

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.

In 1980, the Congress—over the objection of most Alaskans, by the way—passed a law called the Alaska National Interest Lands Conversation Act—that is a mouthful; it is called ANILCA back home—which has had a huge impact on my State.

ANILCA federalized over 100 million acres of land in Alaska. Can you imagine that? That is as big as California. The Fed said: Guess what, Alaska, we are taking it over.

Since that time—1980; that was Jimmy Carter; we didn't like that—Federal Agencies have interpreted ANILCA, and they have often interpreted ANILCA to say—the Federal Agencies—our role is to shut down Alaska, to not provide access to the lands, access to the resources. That is the way the Federal Government—especially when Democrats are in power—has interpreted ANILCA.

But we just had actually not one but two U.S. Supreme Court cases interpreting ANILCA. The case is called *Sturgeon v. the Department of the Interior—Sturgeon I and Sturgeon II*—where the U.S. Supreme Court, 9 to 0, said: Now, wait a minute, Federal Agencies. Wait a minute, Democrats and Congress. Alaska is different. Alaska is the exception. Federal Agencies, you can't just go and shut down Alaska the way you think you can with other Federal lands.

Justice Kagan actually wrote the opinion in *Sturgeon II* and captured the principle that is at stake in so many of the specific litigation cases my State deals with.

The lower 48 what we call ecocolonialists—the radical, far-left environmental groups—sue on everything in Alaska. You want to try to build a sidewalk in Alaska? You will have 13 environmental groups sue to stop. You can build a sidewalk in Connecticut. You can build a sidewalk in New Jersey. You try to build anything in Alaska, and here they come litigating.

Well the Supreme Court said: Whoa, whoa, whoa. Federal Agencies, all these environmental groups, under ANILCA—that involved a great Alaskan. I know him well. John Sturgeon. He wanted to go moose hunting, and the Fed said: You can't go in a certain area. He was on a hovercraft to go moose hunting in a certain area of Alaska. He knew his rights. He was cited. He said: You know what, I don't believe the National Park Service has the right to cite me. I am going to appeal this citation all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Here is what Justice Kagan said—not some kind of conservative, mind you, but a good Justice: “If Sturgeon lived in any other State, his suit would not have had a prayer of success. . . . Except that Sturgeon lives in Alaska. And as we have said before”—“we,” the Supreme Court of the United States—“‘Alaska is often the exception, not the rule’” to these giant Federal lands issues.

We like those *Sturgeon I* and *Sturgeon II* cases, but I will tell you this: When you hear that Alaska is often the exception, it plays the other way too.

No offense to my friends on the other side of the aisle, but when national Democrats are in power, they often get there through the support of far-left, radical environmental groups. Those groups say, “Hey, we helped you get elected”—President Biden, President Obama, President Carter, and Senators on the other side of the aisle—“so here is what we want.” The environmental groups say, “We want to shut down Alaska.”

So guess what happens. Guess what happens. My colleagues here—the minority leader is certainly one of them—in the White House, they put a huge amount of effort into shutting down my State, killing jobs.

Throughout the decades here in DC, the national Democrats and their special interest, far-left environmental allies have not only encouraged this mindset of shutting down Alaska, they have used it for political gain and contorted it to keep my State locked up as some kind of beautiful American snow globe.

Well, we are not a snow globe. We are one of the most important States in the country, from national defense, to resources, to strategic location. Just talk to the military, talk to the Pentagon.

So this mindset has been on display for leaders of the Democratic Party for decades. It was on display, as I mentioned, when President Carter signed ANILCA in 1980. Our delegation secured some important terms and concessions, which is what Justice Kagan was talking about, when they locked up more than 100 million acres of our State. Try that anywhere else. Most States aren't even 100 million acres big.

Jimmy Carter, when he signed this legislation, said: “Public lands are Alaska's future.” I don't think anyone else has ever said that about any other States. “Public lands are Alaska's future.”

We didn't like Jimmy Carter up in Alaska for what he did to our State.

The mindset was also fully on display when we had President Obama—his last couple weeks in office, he locked up what is called the Outer Continental Shelf, the entire Outer Continental Shelf of Alaska. He said: I am going to take that off the table.

By the way, Congress said: No, you actually have to develop that. It is called the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act.

He didn't care. He said: I am taking it from Alaska. It is all coming off.

Then he said that Alaska needs to “move decisively away from fossil fuels” and that the way “to build a strong . . . economy”—this is the President of the United States—is to rely on things like “philanthropy.” Philanthropy. Charity.

