't look likely to change is Democrats' willingness to change their principles when it suits their political purposes.

A new period of session begins today, and I hope the Democrats will manage to move past the fact they weren't able to shut down the government. But whether they accept their defeat or decide to throw a tantrum about it, we are going to continue to do the job that we were elected and sent here to do. In the next three weeks, we will continue to build out the President's administration by voting on more of his nominees. With the Cabinet almost entirely confirmed, we will be turning to undersecretaries and deputy secretaries as well as ambassadors. And like the White House, this work period will be focused on rolling back burdensome government regulations—in our case, through the Congressional Review Act resolutions.

This week, we will send the President Senator CRUZ's resolution to roll back the Biden administration's digital asset broker rule, which puts at risk the privacy and security of tens of millions of Americans who trade digital assets. We will also look to take up Senator TIM SCOTT's overdraft fee resolution overturning a Consumer Financial Protection Bureau rule that threatens access to credit for individuals and small businesses.

And we will take up a number of other CR resolutions this work period. Finally, as I said, we have been hard at work on legislation to extend the tax relief we passed during President Trump's first term and to make a transformational investment in our border and national security.

And those efforts will accelerate over the next three weeks. Confirming nominations, lifting burdensome regulations, laying the ground work for tax and border security legislation, I look forward to another busy work period ahead.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

THE ATLANTIC REPORT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, earlier today, The Atlantic magazine released a stunning and alarming report about the accidental leaking of the Trump administration's coordination on classified military operations targeting the Houthis in Yemen. According to the report, a member of the press was somehow added to an unsecured text chain with the Vice President, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, the CIA Director, and other national security officials. The text chain was not a secure conversation. The app used is not approved for discussing classified military operations. Nevertheless, on this text chain, conversations went at length about imminent military operations, including specific targets, weapons, and attack plans. These text messages very likely included classified U.S. intelligence. The entire time, nobody seemed to realize that a private citizen without security clearance had access to this conversation.

This is one of the most stunning breaches of military intelligence that I have read about in a very, very long time. What we have here are senior U.S. leaders, including the Vice President and Secretary of Defense, having classified discussions of military action over an unsecure app.

It is bad enough that a private citizen was added to this chain, but it is far worse that sensitive military information was exchanged on an unauthorized application, especially when that sensitive military information was so, so important.

If these detailed exchanges about coordinating military operations fell into the hands of America's enemies, it could get people killed; it could severely harm our military; it would put America's national security in danger.

This debacle requires a full investigation into how this happened, the damage it created, and how we can avoid it in the future. If our Nation's military secrets are being peddled around over unsecured text chains, we need to know that at once, and we need to put a stop to it immediately. Every single Senator, Republican and Democrat and Independent, must demand accountability.

If a government employee shared sensitive military plans like this, they would be investigated and face very harsh consequences. Again, this kind of carelessness is how people get killed; it is how our enemies can take advantage of us; it is how our national security falls into danger.

If you were up in arms over unsecured emails years ago, you should certainly be outraged by this amateurish behavior.

I ask that Leader THUNE and my Republican colleagues work with Democrats right away to hold a full investigation into why these military operations were coordinated over an unauthorized messaging service instead of the secure communications channels funded by taxpayers.

I want to finish with this: When Pete Hegseth came before the Senate as a nominee, Democrats warned that something like this might happen. These people are clearly not up for the job. We warned that confirming them was dangerous, that they would behave recklessly. Unfortunately, we were right. Now we must have accountability, and both parties in the Senate should investigate how this blunder was even possible.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. President, now on Donald Trump and Social Security, for 60 days, Donald Trump has waged a campaign of destruction against America's very, very foundations. Each step of the way, Leader THUNE and the Republican majority have enabled his every whim.

In just the last week alone, among many other things that he did that hurt the country, he has, one, created pandemonium at the Social Security Administration, and, two, he has signed an Executive order closing down the Department of Education. Let me discuss each briefly.

When it comes to the Department of Education, of course Donald Trump cannot proceed without an act of Congress. That is the law. Let me be clear. Let me be very clear. If Republicans ever, ever, try to move a bill through the Senate that shuts down the Department of Education, Senate Democrats will halt it in its tracks. It will go nowhere. It will be dead on arrival.

