

RECESS

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

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:57 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. BRITT).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

VOTE ON KRATSIOS NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Kratsios nomination?

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 74, nays 25, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 139 Ex.]

YEAS—74

Baldwin	Fischer	Moody
Banks	Gallego	Moran
Barrasso	Graham	Moreno
Bennet	Grassley	Mullin
Blackburn	Hagerty	Murkowski
Boozman	Hassan	Paul
Britt	Hawley	Ricketts
Budd	Heinrich	Risch
Cantwell	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Capito	Hoeven	Rounds
Cassidy	Husted	Schmitt
Collins	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Coons	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Justice	Shaheen
Cortez Masto	Kelly	Sheehy
Cotton	Kennedy	Slotkin
Cramer	King	Sullivan
Crapo	Klobuchar	Thune
Cruz	Lankford	Tillis
Curtis	Lee	Tuberville
Daines	Lujan	Warner
Duckworth	Lummis	Warnock
Durbin	Marshall	Wicker
Ernst	McConnell	Young
Fetterman	McCormick	

NAYS—25

Alsobrooks	Merkley	Schumer
Blumenthal	Murphy	Smith
Blunt Rochester	Murray	Van Hollen
Booker	Ossoff	Warren
Gillibrand	Peters	Welch
Hirono	Reed	Whitehouse
Kaine	Sanders	Wyden
Kim	Schatz	
Markey	Schiff	

NOT VOTING—1

Padilla

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The majority leader.

WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Bhattacharya nomination.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative 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. 44, Jayanta Bhattacharya, of California, to be Director of the National Institutes of Health.

John Thune, Tim Scott of South Carolina, Ashley B. Moody, Ted Budd, Tommy Tuberville, Jim Justice, James Lankford, Steve Daines, Ron Johnson, Josh Hawley, John R. Curtis, Tim Sheehy, Marsha Blackburn, David McCormick, Katie Boyd Britt, Todd Young, Cindy Hyde-Smith.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Jayanta Bhattacharya, of California, to be Director of the National Institutes of Health, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 53, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 140 Ex.]

YEAS—53

Banks	Graham	Moreno
Barrasso	Grassley	Mullin
Blackburn	Hagerty	Murkowski
Boozman	Hawley	Paul
Britt	Hoeven	Ricketts
Budd	Husted	Risch
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Cassidy	Johnson	Schmitt
Collins	Justice	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Sheehy
Cramer	Lee	Sullivan
Crapo	Lummis	Thune
Cruz	Marshall	Tillis
Curtis	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	McCormick	Wicker
Ernst	Moody	Young
Fischer	Moran	

NAYS—46

Alsobrooks	Hickenlooper	Sanders
Baldwin	Hirono	Schatz
Bennet	Kaine	Schiff
Blumenthal	Kelly	Schumer
Blunt Rochester	Kim	Shaheen
Booker	King	Slotkin
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Smith
Coons	Lujan	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Markey	Warner
Duckworth	Merkley	Warnock
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Fetterman	Murray	Welch
Gallego	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Peters	Wyden
Hassan	Reed	
Heinrich	Rosen	

NOT VOTING—1

Padilla

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BANKS). On this vote, the yeas are 53, the nays are 46.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Jayanta Bhattacharya, of California, to be Director of the National Institutes of Health.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, in the last couple of weeks, I have had the opportunity to travel in many parts of our country, and I have been able to talk to folks in Nebraska, in Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan, Nevada, Colorado, and Arizona.

What I am hearing from in all of these States and, in fact, all over the country is that our Nation right now faces enormous crises—unprecedented crises in the modern history of our country.

How—right now, at this moment—we respond to these crises will not only impact our lives, it will impact the lives of our kids and future generations, and in terms of climate change, the well-being of the entire planet.

Mr. President, what I have to tell you is that the American people are angry at what is happening here in Washington, DC, and they are prepared to stand up and fight back.

