

didn't breathe a word about it; not when Trump is still in the middle of firing just about as many Federal law enforcement workers as he can get away with; and certainly not when some of my Republican colleagues are still ignoring how our lawless President continues to champion the very people who attacked our Capitol Police.

Just this week, mere days ago, President Trump speculated about compensating people who committed crimes on January 6, about rewarding their violence with taxpayer dollars. Where is that outrage? Where is the condemnation? What are some of you waiting for?

Don't you try for a single second to say: Oh, he is not talking about the violent ones. You all know better. We know better. Remember when you tried to say that about pardons? Remember how that worked out? Trump pardoned people who violently attacked police. They are back on the streets—except for the ones who already committed new crimes.

I don't know how my colleagues keep forgetting what happened on January 6. I don't know how on Earth it is not burned into their memories. But President Trump is talking about people who attacked this building, our offices, our staff, our democracy. He is talking about people who smashed windows in that we walk by every day, people who brought bats and weapons to the halls where we meet our constituents, people who beat the Capitol Police who keep us safe every day, the Capitol Police who are standing guard even now, who sit right outside this Chamber.

These are violent criminals, and President Trump is talking about them like heroes. He wants us to write them a check. Over my dead body, Mr. President. And I am going to say it again and again.

Unlike some of my Republican colleagues, I will say the same for the people who burn Teslas and for the people who smash windows here at the Capitol.

I am tired of watching this. I know our constituents are. We need to demand that Speaker JOHNSON hang that plaque that he—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time is expired.

Mrs. MURRAY. It is not too much to ask, and I hope this body recognizes that violence is violence, and we should condemn the attacks on January 6.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON LAWRENCE NOMINATION

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

Mr. CRAMER. 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 155 Ex.]

YEAS—51

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

NAYS—45

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

NOT VOTING—4

Kennedy	Sanders
Rounds	Schumer

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MULLIN). 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.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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. 40.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Matthew Whitaker, of Iowa, to be United States Permanent Representative on the

Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, with the rank and status of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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. 40, Matthew Whitaker, of Iowa, to be United States Permanent Representative on the Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, with the rank and status of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

John Thune, Katie Boyd 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, right now, we have a couple of billionaires running our country straight into the ground and who seem to have skipped American history because President Trump and Elon Musk don't seem to care much about our Constitution, including the part that says quite clearly:

The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States.

It continues:

No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law.

Well, their lack of interest in that section of the Constitution doesn't make it any less real at all. You don't have to take my word for it; it is right down the street at the National Archives. You can go read it yourself. I would invite our billionaire "co-Presidents" to go take a look. Stand in line with the schoolkids who are on trips. Read up on the separation of powers. You can even explain to the students there why you are gutting the Department of Education while you are at it.

Just in case Trump and Musk struggle as much with reading comprehension as history, let me translate for you what the Constitution says. Congress—that is us, everyone elected here—has the power of the purse. Presidents don't write laws; they execute them. That has been true for every spending bill this body has ever passed, including the House Republicans' year-long CR.

The basic fact that Congress has the power of the purse is something Republicans and Democrats agree on, and it

won't change no matter what Trump or Russ Vought or Elon Musk claims. Their legal theories are plain outlandish, and so are their facts. If you listen to them, they argue that Presidents have been impounding funds routinely. That is wrong. The opposite is true. Presidents have traditionally followed the law and followed the legal directives in spending bills.

When Nixon tried to block just a fraction of the amount of funding Trump is now blocking, Congress passed the Impoundment Control Act on a truly overwhelming bipartisan basis. In fact, it cleared this Senate unanimously.

So while the Constitution may be the first word on Congress's power of the purse, this foundational principle has been affirmed time and again by the courts and by Congress. The law affirms what we have long known—Presidents cannot pick and choose which parts of the spending laws to follow—and it lays out a clear procedure for the President to propose to Congress either delaying or rescinding funding.