Could you imagine in any other State a President saying “By the way, don't

worry about a strong economy. Don't worry about good private sector jobs for your citizens. You should rely on philanthropy”—kind of patting us on the head. Charity. Come on. Really? They do it for our State. Charity.

But, of course, this arrogant Federal landlord view of Alaska was on its most full display and reached its zenith under President Biden in what I refer to as the “Last Frontier Lock-Up.”

Do you know what this was? I mean, it is really kind of hard to believe. That is the map of it. Every part of the State, every region of the State, all the resources—by the way, particularly targeting Alaska Native people, the indigenous people of my State, great, patriotic people. Holy cow, Joe Biden, Deb Haaland—they made sure Alaskan Natives got nothing.

The whole State—here is what it was. I am going to show this for a minute. It is kind of amazing. The Last Frontier lockup was 70 Executive orders and Executive actions during the Biden administration—7-0; by the way, there would have been more, but we stopped a few of them—exclusively and uniquely focused on shutting down Alaska. Think about that. That has probably never happened in American history, that a White House comes into power and says: I am going to focus on this State, and I am going to use all our Executive authority, many of which are illegal, and I am going to use it to crush one State in the Union.

Has that ever happened? I don't think so. That is what happened with this administration. Seventy.

By the way, I was in an Oval Office meeting with President Biden when they were at 46. I handed him the lockup. I said: Mr. President, with all due respect, I know I am in the Oval Office, I am not sure you even know what is going on with your administration. You guys have declared a war on working families in my State. Sir, with all due respect, it is not right that you are using the power of the Federal Government that you are in charge of to crush my State. Why are you doing that, Mr. President? Why are you doing that? And why are you particularly hurting the Native people? I thought you care about communities of color, indigenous people. You certainly don't in my State.

I even told him: If a Republican administration came in and issued—at the time, 46; this would be 2 years ago—46 Executive orders targeting little Delaware and you were still a Senator here, you would be on the Senate floor raising hell every day because it is wrong. You know it. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle know it. This should have never happened in any State in the country.

Do you know what else about this that was a little frustrating? Do you think there was one national media story on this from the New York Times, the Washington Post, or, heck, even the Anchorage Daily News? Not one story. Not one story.

The Federal Government using all its power to crush one State—often illegally, and I will get into that—and nobody wrote one story. Why? Because most of the media loved it. Hey, we love all these environmental groups. They want to shut down Alaska, so we are not going to say a word about it.

You wonder why people doubt the media. That is a big story. Four years. The power of the Federal Government to crush one State, and we never had anyone write about it—not just that, but they wouldn't listen. They wouldn't listen.

So a big part of these orders in Alaska were focused on this region we call the North Slope of Alaska. We have State land up here. We have ANWR. A lot of people know about ANWR for oil and gas. We have a thing called the National Petroleum Reserve of Alaska here, set aside by Congress to do what? The national Petroleum Reserve of Alaska? To develop petroleum for our country's strength and power.

This is the North Slope Borough. It is led by Inupiat indigenous people. They are tremendous people. They are patriotic. They serve in the military. They are whale hunters. They are amazing people, some of my favorite people in the whole world.

Their Tribe, their Alaska Native corporation of the borough—by the way, this is about as big as Montana; huge—they came to DC eight times, all the leaders of the North Slope. It takes a long time to get there, by the way. It is about 4 or 5,000 miles from DC.

When they heard that Joe Biden and Deb Haaland were going to do all kinds of regulations to remove their lands from any kind of productive economic use, eight times they flew all the way to DC to meet with Secretary Haaland—eight times. Do you know how many times Secretary Haaland met with my great constituents? Zero. Zero.

We held press conferences. We wrote letters: Madam Secretary, you are indigenous. These people are indigenous. You have a trust responsibility with them. How about meeting them once before you crush their economy?

Never met with them.

So talk about an arrogant, faraway landlord.

By the way, there is good news here. Some of the leaders of the North Slope Borough just last week came down and requested a meeting with the new Secretary of the Interior, Doug Burgum. He met with them for an hour and a half the first time they were in town under the Trump Administration. Eight times under Biden—nope. Sorry. We are too busy. First time for Secretary Burgum—all these great leaders—an hour and a half. That is respect.

It is not just Democrat administrations. Unfortunately, my colleagues—many of them, too many of them—weren't alone in this unprecedented lockup of our State.

Let me just give you one example. We got ANWR open, fair and square, in

2017, in the tax bill. It is in the law: Open it up. Hold lease sales. Passed it. We have been trying to get that done for 40 years.