In my view, and what I have heard from many, many people is that they will not accept an oligarchic form of society where a handful of billionaires control our government; where the wealthiest person on Earth, Mr. Musk, is running all over Washington, DC, slashing the Social Security Administration so that our elderly people today are finding it extremely difficult to access the benefits that they paid into; where Mr. Musk and his friends are slashing the Veterans' Administration so that people who put their lives on the line to defend us will not be able to get the healthcare that they are entitled to or get the benefits that they are owed in a timely manner; slashing the Department of Education; slashing USAID.

And why is all of this slashing taking place? It is taking place so that the wealthiest people in this country can receive over \$1 trillion in tax breaks. Now, I don't care if you are a Democrat, a Republican, or an Independent. There are very few people in this country who think that you slash programs that working families desperately need in order to give tax breaks to billionaires.

I am the former chair of the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and I have had the honor of meeting with veterans in my own State of Vermont—all over Vermont—but all over the country. These are the men and women who put the uniform of this country on and have been prepared to die to defend our Nation and American democracy.

These veterans and Americans all over our Nation will not accept an authoritarian form of society with a

President who undermines our Constitution every day. Every day there is something else out there where he is undermining our Constitution and threatening the very foundations of American democracy. That is not what people fought and died to allow to happen.

I am not a historian, but I do know that the Founding Fathers of this country were no dummies. They were really smart guys, and in the 1780s, they wrote a Constitution and established a form of government with a separation of powers—a separation of powers—with an executive branch, the President; a legislative branch, the Congress; and a judicial branch.

These revolutionaries in the 1780s had just fought a war against the imperial rule of the King of England, who was an absolute dictator—the most powerful person on Earth—and these revolutionaries here in America forming a new government wanted to make absolutely sure that no one person in this brandnew country that they were forming would have unlimited powers.

That is why we have a separation of powers. That is why we have a judiciary, a Congress, and an executive branch. In other words, way back in the 1780s, they wrote a Constitution to prevent exactly what Donald Trump is trying to do today.

So let us be clear about what is going on: Donald Trump is attacking our First Amendment and is trying to intimidate the media and those who speak out against him in an absolutely unprecedented way. He has sued ABC, CBS, Meta, the Des Moines Register. His FCC is now threatening to investigate NPR and PBS. He has called CNN and MSNBC illegal.

In other words, the leader—or the so-called leader—of the free world is afraid of freedom. He doesn't like criticism. Well, guess what, none of us likes criticism, but you don't get elected to the Senate; you don't get elected to the House; you don't become a Governor; you don't become a President of the United States unless you are prepared to deal with that criticism. And the response to that criticism in a democracy is not to sue the media, is not to intimidate the media. It is to respond in the way that you think best.

But it is not just the media that Trump is going after. He is going after the constitutional responsibilities that this body, the U.S. Congress, has. I will say it amazes me—it really does—how easily my Republican colleagues here in the Senate and in the House are willing to surrender their constitutional responsibilities, give it over to the President.

Trump has illegally and unconstitutionally withheld funds that Congress has appropriated. You can't do that. Congress has the power of the purse. We make a decision. We argue about it here, big debates, vote-aramas, the whole thing, make that decision; that money goes out. The President does not have the right to with-

hold funds that Congress has appropriated.

Trump has illegally and unconstitutionally decimated Agencies that can only be changed or reformed by Congress. You don't like the Department of Education? You don't like USAID? Fine. Come to the Congress, and tell us what reforms you want to see. You do not have the right to unilaterally do away with these Agencies.

Trump has fired members of independent Agencies and inspectors general that he does not have the authority to do.

But it is not just the media that he is trying to intimidate. It is not just the powers of Congress that he wants. Now, in an absolutely outrageous, unconstitutional, and extraordinarily dangerous way he is going after the judiciary.

His view is that if you don't like a decision that a judge renders, you get rid of that judge. You try to impeach that judge. You intimidate judges so that you get the decisions that you want.

You know, I am thinking back now as someone who is not a supporter of the Roberts' Court, and I am thinking about one of the worst Supreme Court decisions that has ever been rendered, and that is *Citizens United*. I will say more about that in a moment.