On Social Security, Senate Republicans should do their jobs and stand up to Donald Trump and Elon Musk's reckless behavior. In just a few days, a new policy will be implemented at the Social Security Administration preventing Americans from signing up for benefits over the phone, which they have been able to do for a very long time. Seniors who can't drive themselves or use the internet will be in danger of losing benefits. As the Wall Street Journal says, “Dealing With Social Security Is Heading From Bad to Worse.”

There is no other way to describe this new policy. It is a direct attack from Donald Trump and Elon Musk on American seniors. Just because they are not stopping the checks directly that go to people, they are stopping people from getting them in indirect ways—just as bad when you don't have the money that you desperately need for drugs, for food, for rent. It is all part of DOGE's two-faced efforts to root out fraud within Social Security—the fraud that everyone knows does not exist. In fact, a judge last week called DOGE's fraud hunt little more than a “phishing expedition.”

We all know Donald Trump and Elon Musk's real goal: They want to run Social Security to the ground. They want to starve it, strain it, make it unworkable for the American people. They want to make Social Security so dysfunctional, so chaotic, so unworkable in order to justify cutting benefits for the American people.

If the American people don't believe this is coming directly from Donald Trump, just listen to his address to Congress, where he spent 10 minutes—a full 10 minutes—spreading lie after lie about fraud, about checks to people who are 150 or 200 years old. People who say Donald Trump isn't serious about attacking Social Security were not paying attention to what he said in his speech. Of course, those people weren't getting the checks.

Donald Trump wanted to ridicule and demean Social Security, which so many of our seniors depend on. Americans, of course, are outraged. Of course they are afraid. But the administration's response has been utterly heartless and cruel.

Listen to this. Last week, Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick suggested that most seniors won't mind if the government skipped a payment. Let me read his quote directly. "Let's say Social Security didn't send out their checks this month," said Lutnick. "My mother-in-law, who's 94, she wouldn't call and complain. . . . [S]he'll get it next month."

Of course his mother-in-law isn't worried. She could call her very wealthy son-in-law for a little help. Yeah, if every senior had a billionaire son-in-law, they wouldn't worry about not getting their check. Most people aren't so lucky.

To call this out of touch doesn't even begin to describe it. Does Mr. Lutnick realize that a lot of seniors are living paycheck to paycheck, that without even one check, they don't have enough money for food or medicine or the rent? To call this out of touch doesn't even begin to describe it; it is delusional.

But so far, unfortunately, we have not heard a peep from the Republican leader or the Republican majority about the crisis happening to Social Security.

I ask our Republican majority, I ask every Republican Senator sitting in this Chamber, who sits in this Chamber, I ask the Republican Senators: Are they fine with Elon Musk taking a chain saw to the Social Security Administration? Do they agree with Donald Trump and Elon Musk that Social Security is a scam? Do they agree with Howard Lutnick that seniors will be OK with missing a payment? If not, where is the outrage from Senate Republicans?

The richest man in the world, Elon Musk, is on the brink of detonating one of the most sacred social programs in America, and Republicans are completely silent. It is deafening, their silence.

Instead of standing on the sidelines, Leader THUNE and Senate Republicans should be using their majority to protect seniors' benefit, but they aren't doing that. Committees should be taking swift action. They should be writing letters to Musk telling him to get his hands off the people's benefits.

If Democrats were in the majority, the crisis happening to Social Security right now would be agenda item No. 1. Leader Thune and the Republican majority, meanwhile, are sleepwalking in the middle of the gravest danger Social Security has faced perhaps in its history.

If seniors miss out on benefits, the political blowback from the American people will be nothing short of immense.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I was happy to be back home last week, as were, I am sure, all the Members of the Senate. And as typically happens—as I was explaining to my constituents—typically, we are in session here about 3 weeks out of the month, and then we have a week back home where we can travel our States. Whether you are in North Carolina or you are in Texas, usually, you have a lot of ground to cover in a relatively short period of time, but it is always good to be back home.

I want to report a little bit on some of my travels because it was a very, very productive week. From Corpus Christi, which is on the gulf coast of Texas, and Houston, also along the gulf coast—now, the Gulf of America—to Midland, to Dallas, to San Antonio, to Austin, I had great conversations with folks that are praising the work we are doing here in Congress. It is nice to get some good reviews now and again, but particularly our support for President Trump's agenda and for his team.

