

didn't stand for anything; they were just catchy.

At the time of the station's founding, a newspaper reported that WOWO "expects to become a familiar voice of the middle west despite the low wave length. The trick call letters, it is believed, will add to the novelty of the plant." The station's leaders were right on both accounts.

A listener contest later determined that "WOWO" would stand for "Wayne Offers Wonderful Opportunities." But "WOWO" will never be just call letters. If you grew up in its listening range, you know what it stands for, what it means, and what it has meant to north-east Indiana since that first broadcast a century ago.

I have no doubt, however much change that time and technology may bring, a hundred years from now, WOWO will remain on the air and remain an important part of the fabric of northeast Indiana.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, Social Security is under attack. It is under attack from Donald Trump. Social Security is under attack from Republicans. Social Security is under attack from Elon Musk. Social Security is under attack from greedy billionaires who want to loot Americans' hard-earned money to line their own pockets.

Trump, Musk, and DOGE know they can't come right out and cut Social Security. That would be wildly unpopular. Instead, they are revving up their chain saw—cutting staff, reducing services, closing offices, and lying about the program, finding so-called fraud where no fraud exists.

Here is their reckless roadmap: first, lie about the program to undermine it with the public; second, use those lies as an excuse to gut Social Security and cut benefits; and third, raise the retirement age and privatize Social Security, handing your benefits over to Wall Street—making the billionaires richer and our seniors poorer. It is a very shameful plan.

Now cue Elon Musk and his DOGE lackeys who descended on the Social Security Administration, claiming there are millions of dead people over the age of 150, over the age of 200, over the age of 360 years. They are claiming that people born in 1665 are claiming Social Security benefits, that they are fraudulently applying for benefits. The only problem with what they are saying is that none of it is true. They are just lying.

Former inspectors general and Social Security Administration leaders have never found any of this phantom fraud—none of it.

But following the Trump playbook, Musk, DOGE, and Republicans have repeated this lie over and over again. Again, the key to their messaging on Social Security is lying about Social Security. That is their campaign plan.

So Trump, in his State of the Union, repeated the lie, telling the country that there were millions of people fraudulently receiving Social Security benefits. That is the Trump way: If at first you don't succeed, lie, lie again.

While Trump and Musk see 200-year-old ghosts—360-year-old ghosts—collecting Social Security benefits, they are gutting the Social Security Administration to the bare bones. That lie of massive fraud in Social Security is now their excuse to make changes that could force Grandma and Grandpa and people with disabilities to travel more than 100 miles to sign up for Social Security benefits. They want to make it as tough as possible for Grandma and Grandpa and for people with disabilities to collect Social Security—just make it something difficult.

The Social Security website crashed 4 times in 10 days this month. They are bringing all the DOGE boys who are supposed to be geniuses—AI, bringing efficiency to the government. The Social Security website crashed 4 times in 10 days just in the past month.

But Trump and Musk, they won't stop there. They are also cutting the phone lines. By the end of this month, telephone services could be eliminated at the Social Security Administration, with assistance only offered online or in person or at a field office. So good luck, Grandma and Grandpa. Sorry you didn't take that computer course 40 years ago. Sorry that you are 85 now. Can't call in any longer; you are going to have to figure out how to do everything online. It is just another way of making it harder and harder for people who are older to be able to collect.

The person running the Agency right now has already pushed out more than 12 percent of the staff, and he has admitted that the Agency's phone service "sucks." That is what he said, talking about his own work at the Agency. Yeah, you did such a great job on it that now you yourself say that the phone service sucks. Excellent work. You are deliberately trying to make the system fail.

And he said the quiet part out loud, that Musk and DOGE are the ones really in charge at the Social Security Administration. And they have one primary goal right now: find fraud, despite the truth that they have not reported any yet because there is so little to find at the Social Security Administration.

But by hollowing out the Agency—cutting staff, closing offices, and making it harder to access benefits—the Trump administration is effectively cutting Social Security benefits. But if you complain too loudly, the Trump administration might just accuse you of being a fraudster as well. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, another billionaire, said last week that his 94-year-old mother-in-law wouldn't complain about missing her Social Security check and that the only person who would complain would be a fraudster themselves, because they would be so upset, the fraudster.