I am thinking about the Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, taking away American women's right to control their own bodies. In my view, these were outrageous decisions, unpopular decisions, but it never occurred to me—because maybe I am old-fashioned and conservative and I believe that you live by the rule of law—to say: Hey, look at the decision Roberts made. We are going to impeach him.

No. We try to elect a new President, who is going to appoint new Supreme Court Justices. That is the system that people have fought and died to defend.

But it is not just the movement or oligarchy which is outraging millions of Americans, Democrats and Republicans, by the way, and it is not just the movement toward authoritarianism that we are seeing; the American people, especially with Mr. Musk and 13 billionaires in the Trump administration running Agency after Agency, the American people are saying as loudly as they can that they will not accept a society of massive economic and wealth inequalities where the very richest people in our country are becoming much richer while working families are struggling to put food on the table.

Having gone all over this country, I can tell you that the American people are sick and tired of these inequalities, and they want an economy that works for all of us, not just the 1 percent.

You know, we deal with a whole lot of stuff here in the Congress, and you know, virtually all of it is important in one way or another. Well, let's do something fairly radical today. Let's

try to tell the truth—the real truth—about what is going on in our society today, something that we don't talk about too much here in the Senate. We don't talk about it too much in the House. We don't talk about it too much in the corporate media. But the reality is that today we have two Americas, two very, very different Americas.

In one of those Americas, the wealthiest people have never ever had it so good. In the whole history of our country, the people on top have never ever had it so good as they have it today.

Today, we have more income and wealth inequality than there has ever been in the history of America. I know we don't discuss it. You don't see it much on TV. You don't hear it talked about here at all. But the American people do not believe that it is appropriate that three people—one, two, three; Mr. Musk, Mr. Bezos, and Mr. Zuckerberg—three Americans own more wealth than the bottom half of Americans in society—170 million people. Really? Three people own more wealth than 170 million people? Does anybody here think that is vaguely appropriate?

By the way, those very same three people—the three richest people in America—were right there at Trump's inaugural, standing right behind the President.

Do you want to know what oligarchy is? I know there is some confusion out there. What is oligarchy? Well, it starts off when you have the three wealthiest people in the country standing right behind the President when he gets inaugurated.

The top 1 percent of our country now owns more wealth than the bottom 90 percent. CEOs make 300 times more than their average worker. Unbelievably, real, inflation-accounted-for wages today for the average American worker, if you can believe it, despite a massive increase in worker productivity, is lower today than it was 52 years ago. During that period, there was a \$75 trillion transfer of wealth that went from the bottom 90 percent to the top 1 percent. That is the reality of the American economy today. Do you know what? Maybe we might want to be talking about that.

In our America today, that top America, that one America, the 1 percent are completely separate and isolated from the rest of the country. Do you think they get on the subway to get to work? Do you think they sit in a traffic jam for an hour trying to get to work? Not the case. They fly around in the jets and the helicopters that they own. They live in their mansions all over the world, in their gated communities. They have nannies taking care of their babies. They don't worry about the cost of childcare. They send their kids to the best private schools and colleges. Sometimes they vacation not in a Motel 6, not in a national park, but on their very own islands that they have. On occasion, for the

very, very richest, just for a kick, to have a little bit of fun, maybe they will spend a few million dollars flying off into space in one of their own spaceships. Sounds like fun.

But it is not just massive income and wealth inequality that we are dealing with today; we have more concentration of ownership than ever before. While the profits on Wall Street and corporate America soar, a handful of giant corporations dominate sector after sector, whether it is agriculture, transportation, media, financial services, et cetera, et cetera. A small number of huge corporations, international corporations, dominate sector after sector. As a result of that concentration of ownership, they are able to charge the American people outrageously high prices for the goods and services we need.

We don't talk about it too much, and maybe we should, but there are three Wall Street firms—BlackRock, Vanguard, and State Street—that, combined, are the major stockholders in 95 percent of our corporations. Got that? Three Wall Street firms—three—are the major stockholders in 95 percent of American corporations.

