

and save them \$5 billion a year. I urge my colleagues to vote no.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

ELON MUSK

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I have spoken before about my constituent, my fellow Texan, Elon Musk here on the floor and recounted the fact that it was really, maybe, probably—at least 15 years ago, maybe a little longer, when he came to my office here in Washington, DC, and said he had a new company called SpaceX, and he wanted to compete for the business of NASA and commercial space.

And as it turned out, Mr. Musk had to sue the U.S. Government just for the privilege of competing with the United Space Alliance, I believe it is called, the existing entity that had an exclusive contract on space flight with the U.S. Government.

I read recently that now SpaceX carries about 90 percent of the payloads in the world into space. It is a remarkable testament to not only his incredible innovation but resilience and persistence to build such a successful company.

And that is not the only one he has built. Tesla is headquartered in Texas. I have been out to the Gigafactory right outside of Austin, TX, and he is building cars that are very popular and employing an awful lot of Texans—which I am all in favor of—and they continue to grow and hire more of my constituents.

Mr. Musk has done something here in Washington, DC, in the last couple of months which is heresy; it is heresy. He has actually said the Federal Government spends too much, and he said a lot of what the Federal Government spends is waste and fraud and abuse. And much of it, as we have seen, are things that most of us had no real awareness of. But as he has targeted some of the most egregious examples of waste and abuse of the taxpayer dollar, I think there are many people across the country—certainly where I come from—who have applauded that effort. They feel like this has been long coming and long overdue.

One of the major challenges we face here in Washington, DC, is that spending money is very popular, and, of course, people who spend money—even though it is not theirs, it is the taxpayers' dollars—can go home and say: Guess what I did for you. And most of it involves spending. But we are now having to come to grips with the fact that we are \$36.4 trillion in debt, and we have kicked the can down the road so long that we have run out of road.

And, indeed, many of us have talked over the years about the fact that this is immoral. We basically are writing checks that our children and grandchildren will have to cash. Somebody is going to have to pay that money back.

And now we are spending more money on interest on the national debt than we are to defend the Nation, which is a very dangerous set of cir-

cumstances, given the situation we find ourselves in, which is the most dangerous time since World War II.

Now, it is no secret that Elon Musk is perhaps the richest man in the world. I don't begrudge him that. It looks like he has done some amazing things and continues to do so. I know that with that sort of money, he doesn't have to be up here volunteering to do some of the work that needs to be done in terms of identifying the waste and abuse. He could go relax on an island somewhere. He could buy an island. He could do whatever he wants and he wouldn't have to lift a finger to help anybody else and he could just live a life of luxury and leisure for the rest of his existence, but I don't believe he is wired that way. I am grateful for that because, instead, he is volunteering his time to serve not only the President of the United States but the American people.

You don't have to agree with everything that Mr. Musk recommends to recognize that this is an incredible public service, and this is long overdue, identifying all of the waste and abuse and egregious expenditures of taxpayer dollars.

In fact, I am a little shocked that our Democratic colleagues don't join us in this effort. I happen to be a member of what we call the DOGE Caucus, the Department of Government Efficiency. We are making recommendations to DOGE to look at different departments of the government and say: Can you find savings here? Can you find expenditures that don't make any sense?

I am kind of shocked our Democratic colleagues refuse to join us in that. It seems like, in a normal world, they would be concerned about this too. Instead, they just say: The status quo is just fine. We don't need to change a thing—\$36.4 trillion and counting.

And, in fact, they seem to be in denial of the fact that President Trump and Republican majorities in both Houses were elected on November 5. Hopefully, that won't continue indefinitely.

But what I want to mention is some of the violence and the acts of vandalism that have occurred around the country that have been focused primarily on Tesla owners.

Now, by the way, most of these Teslas aren't owned by Elon Musk anymore. They have been sold to private citizens, and yet they have been the target of a lot of the vandalism and violence that we have seen around the country.