But his 94-year-old mother-in-law wouldn't complain. Maybe if everyone had a billionaire as a son-in-law, maybe you wouldn't complain. But that is not 99.999 percent of all people receiving Social Security benefits. They would be very concerned if that check did not, in fact, arrive. Maybe if your son-in-law is a billionaire, you can afford to miss a check.

But how out of touch can Lutnick be because, without Social Security, more than 22 million people would be thrown into poverty. Get that number? Without the check they get each month, 22 million Americans would go into poverty. That includes over 16 million seniors, including 268,000 in Massachusetts and nearly 1 million children. Nearly one in four people drawing Social Security rely on it for 100 percent of their income.

Let me say that again because it is very important to internalize the reality of our country in 2025: One in four people receiving a Social Security check rely upon it for 100 percent of all of their income. If that gets stopped, people don't have access to it, those people immediately go to poverty because they are living check to check.

And more than two-thirds of seniors rely on it for the majority of their income. That would have been my mother and father—my father who drove a truck for the Hood milk company. They were dependent upon Social Security. There was not a big pension in the old days, so you needed Social Security just to make it by week by week, month by month.

And 55 percent of all Social Security beneficiaries are women. This increases to 66 percent for beneficiaries aged 85. Two-thirds of all people receiving a Social Security check over 85 are women. That is who they are playing with here. They are truly playing with Grandma, her life, her security, what she earned, what she deserves. Social Security would do to women—who only still earn 82 cents to a man's dollar and live longer after retiring—they would perform an enormous disservice for all of those women. A greater proportion of women's retirement income comes from Social Security.

For the millions of seniors that rely almost entirely on Social Security for their income, a missed check means missed meals, missed medications, missed rent payments. That is who they are in our country right now.

Social Security is not rife with fraud. It is not a Ponzi scheme, as Elon Musk has said. It isn't something that can just be "turned off," as Trump's acting director threatened to do in response to a court order blocking DOGE access to your private Social Security information. He threatened to turn it off unless all this information about every one of us in the Social Security system was turned over to DOGE. Well, where we all worked, the income that we earned, every single job—that is all there in order for Social Security to make the right decisions about how big

the check is that we get. And Trump's acting director at Social Security threatened, in response to a court order blocking DOGE access to your private Social Security, to just, basically, turn it all off.

This is, bottom line, a huge threat to Americans, to seniors, to people with disabilities in our Nation. It is a direct assault.

The nominee to be the next Social Security administrator, Frank Bisignano, today before the Senate, refused to undo any of the harmful actions taken by DOGE. He refused to even acknowledge DOGE was behind the cuts and closures. He refused to call benefits delayed benefits denied. He refused to commit to adequate staffing levels for the Agency.

For these reasons, I am refusing to give him my vote to be our next administrator. I am voting no on the administrator. I am saying absolutely unqualified for this job because he doesn't understand the core of this intergenerational responsibility and obligation that we have to seniors in our country.

The Trump administration can tell lie after lie, but Americans know the truth. Social Security is a promise we make to current and future generations. For our parents, for our grandparents, and for all of us, the assurance of Social Security means that we need never worry about living out our final years in poverty in the United States of America. That is why Social Security was put on the books in the 1930s, because of the wave of poverty among seniors in our Nation. People have contributed to Social Security throughout their entire lives. Social Security is not an entitlement; it is an earned benefit.

But this isn't a new formula that Trump and Musk and Republicans have come up with. In 2005, President George W. Bush and Republicans tried to privatize Social Security. Can you imagine what would have befallen our Nation's seniors if George W. Bush and Republicans had succeeded and then millions of Americans' nest eggs had been wrapped up in the 2008 stock market crash? Our "greatest generation" would have become a destitute generation.

Today, Donald Trump and his billionaire advisers, like Secretary Lutnick, have said that a recession wouldn't be so bad, that it would be "worth it." A recession would be worth it. Ask people who lived through the Great Depression, like my parents. How did that go for them and their families? I will tell you what: In my family, it didn't go well. It set my family on both sides—my father's and mother's side—back an entire generation. That is how devastating the Great Depression was.