So that is one America—people on top doing phenomenally well. Not only do they have economic power, they have enormous political power. That is what is going on there. They live like kings.

That is one America, but there is another America. In that other America, 60 percent—60, 60 percent—of our people are living paycheck to paycheck, and millions of workers from one end of this country to the other are trying to survive on starvation wages.

Now, unlike Donald Trump, I grew up in a family that lived paycheck to paycheck, and I know the anxieties that my mom and dad had living in a rent-controlled apartment. Can we afford to buy this? Why did you buy that? That is the story taking place all over America.

What does living paycheck to paycheck mean? It means that every single day millions of Americans worry about how they are going to pay their rent or their mortgage, all over the country. Rents are skyrocketing, and people wonder, what happens? What happens to me and my kids if rent goes up by 20 percent and I can't afford it? Where do I live? Do I have to take my kid out of school? Where do I put my kid? In a worst-case scenario, do I live in my car?

Let's be clear. There are many people who are working today who are living in the back of their cars.

How do I pay for childcare?

I talked to a guy the other day, a police officer, who spends \$20,000 a year for childcare.

How do I buy decent food for my kids when the price of groceries is off the charts? What happens if I get sick or my kid gets sick or my mother gets sick and I have a \$12,000 deductible and I can't afford to go to the doctor? How,

at the end of the month, am I going to pay my credit card bill even though I am being charged 20 or 30 percent interest rates by the usurious credit card companies?

People are worrying about such things.

What happens if my car breaks down and the guy at the repair shop says it is going to cost a thousand dollars and I don't have a thousand dollars in the bank? If I don't have a car, how do I get to work? If I don't get to work, how do I have an income? If I don't have an income, how do I take care of my family?

Those are the crises that millions of Americans are experiencing today. But it is not just working-age Americans; today in our country, half of older workers—older workers—have nothing in the bank as they face retirement. They are watching TV, and they are seeing Mr. Musk firing Social Security workers and are actually worrying whether Social Security will be there for them.

It is not just older workers with nothing in the bank wondering what happens when they retire; 22 percent of seniors are trying to survive on \$15,000 a year. I dare anybody in this country, let alone somebody who is old, who needs healthcare, who needs to keep the house warm—try to survive on \$15,000 a year. And there are people here, by the way, talking about cutting Social Security.

It is not just about income and wealth inequality; it is about a healthcare system which everyone in the Nation understands is broken, is dysfunctional, and is outrageously expensive.

I hear my Republican friends—you know, I don't know where they are today—wanting to destroy the ACA, and my Democratic friends say: Oh, we have to defend the ACA.

The ACA is broken. It doesn't work. In my State, the cost of healthcare is going up 10, 15 percent. In America today, you have 85 million people who are uninsured or underinsured.

The function of the healthcare system today is not to do what a sane society would do: guarantee healthcare to all people in a cost-effective way—something which, by the way, every other major nation on Earth manages to do. The function of our healthcare system, as everybody knows, is to make billions of dollars in profits for the insurance companies and the drug companies.

So I say to my Democratic friends: It is not good enough to defend the Affordable Care Act. It is a broken system. You have to have the guts to stand up and allow us to do what every other major nation does: guarantee healthcare for all people as a human right, not allow the drug companies and the insurance companies to make massive profits every year.

I want to touch on an issue that gets virtually no discussion, but I think it is enormously important, and it says a hell of a lot about what is going on in

our society today. In America, according to international studies, our life expectancy—how long we live as a people—is about 4 years lower than other countries. In most European countries, people there live longer lives. In Japan, they live even longer lives than in Europe.

So question No. 1 is, Why is that happening? We spend \$14,000 a year per person on healthcare—almost double what any other country spends—and yet people around the world are living on average 4 years longer than we do.

But here is the really ugly fact, even worse than that, and that is that in this country, on average, if you are a working-class person, you will live a 7-years-shorter life than if you are in the top 1 percent. If you are a working-class person, your life will be 7 years shorter than if you are wealthy. In other words, being poor or working class in America today amounts to a death sentence.