Just 2 days ago, police officers found what they called multiple incendiary devices at a local Tesla dealership in North Austin, where I live. Now, this prompted a full bomb squad to respond, and an investigation is still underway. Thankfully, there were no injuries, but it is ridiculous that the state of our public discourse has reached this point.

The North Austin Tesla dealership bomb threat, unfortunately, is not the first of its kind. It comes on the heels

of another attack in Las Vegas where several Teslas were set on fire outside of a service center. I have no idea what that was supposed to accomplish.

The protesters vandalized the building by spray-painting the word "resist" on the front doors, while at least one protester reportedly threw a Molotov cocktail.

Over on the west coast in Seattle, four Cybertrucks were set on fire earlier this month.

The Associated Press has reported that there have been at least 50 demonstrations around the country focused on Tesla, while more are planned, not just here in the United States but around the world in countries like England, Spain, and Portugal.

Some Tesla owners have reported incidents of vandalism of their personal vehicles. Some have been even spray-painted with swastikas. Now, why anyone would think that would be a good idea is beyond me.

It should go without saying, but I will say it anyway, that that kind of violence and vandalism of private property is unacceptable. But I know not everybody is speaking up to condemn these attacks.

Now, I support the First Amendment. Obviously, I take an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States—all of us do here in the Congress—and I will defend the right of all Americans to express their views about government, even when they and I may disagree. But the First Amendment, we know, does not protect activities like placing explosive devices or damaging private property. Those are simply crimes, and I would hope that much is obvious.

It is certainly understandable, and perhaps inevitable, that some people will disagree about reducing government spending. Our Democratic friends are the party of government. They got us 40-year high inflation because, during the last 4 years, we have seen an unprecedented expenditure of taxpayer dollars, which is inherently inflationary. And every single American has seen an increase in their cost of living and a decrease in their quality of life because they are paying about 21 percent more today than they did 4 years ago.

But there are people who think that spending money without any sort of second thought is a good idea—maybe people who benefit from that government spending—but they also have a right to express their concerns. I am not suggesting that they don't. But what is far from understandable and, in fact, is inexcusable is what we are seeing in the examples that I mentioned: this expression of political disagreement in the form of vandalism, destroying private property, and especially using potentially fatal means like the incendiary devices that were found in Austin. We should not hesitate to call this what it is: domestic terrorism.

Now, I wish I could say that this kind of behavior is an anomaly and has

never happened before and is unlikely to happen again, but, unfortunately, this has happened before, and it is reminiscent of the violent unrest that plagued our Nation with the BLM riots that happened during the summer of 2020.

We live in a democratic republic, not a banana republic. We are blessed to live in a country where we value and protect the rights of citizens to speak freely. We live in a country with universal suffrage, where citizens can bring their disagreements with their government officials to the ballot box.

But placing bombs and lighting cars on fire is not an appropriate means of expressing dissenting views in a country like the one we are blessed to live in. We are so much better than that.

For this reason, I was disappointed to see one of my fellow Texans in our congressional delegation go so far as to condone these kinds of activities. Congresswoman JASMINE CROCKETT recently made comments encouraging violent protests at a virtual rally. She said, and I quote—these are her words, not mine. She said:

All I want to see happen on my birthday is for Elon to be taken down.

Well, that could be interpreted any one of a number of ways, but I believe it is wrong to wish on any American, much less a fellow Texan, and I would expect better than this sort of incendiary rhetoric from a Member of Congress who was elected to her position because of the very democracy we are fortunate to enjoy.

But this isn't the only thing she said recently that has raised eyebrows and resulted in condemnation. Congresswoman CROCKETT recently commented that our Governor, Gov. Greg Abbott—who happens to be a paraplegic as a result of a terrible accident years ago—she referred to him as “Governor Hot Wheels,” presumably because he is in a wheelchair due to an accident decades ago.

And then Senator CRUZ, my colleague, the junior Senator from Texas, she said should “be knocked over the head, like hard.”