It was bipartisan, by the way. Back home in Alaska, Democrats and Republicans, we all want this done—the Native people that live there. So that was done.

The Trump administration is going to have a lease sale. They have mandated it at the end. But in the interim, my colleagues, led by the senior Senator from New Mexico—I am going to get to that in a minute. My colleagues, in a letter—boy, there is a whole bunch of them. Do you know what they did?

My colleagues here, Democrat Senators, a bunch of them, they wrote all the insurance companies and all the big banks in America, and they said: Don't invest in Alaska. Don't invest in Alaska.

A bunch of my colleagues, after we got a law passed that we have been trying to get done for decades: Don't do it, banks and insurance companies.

A bunch, about a third of the Democrats here—that is pressure: Don't do it. We don't want you to do it.

Why? Do you know what they said? It was remarkable. Because if you develop Alaska, America won't achieve "its climate goals"—"its climate goals."

So that was Democrat Senators. By the way, no one asked me about this. They came in to crush my State about climate goals.

Now, let's just talk a little bit about hypocrisy here. That was led by the senior Senator of New Mexico.

Now, during the Biden administration, remember, they wanted to shut down Alaska. They were doing everything they could to shut down my State. We didn't increase production at all. Our oil production has been going like this.

But there is one State in America where it is "drill, baby, drill." The production of oil is through the roof. Guess what State that is. Oh my goodness, it is New Mexico—on Federal lands—when Secretary Haaland was the Secretary. Whoa, are you kidding me?

The gray here is Alaska. The red is New Mexico. During the Biden administration, the 4 years they tried to crush my State, the senior Senator from New Mexico led the efforts to crush my State. Secretary Haaland, another New Mexican, crushed my State. And guess what. In New Mexico, on Federal lands, it was "drill, baby, drill." They went from a million barrels a day to 2 million barrels a day.

Where is the New York Times on that one? Where is the Washington Post on that one?

Could you imagine the counterfactual? A Republican administration comes into office, and they target a Democrat State to crush them, and then that same Republican administration, with the Secretary of the Interior and one of their senior Senators, says:

But in our State, we are going to unleash it. And we will shut down the other States because of climate concerns, but we will be the climate bomb of America—which is what New Mexico has become.

OK. Where is that story? Where is that story?

Again, you wonder why people don't trust our media. This is an unbelievable story.

So is this, by the way. My colleagues all, can you imagine if every Senator here decided, hey, I am going to get a bunch of Senators, and we are going to write a letter to make sure we crush the economy in New York or Connecticut? Like this place wouldn't even work. But if it is Alaska, you get to do that.

Well, I don't like it. But here is the other reason I feel so passionate about this, and this is what my colleagues—and look, they are writing a letter. We know why the senior Senator from New Mexico writes this letter—because all the radical far-left groups who support these guys tell them to do this.

But here is what makes me really upset, because they don't realize what their letters do. It is not just about producing energy that our country needs or jobs. For me and the people I represent, it is about something even more.

What am I talking about? I have brought this chart out a lot. This is an American Medical Association study from 1980 to 2014.

What does it show? It shows life expectancy in America. It is a little bit hard to read here, but the increases or decreases in life expectancy. So if you are looking at, kind of, orange and red, unfortunately, parts of the United States have a little bit of orange and red. That is actually a decrease in life expectancy. We experienced that for 25 years, 1980 to 2014. In some parts of our country, according to the American Medical Association, the people in those parts, they lived less longer lives. It is really bad. I mean, it is horrible.

Now, if you look at the map—I won't go into all of it—a lot of this is where the opioid epidemic really surged and destroyed so many lives. But other parts of America, if you look here—the blue, the purple—had an explosion in life expectancy.

Wow, that is pretty important. As a matter of fact, I have debated a lot of my Democratic colleagues: Give me an indicator of policy success more important than that the people you are representing are living longer. Give me one. There isn't one. It is really important.

So guess which State in that period, 1980 to 2014, had a huge increase in the life expectancy. My State. And guess which regions of Alaska had that. The North Slope—I was just showing you that—the Northwest Arctic Borough, the Aleutian Islands chain, all the way out here, had giant increases in 25 years, up to 13 years of life expectancy increases.

Hmm, why did that happen? Well, it happened for two reasons. One, unfortunately, these are a lot of the areas where our Alaska Native communities live, and they started at really low levels of life expectancy—really low, 50-, 55-years-old average lifespan. It is horrible.