It is not only a broken healthcare system; we have to ask ourselves a simple question—and the Biden administration began a little bit of movement in this direction—and that is, Why are we living in a nation where one out of four people can't even afford the prescription drugs their doctors prescribe? Why are we in some cases paying 10 times more than our neighbors in Canada or in Europe? How does that happen?

The answer, of course, has to do with the greed of the pharmaceutical industry and their power right here, all of the campaign contributions they make, which has prevented us from negotiating prices.

But it is not just healthcare or prescription drugs when we look at what is going on in America. In Vermont and throughout this country, we have a major housing crisis. Here we are, the richest country on Earth, and 800,000 people are sleeping out on the streets and 20 million people are spending more than 50 percent of their limited incomes on housing. Can you imagine that? If you are a working person spending 50 percent of your income on housing, how do you have money to do anything else? And the cost of housing is soaring.

Do not tell me that in a nation which can spend a trillion dollars on the military, a nation that can give massive tax breaks to the rich, that we cannot build the millions of units of housing we desperately need.

So why is all of this happening? Why do we have a healthcare system that is broken and prescription drugs that are the most expensive in the world and a housing system and education in deep trouble?

I talk to educators in Vermont and all over the country. I talked to a principal the other day in Vermont. The starting salary at a public school is \$32,000 a year. But don't worry—they can't afford to even bring people in because they can't afford housing in the community.

Why have we let education sink to the level that it has?

I think the bottom line of all of this is that the American people, I think, are catching on. And Mr. Musk—I must thank him because he has made it very clear. We are living in an oligarchic form of society.

If anybody out there thinks Mr. Musk is running around out of the goodness of his heart trying to make our government more efficient, you have not a clue as to what is going on. What these guys want to do is destroy virtually every Federal program that impacts the well-being of working people—Social Security, Medicare, the Postal Service, public education, you name it—so they can get huge tax breaks for the rich and eventually make government so inefficient that they will have the ability as large corporations to come in and privatize everything that is going on.

So this is a pivotal moment in American history, and I sense that the American people have had it up to here. They are prepared to fight back. They do not want a government run by billionaires who have it all, whose greed is uncontrollable.

We have in Vermont and I think all over this country a serious problem with addiction, with drugs, people drinking too much alcohol, people smoking too many cigarettes. The worst form of addiction this country now faces is the greed of the oligarchy. You might think that if you had \$10, \$20 billion, it would be enough—you know, kind of enough to let your family live for the next 20 generations—but it is not. For whatever reason, for whatever compulsive reason they have, these guys want more and more and more, and they are prepared to destroy Social Security, Medicare, and nutrition programs for hungry people in order to get even more. That, to me, is disgusting.

Now we are at a pivotal moment in American history. Now, having been all over this country, many parts of this country, I am absolutely confident that the American people—and I am not just talking about Democrats, who are as complicit in the problems that we have right now as are Republicans. We have a two-party system which is basically corrupt.

You have Mr. Musk over on the Republican side saying to any Republican who dares to stand up and defy the Trump agenda: We are going to primary you. On the Democratic side, you have AIPAC and you have other super PACs saying: You stand up for working people, you are in trouble as well. We have a corrupt campaign finance system in which billionaires are able to buy elections. And that is why, all over this country, people are not happy with our two-party system, the Republicans and the Democrats.

So this is a pivotal moment in American history, but we have had difficult moments before. I am confident from the bottom of my heart that if we

stand together and we do not allow some rightwing extremists to divide us up by the color of our skin or our religion or where we were born or our sexual orientation—if we stand together, we can save this country, we can defeat oligarchy, we can defeat the movement toward authoritarianism, and, in fact, we can create an economy and a government that works for all, not just the few.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

RECOGNIZING WOWO RADIO

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I am so glad the junior Senator from Indiana occupies the chair as Presiding Officer at this time because it was 100 years ago next week that “The Voice of a Thousand Main Streets” first began broadcasting from the second floor of the Main Auto Supply Building in downtown Fort Wayne, IN—an area that the Presiding Officer knows well.