The Impoundment Control Act is still the law of the land. The Constitution is still the foundation of this democracy. Congress still has the power of the purse, and for some of the House Republicans who seem to have forgotten, that power is a critical part of how all of us—how we fight for our constituents.

As lawmakers, we allocate funding to solve problems, to make lives better, to make our country safer with things like new bridges to safely get to work or with affordable healthcare or childcare, with clean drinking water, with a strong national defense, with personnel who keep planes flying safely overhead and keep toxins out of our food supply, and so much more.

When Congress passes legislation to make all of those priorities real and the President signs it into law, it needs to be followed. That is how it works in this democracy.

You don't like the law, come to win the votes in Congress and change it. But I am here today on the floor because we all know too well this President is not doing that. He and the richest man in the world are defying our laws. They are hurting our constituents, and they are seeking to enrich themselves in that process.

For over 2 months now, President Trump has been illegally choking off huge chunks of funding. We are talking about hundreds of billions of dollars—holding up investments in everything from new roads and bridges to cheaper energy, to stronger national security.

Back in my home State of Washington, the reports keep rolling in about how President Trump is causing havoc by illegally blocking funds.

Last week, I heard from a lumber company that is struggling to cover a loan, given its Federal grant for solar power has now been frozen for months.

Earlier this week, my office heard about a terminated Spokane project fo-

cused on environmental restoration, stormwater management, and millions of dollars being canceled for Tribal public health efforts in my State alone.

I have no doubt the fallout will continue next week because Trump keeps freezing more funding, ripping up more contracts, and ignoring our laws. It has to end.

All of us—every one of us—wants a better working, more efficient government that delivers for people. But what Trump and Musk are doing has nothing to do with efficiency or with helping people. They are breaking the law and ripping the rug out from underneath families and American businesses, all while working overtime to pass more tax breaks for billionaires like themselves. This lawlessness has to end.

I am hopeful, in this Chamber, we get back to regular order and pass actual bipartisan bills, full-year bills. We cannot let what happened with House Republicans' awful CR happen ever again. We have got to ensure that our constituents—our constituents, each and every one of us—have their voices heard by getting a full-year spending bill reflecting current needs and getting it across the finish line. And those bills need to be bipartisan. That is the bare minimum, and it is not too much to ask.

I have worked with Republicans for years—for years—on bipartisan spending bills. During my time as Appropriations chair, I worked with Senator COLLINS from the other side of the aisle and our colleagues on the committee on both sides of the aisle to hammer out strong, bipartisan bills 2 years in a row—bills that passed out of our committee in overwhelming bipartisan votes, many of them unanimously. So I know well it is absolutely possible to work together, and it is worthwhile.

Is it easy? Of course not. But you look at the bills we wrote together, and you look at the disaster of a bill that House Republicans wrote on their own, and the difference is night and day.

I am not just talking about the difference in huge, painful cuts from the House Republican bill. I am also talking about the huge incompetence House Republicans displayed.

They wrote a bill that slashed DC's own budget by \$1 billion for no reason. The Senate has now passed a bill to fix the inexcusable cut to DC's own funds—their own funds. But if the House does not act quickly now to pass the Senate bill and fix that mistake, House Republicans will force DC to fire teachers, to fire police officers, and more, by the way, without saving taxpayers a dime.

That is just one—one—of the many glaring issues with the House Republicans' partisan CR, which I spoke about at length when I cast my vote against it. And I stand proudly by that vote today.

Republicans should not write a bill without me and expect me just to vote for it. That is not how this ever works. We should not accept a false choice of

accepting House Republicans' poison pills or facing a shutdown; otherwise, that poison is only going to get more bitter each time.

The choice we have to talk about instead is this: Will we work together in a bipartisan way to fund the government and invest in the places that we represent or will House Republicans cut us out, go on their own, and cause a shutdown?