So tell the retired workers; tell their survivors; tell the vulnerable, the poor, the disabled Americans for whom Social Security isn't just a budget line, it is a lifeline. But Trump only cares about his billionaire donors' bottom lines.

Social Security has paid out benefits on schedule for nearly 70 years. But to keep our promise in the future, changes to the program will have to be made. To shore up Social Security, we must require millionaires and billionaires, like Donald Trump, Howard Lutnick, and Elon Musk, to pay as much into Social Security as everyone else. It is time they pay their fair share and stop trying to pay for their tax cuts with the earnings of those who built this country.

It is essential that Social Security be preserved for today's retirees and for future generations. It has served as a never-fail insurance program for every single American worker's retirement since the program's inception. It is the crown jewel of the New Deal. And Republicans have been going after it from day one. Republicans haven't been able to destroy Social Security yet, and we are not going to let Trump and Musk or billionaires succeed in looting all of that Social Security money so they get a tax break.

The health of all of those seniors is more important than the wealth of the billionaires who will benefit from the slashes to the Social Security system, which they are planning.

Elon Musk said the truth about how they view Social Security. He called it a Ponzi scheme. That is all you have to know about the Republican Party. They opposed Social Security when it was put on the books in the 1930s, and they always harbored an ancient animosity towards Social Security; waiting for the moment, waiting for the opportunity where they could slash Social Security to send us back to before the 1930s when families were gutted, when there was no income for Grandma and Grandpa. That is what we are talking about.

But I am going to tell you this: They are going to have a fight on their hands. We are going to stand up and fight for them. We are going to make sure that Social Security is preserved. We are going to make sure that Donald Trump and Elon Musk, that the Republican Party does not destroy Social Security as we know it today. They have a fight on their hands.

I am ready for this fight. I am ready to defend the seniors in our Nation. I am ready to protect the disabled who depend upon Social Security. This is the time to have this showdown, and they are going to regret ever putting Social Security into play. I am ready for this fight.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CURTIS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 136

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor to make a unanimous consent request. That is a process in the Senate where we agree on things because no one disagrees—unanimous consent.

I have made this request before. Senator GRASSLEY, who is my colleague and friend from the State of Iowa—different political party, but occasionally we do agree—he has a different point of view. He is likely to object. I will keep my fingers crossed that my speech will be so convincing that perhaps he will change his mind. We will see.

But what we are basically discussing on the floor, at this point, is whether or not, if the court issues an order, a public official has to follow the order. It is pretty basic. It gets down to the daily routine of courtrooms across the Nation.

Now, it has more meaning because there is a question as to whether this new President—President Trump—is going to follow a court order, if it is handed down by a court.

So my unanimous consent request is one on basic principle, as to whether or not people—elected officials—are required to follow court orders. I would like to make a statement in support of my offer.

I have come to the floor several times in recent weeks to speak about unacceptable attacks on the Federal judiciary—the Federal courts—by President Trump and his allies. These attacks are not only wrong but dangerous. It is posing a serious threat to our constitutional order.

I am sorry to say that the attacks on our judges and our judiciary have not stopped, as I have made these requests on the floor. Instead, they have grown worse.

Last week, President Trump himself called for the impeachment of a Federal judge simply because the judge ruled against the Trump administration. The President's MAGA loyalists were quick to pile on when he did that. Elon Musk has demanded the impeachment of Federal judges dozens of times, and House Republicans rushed to introduce articles of impeachment in the House.

In response to this unprecedented attack on the Federal judiciary, Chief Justice Roberts and the Supreme Court issued a rare statement. It reads:

For more than two centuries, it has been established that impeachment is not an appropriate response to disagreement concerning a judicial decision. The normal appellate review process exists for that purpose.

Yet this relentless campaign against the judiciary has continued.

On Friday, President Trump issued a wild rant that read, in part—this is the President: "Unlawful Nationwide Injunctions by Radical Left Judges could very well lead to the destruction of our country! These people are Lunatics" the President's Tweet read.

There has been a lot of debate about when we will cross the threshold into a