The last time the President got elected, Democrats dragged out the confirmation process, and it took, literally, months before the President had his Cabinet in place. But as a result of keeping the Senate in session for an extended period of time without breaks, we finally broke the opposition and got, basically, most of the President's Cabinet confirmed to this point, and people are excited.

Of course, energy security is national security, and President Trump, unlike his predecessor, said he wants to usher in an era of American energy dominance, which is also important not only for our national security but also for our economy, bringing down gasoline prices at the pump so working families can feel that. It is already beginning to work.

During the week, I traveled out to Midland, TX, which is where the Permian Basin is located. This is a region that is famous for its energy production. It actually extends from Texas west into New Mexico. I went on a tour of a field where the oil is literally

being produced from the ground and then processed and then injected into a pipeline where it heads to refineries and other parts of the State and the country. This impressive facility is making a lot of headway thanks to the most advanced technology, delivering affordable and reliable energy while using state-of-the-art technology.

One of the issues that had been raised in the past because of environmental concerns is a release of various methane emissions into the atmosphere. This is as a result of loose connections in pipe and other designs that needed to be improved upon, and, indeed, they have been. New emissions monitoring systems use everything that include the use of helicopter-mounted sensors and other improved technology to help improve efficiency and reduce those emissions, which means cleaner air and lower costs.

I went down to Corpus Christi, which is on the gulf coast of the Coastal Bend region of Texas, and met with energy businesses located there. Primarily, they are in the export business. They are exporting American LNG and oil to our friends and allies around the world. Corpus Christi is home to a number of impressive and innovative projects. One of the things they are working on that I intend to do more to help them with is to put in place a desalinization plant.

(Mrs. BRITT assumed the Chair.)

One of the challenges we have in Texas because of the huge development of our State—31 million people and growing, 1,600 people a day moving into the State—is that our development is outstripping our ability to provide water to communities all across the State, and because of permitting problems, it takes forever to build a new reservoir. So one of the things that Corpus Christi is doing is using state-of-the-art desalination plants, modeled after what they have observed in Israel, for example, and it has six of these impressive facilities. Desalination uses nanofiltration to remove salt and other minerals from seawater. One thing we have an abundance of on the gulf coast of Texas—in Alabama as well—is we have a lot of seawater, which allows, in using this technology, our State and that region to meet future water needs.

This is something I want to engage in here in Washington with my friends and colleagues who may have similar issues in their home States. As I tell my constituents back home, usually when they identify a problem, I go on a hunt to try to find Senators from States that have similar issues and concerns and then build a consensus and support for solutions that we might be able to offer in cooperation with our State and local authorities. The technology is impressive, and it has the potential to address significant needs in a growing region. As I said, it is not even just in the Corpus Christi area; it is throughout the State and, perhaps, even throughout other parts of the Nation.

In addition to desalination, we had a great discussion about the importance of the Port of Corpus Christi and the product that passes through that port that helps America's energy independence and helps our friends and allies around the world.

I heard firsthand of the benefits that have come to the Coastal Bend from the Corpus Christi Ship Channel Improvement Project. Because of these ultralarge oil tankers, they are able to carry up to 30 percent more oil in these tankers to our friends and allies around the world than our existing ships, but the problem is, they need to deepen and widen the port, which is why the Corpus Christi Ship Channel Improvement Project is so important. This will dramatically increase the capacity for crude oil to our friends and allies and will save the port up to \$150 million every year. In 2015, Congress approved the lifting of the ban on crude oil exports, which has allowed the Port of Corpus Christi to become the third largest port for oil exports in the world.

America is one of the most significant energy producers, and in large part, it is because of what happens in the Lone Star State. The ship channel project will make the Port of Corpus Christi one of the deepest and widest in the Gulf of America. When America has the capacity, I believe, under the current administration, to drill and export more oil and gas, it means the rest of the world becomes more reliant on America and less reliant on our adversaries, like Russia. I have been a long-time advocate for the Corpus Christi Ship Channel Improvement Project, and after decades of hard work by so many, it is exciting to see this project move forward and come to completion here in the next few weeks.

But increasing energy production wasn't the only one of President Trump's agenda items we discussed when I was back home. Another important opportunity I had during the State work period was to meet with my constituents to talk about the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and how it has helped their small businesses and their employees thrive.