So it was a low level. But what else happened? These areas all started to experience major resource development, fisheries.

There is a huge law called the Magnuson-Stevens Act, which Americanized our fisheries. So the Aleutian Islands chain had incredible opportunities for resource development with fisheries.

The North Slope, as I was talking about, the discovery of Prudhoe Bay, had big oil and gas developments.

This area had a huge mine called the Red Dog mine, one of the biggest silver-zinc-lead mines in the world—or lead-zinc mines in the world.

So resource development happened, and guess what. The Native people of Alaska started to get clinics, running water and flush toilets—which a lot of them don't have—hospitals, gymnasiums, good jobs.

Again, what policy indicator of success is more important than that the people you are representing are living 13 years longer than they did 20 years earlier?

I don't think there is one. But all my colleagues came and said: No—the Federal Government, Joe Biden, the senior Senator from New Mexico. We are going to shut all of this down.

They are not listening to me or LISA MURKOWSKI. We are going to shut it down because some radical far-left groups, who don't give a damn about my constituents, are telling us to do it.

Shame on you guys. Shame on you guys. I hope I never see another letter like this again—all the banks, all the insurance companies, led by MARTIN HEINRICH—ridiculous. I wouldn't do that to New Mexico. Even though I was tempted, I didn't.

So let me end with a couple of more points, with some good news.

So like I said, you have 70 Executive orders and Executive actions. As I said, a lot of these were just blatantly illegal. Well, we just found out that I wasn't just saying that. One of the biggest Executive orders that Joe Biden put in place right away was like: Hey, I know you Republicans have ANWR open. Donald Trump signed it. But guess what. I am going to cancel all the leases.

Wait a minute. You can't cancel all the leases. Congress said you have to put forward the leases.

They don't care. Deb Haaland said: Hey, I don't care what Congress did. You can't develop ANWR.

You can't do that. The Congress of the United States just passed it. The President of the United States, Donald Trump, signed it into law. You can't just cancel the leases. That is illegal.

Nope, they did it. Joe Biden did it. Deb Haaland did it.

Two days ago, the Federal district court in Alaska, on litigation, when we sued and said: You can't do that—a court, to be perfectly honest, where she usually favors the far-left environmental groups. She wrote a big opinion saying: Guess what. What Joe Biden did, what Deb Haaland did was totally illegal.

Where is the New York Times and Washington Post story on that one? I don't know. They haven't written it.

So the Biden action on ANWR was what? Illegal.

Now, we have all kinds of people talking about a constitutional crisis right now. But my constitutional crisis was the last 4 years, because it wasn't just this. It wasn't just the ANWR provision. The Biden administration took this area of Alaska, the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska, completely off the table. It is as big as Indiana right here, the NPR-A. They just said: We are taking it off the table.

But the Congress said that the Department of the Interior “shall conduct an expeditious program of competitive leasing for oil and gas in the” NPR-A. That is what we said. So that is certainly illegal.

I will give you another one. This is a huge critical mineral deposit area in Alaska called the Ambler Mining District. It has more critical minerals, probably, than any place in America.

The Trump administration said: We are going to build a road to it. Congress, in 1980, said the Secretary of the Interior “shall permit” a road to the Ambler Mining District. “Shall”—that is what we said.

Guess what the Biden administration did. They canceled the road—completely illegal.

So it is not just actions to hurt my constituents. It is complete lawlessness in the process of doing that.

So I am sounding a little cranky here because I am cranky about the attacks on my State. You have got an administration saying: We are going to shut down Alaska.

And then you have a lot of my colleagues saying: And we are going to help.

They never asked me. They never asked like: Hey, Dan, if we do all this, will we be hurting the life expectancy of the people you represent?

Answer: Yes. They don't care.

But I will tell you, we now have a new vision, and it is because Republicans are in charge in the Senate, in the House, and, very importantly, in the White House.

And I want to thank President Trump and his team; Secretary Burgum; Secretary Wright, the Secretary of Energy; the Chief of Staff, Susie Wiles; all of them.

On day one—day one—in the Trump administration, they said: We are not going to shut down Alaska. We are not going to hurt Alaska. We think Alaska is critical, not just for Alaskans but for America. We are going to unleash Alaska's extraordinary resource potential.

That is the Executive order President Trump signed on his first day in office. And this is the vision that Alaskans want. This is the vision that will strengthen my State's economy, create more jobs, and not have this arrogant Federal landlord focused on shutting us down.