This is disgraceful, and we should call it for what it is. We have a duty as elected officials to bring out the best in our country, not to take the low road. And, particularly, we should not encourage harm against people we don't particularly agree with. This is a disturbing trend in political rhetoric, one that has turned to violence—again, not for the first time, but we should condemn it, and we should shut it down now.

These events should serve as a wake-up call that it is past time to turn down the temperature. I believe that all Americans and all Texans deserve better.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO LOUIS DEJOY

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I will be brief. I know we are coming up on a vote.

I just wanted to come to the floor and thank my friend and fellow North Carolinian, Louis DeJoy, for his service as Postmaster General. He announced a few weeks back his intent to resign, and that has been accelerated. Hopefully, he will come back and continue to provide advice on a transition plan for the U.S. Postal Service that is unlike any transition in the Postal Service's modern history.

Louis DeJoy is a very successful businessperson who many people believe was appointed to Postmaster General because he has also historically been a big supporter of President Trump, but the reality is that Louis DeJoy was identified by the Postal Service Board through a nationwide search as one of the most capable people in the United States to be Postmaster General. That is because he had built an idea around a kitchen table of an enterprise that ultimately became a business that, when it was sold, was nearly worth \$1 billion, in transportation and logistics.

Louis came to the Postal Service a little less than 5 years ago and really shook things up, but in the process of doing that, I believe he has created a plan that is a best practice for what we are attempting to do with the Department of Government Efficiency. He has gone across the Nation. He has listened to the concerns of Members of Congress and of Members of the Senate. He has been to Alaska. He has gone out in the rural areas. He understands the unique mission of the U.S. Postal Service.

Many people may not realize that it was designated in the Constitution, at the urging of Benjamin Franklin, to do something very different: to have a constitutional mandate to make sure that every household in the United States of America could be visited if, in fact, they had somebody with a post that needed to get to them. That is extraordinary.

In North Carolina, we are a 50-50 State—about 50 percent urban, 50 percent rural. So you can make, maybe, the numbers and logistics work there. But when you go to States like Alaska, Montana—some of these large, expansive, rural States—the U.S. Postal Service is the only way to touch those communities. The postal package carriers can do a little bit of it, but it makes no economic sense for them to go there.

So Louis inherits this very complex and efficient organization and puts together a transformation plan that is only beginning. And he is going to be leaving the Postal Service, but I just wanted my friend and what I consider to be one of the best Postmaster Generals in modern times—I don't want his

work and the impact that he is having to be lost on anyone. I do hope that this administration recognizes the work that has been put into that plan and that we have to carry it through. It is great work.

As for my friend Louis DeJoy, I am going to miss talking with him on postal matters, but what I will miss in that I will gain in having him back in North Carolina. I just wanted to state for the record that I appreciate his dedication and the sacrifice for this job. He certainly had many other opportunities, and I think that the American people owe him a debt of gratitude.

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

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

NOMINATION OF MICHAEL FAULKENDER

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the confirmation of Mr. Michael Faulkender, who is nominated to serve as Deputy Secretary of the Treasury.

The Deputy Secretary advises and assists the Secretary in the supervision and direction of all of the Department and its activities. Along with Secretary Bessent, the Deputy Secretary will be thoroughly involved in Congress's efforts to craft pro-growth tax policies, which will benefit all Americans and allow U.S. businesses to compete on the global stage. Mr. Faulkender's depth of experience in the public and private sector, in addition to his academic credentials, makes him a highly qualified choice for this position.

Mr. Faulkender spoke strongly at his confirmation hearing about his determination to tackle America's affordability crisis. I look forward to working with him to restore economic prosperity and opportunity and usher in the economic golden age envisioned by the President.

Mr. Faulkender, also, clearly met the standard of the Finance Committee's rigorous nomination process, and I commend the candor and the diligence that he displayed during the extensive meetings that he had with committee members and committee staff.

Qualified nominees for Deputy Treasury Secretary in prior administrations have normally received bipartisan support. I strongly encourage my colleagues today, on both sides of the aisle, to join me in voting to confirm Mr. Faulkender.

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