I remember 2017, during President Trump's first term, when we passed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. Democrat colleagues at the time said: Well, this is only going to help the rich. Well, it didn't just help the rich. It literally helped everybody in every tax bracket. So I thought it was important to go back and talk to my constituents and say: OK. What was your experience, and how important is it to you that we continue by renewing the expiring provisions of that legislation—some of which expire in 2025.

Well, not surprisingly, the folks back home disagreed with those who are reading from the talking points from the Democratic National Committee. For example, I met with the good folks at Southland Hardware in Houston, TX. Now, this is one of the original

hardware stores that you don't find very much anymore, where you can literally buy almost everything that you can imagine. We also had representatives from Empire Tools and Sylvia's Enchilada Kitchen and Tejas Office Products—all thriving small business owners who shared their support for the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and explained why it needed to be extended.

I heard the same thing from business owners all across the State, including Austin, where I live. We went to Wally's Burger—even in Austin—right at the start. I went there in 2018, and I went back. Robert Mayfield, who employs a single franchise there in Austin, 7 years later, reported that the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act had been very, very helpful, allowing him to provide better benefits and bonuses to his employees whom he considers to be part of his family.

So I would encourage the naysayers of our Democratic colleagues to actually talk to real people about what their experiences have been. I would bet what I learned was not isolated. I am sure it is common throughout the country. I am sure they would find that the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act did not, contrary to our Democratic colleagues, just help a bunch of rich people. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act has, in fact, allowed people in communities from Austin to Houston and everywhere across the country to provide more of what they have earned to their families; to provide employment opportunities for their neighbors, and contribute to their communities, which is just another way of saying: Help them to help contribute to the American dream.

So that is why we have no option but to extend the expiring provisions of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. Many are already benefiting—ordinary working families and small business owners—as I said, but if Congress fails to extend these expiring provisions, these same people who have sacrificed so much will no longer be able to offer the same benefits to their workers, making it harder for them to attract the talent they need and making it harder for them to literally keep their doors open.

If we fail to extend the tax cuts, 62 percent of American taxpayers will see a tax increase in 2026, including people like the ones I mentioned back home in Texas—small business owners, in particular, because they pay a business income, typically, on an individual tax return—their so-called passthrough organizations, not corporations. They will be particularly hard-hit. They would see their Federal tax rates increase nearly 50 percent. Working parents would see the child tax credit cut in half, and Texans, whom I represent, would see their taxes increase on an average of \$3,000 next year.

I would be happy to introduce our Democratic colleagues to these folks, and they can learn what I learned if they are willing to listen. Hope springs eternal. I am sure these same folks would be happy to give them an earful

about why their view of the tax cuts only benefiting millionaires and billionaires is dead wrong.

So I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues here in the Senate and our House colleagues to pass a budget resolution, then to get the necessary reconciliation instructions in order to make this happen. There is so much more we have to do. We have to get our country back on a sane fiscal path. We are now at, roughly, \$36.4 trillion in debt. In other words, the current generations and previous generations have racked up debt that our kids and grandkids and great-grandkids are going to be responsible for paying, which strikes me as profoundly immoral.

We know how to fix this. We should, and we can now thanks to President Trump's election and his commitment not only to reducing waste and inefficiency in the government, as identified by the Department of Government Efficiency, but also to looking at programs that we haven't revisited in decades: to look at whether they still make sense, whether there need to be some reasonable work requirements for able-bodied adults for means-tested programs. All of these things are on the table, and we need to roll up our sleeves and get to work here in the coming weeks so we can get this done without delay.

So I was delighted to be home, but now we are back at work. We need to roll up our sleeves and get the job done because failure is not an option.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

REMEMBERING MIA LOVE

Mr. LEE. Madam President, the State of Utah, last night, lost a dedicated public servant, a loving mother, and a trailblazing leader, as well as a friend to many: Mia Love returned home to her Heavenly Father at the age of 49 after a courageous battle with glioblastoma, leaving behind a legacy of faith, service, and an unshakable belief in the American dream.

Mia was a woman of many firsts. She was the first Haitian American elected to Congress. She was also the first Black Republican woman elected to Congress; a first generation American whose parents immigrated to this country with just \$10 in their pockets but with the firm belief that America was and still is a land of opportunity.

She was never one to follow a script, at least not one written by someone else. Mia spoke her mind and never allowed others to define her. Mia knew that this country wasn't defined by where you start but by the opportunities you seize and the work you put in.

Her parents Marie and Jean Maxime Bourdeau fled the brutal dictatorship