On March 31, 1925, at 500 watts, 1320 on the dial, the voice of the Midwest, WOWO Radio, hit the airwaves. In Indiana, from such humble beginnings, great things often rise, and those distinctive call letters, “WOWO,” endure today.

In fact, over the past century, through good times and bad, Hoosiers in the northeast part of our State have turned on and tuned in to WOWO radio. Although the number on the dial has changed, the studio was moved, the station’s wattage has expanded, and the world of media has evolved, Hoosiers still listen to WOWO today.

WOWO is not just a radio station in this community; it is the community’s radio station, one it has loved and taken care of for 100 years now. Its programs didn’t just entertain Fort Wayne but became part of its culture. Its personalities didn’t simply report the news but made history.

During the Great Depression, WOWO turned Fort Wayne into a midwest hub of country music and helped Hoosiers escape from hard times, if only for an hour.

After Pearl Harbor, WOWO provided desperately needed updates as they arrived over the wire with word of the progress of the war effort to the families of the 12,000 soldiers from Fort Wayne fighting overseas.

No matter the era or the decade, WOWO always looked out for its audience. It brought them the local news, helped them stay informed and engaged. Every morning, the legendary Bob Sievers called the Fort Wayne Police Department before going on the air.

When the station moved to the Gaskins Building on Washington Boulevard, where there were no nearby windows, a reporter ran down the hall, climbed out on the fire escape, and looked to the sky to determine the weather. The Gaskins Building is now gone, but, as WOWO listeners know, the station still reports the weather from its “world famous fire escape.”

During the events that defined the last century for people in and away from northeast Indiana—from the blizzard of 1978 to that terrible September morning in 2001, from the thrill of the Moon landing to the loss of the space shuttle Challenger—listeners can still remember not just where they were when they heard the news but how they heard it: from WOWO through the radio in the car, on the kitchen table, in their classroom.

During tough times, WOWO provided welcome distractions. The audience could tune in to the “Hoosier Hop,” where local talents Nancy Lee and the Hilltoppers played and Kenny Roberts yodeled. They could visit the Little Red Barn on a farm down in Indiana for the latest in ag news. “Modern Home Forum,” hosted by the fictional Jane Weston, offered cooking lessons. Broadcasts of Komets and Pistons games brought the people of Fort Wayne together around their beloved hockey and basketball teams. The innovative and much imitated “Man on the Street” and “One Moment” programs turned the shows’ listeners into stars.

If a member of the Fort Wayne community lost their dog, WOWO could help them find it. If they fell on hard times, it offered them a hand up.

In the 1940s, the station created the Penny Pitch, encouraging listeners to contribute pocket change for a disabled young man so he could realize his ambition of pursuing a career in journalism. The annual drive still raises money to provide resources to charities across northeast Indiana. Last year, the Penny Pitch raised over \$135,000 for Habitat for Humanity of Greater Fort Wayne.

Throughout WOWO’s history, many of its personalities became household names across northeast Indiana. Broadcasters like Bob Chase, who served our Nation in World War II and then served WOWO listeners as sports director and the voice of the Komets hockey team for over six decades, were beloved figures. More recently, Charly Butcher, Patrick Miller, and Kayla Blakeslee became well known and trusted by the WOWO audience. Brian Ford, WOWO news director, recalled that as a child, when the sky grew dark and storms neared, his grandmother would simply say: Turn on WOWO.

When news breaks, good or bad, at home or far away, at the beginning of another day in Fort Wayne, and the world turned beyond it, families still find WOWO on their dial or on their phones.

So today, I join my fellow Hoosiers in marking this milestone, offering WOWO and its staff past and present congratulations on creating a truly remarkable bond with their audience and for serving fellow Hoosiers with news and entertainment.

Oh, about that call sign—it is a bit counterintuitive, perhaps, but back in 1925, the “W” in “WOWO” designated the station’s location east of the Mississippi River. The other three letters