We have to start looking ahead to fiscal year 2026 and working on those bipartisan funding bills. I am focused on making sure that what happened earlier this month absolutely does not happen again because let me be absolutely clear: If Republicans draft another funding bill in September with zero Democratic input and that bill fails to pass the Senate because Democrats do not vote for it, that is on Republicans. That is Republicans forcing a shutdown. Period.

I represent nearly 8 million people in the State of Washington. I am not offering up my vote in exchange for nothing—and, actually, in the case of House Republicans' CR, worse than nothing, given how it will now be used against Democrats.

So I am absolutely not going to stop making this point. Democrats should not offer up our votes in exchange for exactly nothing. I will be making that argument loud and clear for everyone to hear.

We need to be focused on negotiating bipartisan bills that give our communities strong investments instead of devastating cuts. We need to ensure that our constituents have a voice in this process.

Colleagues, understand this: Passing full-year, bipartisan spending bills, that is my top priority—those spending bills that carry the full authority of Congress on how we spend taxpayer dollars, that carry forward the priorities our constituents tell us about. That is my top priority. That is the most important guardrail we can place on an administration that looks to punish people they disagree with and strip funding from priorities like Army Corps dam repairs or public transportation projects or from public schools and universities.

As we write those bills, we need transparency. We need to understand the reality on the ground of what this administration and DOGE are actually doing. Who is calling the shots over there? What programs are functional at this point? Where do we have enough staff to even carry out the mission of specific Agencies or to faithfully follow congressional intent?

We need a hearing with Elon Musk and whoever else is running DOGE. We need hearings with Department heads. Whatever form it takes, we need answers on what has been going on; we need an end to the lawlessness that is happening; and we need transparency that is sorely lacking.

I don't know when that became controversial. Isn't DOGE supposed to be

all about accountability? Isn't it supposed to be all about transparency?

So let's get to it. Let's show the American people exactly what Trump is doing. What is the problem with that?

After all, it is not like it is meant to be a secret. Project 2025 was a public playbook, and it is clear they are following it to the letter.

Before he returned as OMB Director, Russ Vought made clear he wanted to ignore our laws and "Impound, Baby, Impound!" That is a direct quote from the general counsel, by the way. He said it, "Impound, Baby, Impound!"

I even asked him about it directly: Will you follow our laws or just toss them out in the dumpster? And he wouldn't give us a straight yes. He wouldn't, why? Because he already laid out his plans in black and white. His plan: Break the law, block funds that Congress passed, dare the courts to stop him. And, shocker, the guy who made it clear he is willing to go break laws and block funding is breaking laws, and he is blocking funding.

President Trump and Musk have made their intentions just as clear, not just ignoring our laws but ignoring court orders to uphold our laws and attacking our judges and our judicial system every time they don't get their way.

Just this week, we saw new, blatantly illegal acts from the Trump administration. First, OMB removed a website that provides transparency by displaying how it directs Agencies to apportion—or spend—Federal funding. That website is not optional. It is in the statute. And OMB was complying with a requirement that was passed by us, by Congress.

This is a cut-and-dry case. OMB must publish the Agency's legally binding budget decisions. We passed that language on a bipartisan basis because our constituents deserve transparency, and they deserve accountability for how their money is being spent.

But the only thing transparent about this administration is how transparently illegal their actions are because the same day they illegally shut down and shut the American people out of seeing what they are doing, they also blocked funding that House Republicans continued in their own CR and that the President Trump himself actually just signed into law.

Trump wants to illegally cherry-pick what gets funding that we passed and what gets left in the dust. Well, for one thing, that is straight up against the law—open-and-shut case; for another, it fundamentally erodes our democracy, the trust that people and businesses and local and State governments across the country place in the Federal Government, and, of course, our ability to negotiate bipartisan deals here in Congress. And let's not lose sight of the fact that it is bad for our country, and it is bad for our constituents.

There is a reason we passed the emergency funds. But President Trump is

choking off critical investments to combat the flow of fentanyl. He is slashing support for U.S. national security initiatives. He is weakening the competitiveness of U.S. business. He is setting back next-generation weather forecasting and more.

That still is not all because the very next day, we learned he wants to illegally freeze tens of millions of dollars in title X funding. That is a program with a long bipartisan history that helps women get cancer screenings, get birth control, pregnancy tests, prevent and treat STIs.

Last time, President Trump tried to do that through rulemaking, but now that he is throwing the law out the window entirely, he thinks he can do it with the stroke of a pen.

I have to underscore, these are just the most recent examples. Everything I just talked about happened just this week. This is the latest in a long trail of devastation they have left behind in this ongoing parade of lawbreaking because, as I mentioned, President Trump is still—is still—blocking hundreds of billions of dollars in investments we secured for our constituents.

President Trump and Musk illegally shuttered USAID. They are illegally gutting the Department of Education. They are trying to dramatically slash medical research funding with restrictions that are in direct defiance of bipartisan language that I actually worked to negotiate with my Republican colleagues.

I could go on all day describing the damage caused by these moves and the many other funds that are now illegally being blocked, but I think the pattern is clear. They said they were going to cut funding, regardless of the consequences, regardless of the laws, regardless of the Constitution, and that is exactly what they are doing.

We here in Congress can't bury our heads in the sand while Trump, Musk, and Vought try to snatch away our power—our power, Democrats and Republicans—of the purse.

I will continue to use every tool I have as a Senator. I will use my voice. I will use my vote and more to stop this lawlessness, to stop the cuts that hurt my constituents, and to write and pass bills that actually help people.

So I really hope our Republican colleagues will work with us to craft bipartisan funding bills and to conduct basic oversight to provide accountability because it absolutely matters that we not just pass strong bipartisan funding laws but that the laws we pass are actually followed, that our constituents—every one of our constituents—actually have a say in how their tax dollars are spent, and that Congress maintains the power of the purse. And I will keep continuing to press all of my colleagues to stand with me on this.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BUDD). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ALASKA

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, like all of us, last week, I was back home in my great State—the great State of Alaska. And, actually, I try to be home every weekend, even when we are in session. But this trip back home was particularly important because I was in Juneau, AK, our State's capital, to deliver my annual address to our legislature.

We have a really great tradition in Alaska where the Senators get invited to come back and give a big address to the entire State senate, to the entire State house. Senator MURKOWSKI did it a couple of days before I did, and then I was able to do it. Then you kind of do like a little prime minister time, where the legislators get to ask you Q&A's and do a big press conference.

So it is a really important event for me. I know it is for Senator MURKOWSKI. It is certainly one of the most important speeches I give all year, and I wanted to touch on some of the themes because the themes of the speech were actually about the long history and two visions that we have in DC about the great State of Alaska—my State. And boy, oh boy, these visions are competing all the time still, and it really, really matters to the people I represent.

When one vision is kind of ascendant—and I will talk about that—my constituents really get harmed. That is the national Democrat vision for Alaska, which is the shutdown of Alaska. When the Republican vision is ascendant—and now we have President Trump, who is really, really focused on actually helping Alaska, unleashing Alaska's economy—then we do well.

This has been going on for decades, and I feel very passionate about it because it really impacts the day-in and day-out lives of the people I am so privileged to represent.

So let me just mention these competing visions in a little bit more detail. You have one vision, like I said, where there is this historical belief that Alaska would do better continuing as almost a territory run by an absent Federal landlord who protects us, occasionally gives scraps from the national wealth of America's table to our constituents back home, but they are not focused on truly unleashing the private sector opportunities and jobs and economy for Alaskans.

Of course, this gets debated all the time and litigated all the time. We are one of the few States that have several very specific, large, complex Federal pieces of legislation that often get litigated and, of late, have gone all the way up to the U.S. Supreme Court. I want to talk about one of those because it really lays out the entire kind of debate, back-and-forth.