It is a vision arising from our frontier heritage in Alaska, a spirit of strength, invention, energy, resilience, and shaking off the shackles of the past, and building a new world. It is a spirit of opportunity. It is a spirit of the last frontier.

And we get it from the Alaskan Native people who have thrived on these lands for thousands of years, in some of the harshest conditions in the world. We get it from the gold miners who traveled north to find their fortune. We get it from the pioneers who came from thousands of miles away to build new communities in Alaska.

We get it from our incredible veteran population. We have more vets per capita than any other State in the country, who have defended freedom for America all over the world.

We get it from our construction workers and building trades, who have built Alaskan manmade marvels like the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System, which, by the way, is another example of what I am talking about. It passed the Senate by a tie vote. The giant Trans-Alaska Pipeline system that has produced over 40 billion barrels for our State passed right here on the Senate floor with a tie vote from the Republican Vice President of the United States. We get this from our law enforcement officers who have brought law and order to a rough and rugged land. We get it from our fishermen on dangerous seas, and we get the spirit, the spirit that President Trump wants to unleash in our State, for the benefit of Alaskans, for the benefit of America. We get this from Alaskans who want to create private sector jobs, who want to create wealth for our State and our country, and want to reject what the national Democrats do every single time they get into power, which is crush my State; crush jobs; undermine working families; in particular, go after the interests of the Alaska Native people.

So the final thing on this Executive order, which we are seeing—and this is where some of my Democratic colleagues in the Senate have actually been helpful to me, so I appreciate that—so we have a huge opportunity for a giant LNG project in Alaska that will be a counter to the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative by getting clean-burning Alaska natural gas to our allies in Asia, to Alaskans, to our military, to Americans. This is a huge project that the President of the United States in his State of the Union, in his Executive order, and in his recent meeting with the Prime Minister of Japan has said is one of his administration's top priorities.

It will unleash jobs by the thousands. It will revitalize our steel industry.

And at full capacity, given how much natural gas we have on the North Slope, the estimates are that this will reduce our trade deficit by \$10 billion a year.

So we are very focused on this. It is a new day in Alaska with regard to our economy and energy. And the new day is because Republicans are back in the White House. Republicans are back in control of the Senate, and Republicans are still in charge of the House. That is how we need to unleash our economy.

One day, I am going to be able to convince some of my Democratic colleagues: Let us do this. We don't come attacking your States. We don't write letters to all banks and all the insurance companies saying: Let's shut down Arizona.

We should all be trying to lift each other up. Someday, my Democratic colleagues will do that. But until now, with Republicans in charge, we got huge opportunities in my great State, and I am very, very thankful for that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

#### MEDICAID

Mr. KELLY. Mr. President, with all of the chaos in Washington right now, it can feel like it is tough to keep up. In the middle of bombshell revelations, new Executive orders that threaten the safety of Americans, and the administration's plans to give rich people trillions of dollars of tax cuts, what is often lost is how this all impacts the people we represent. The best way to find out, though, is to get out of Washington, DC, and talk to the families and the seniors and the kids who are going to be directly impacted.

Let me tell you: These folks are paying attention, and they aren't happy about it. I know some of my Republican colleagues in Congress are trying to tune out the thousands of phone calls and the emails and have been avoiding townhalls.

But last week, I held a couple of townhalls in Arizona. We focused on Medicaid and brought together healthcare providers and families who rely on it to talk about what Republicans are planning to do and what that would mean for them.

Republicans are working on a plan that could absolutely gut healthcare in our country by slashing Medicaid. There is a number of ways they could do this, but we know it is the plan. The way Republicans talk about it is about dollars saved and pay-fors for those tax cuts for the wealthiest.

When it is framed as a line item instead of what it actually is, which is healthcare that tens of millions of Americans rely on to survive, it is easy to lose track of who will bear the consequences of these decisions: hard-working families, kids, and seniors in Arizona and across the entire country.

My State has one of the largest Medicaid populations. The Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System—or AHCCCS, as Arizona's Medicaid pro-

gram is called—has been expanded under Republican Governors to be the backbone of healthcare for more than 2 million people.

We are talking about kids. We are talking about seniors. We are talking about pregnant women and people with disabilities. And I heard from them last week. I promised them that I would bring their stories back to DC and share them. Now, I don't think I have enough time here to talk about all of them today, but I am going to share a few.

This is story No. 1. In Scottsdale, along with Senator RUBEN GALLEG0, I heard from a woman named Quianna Brown. Quianna is the mother of a 10-year-old girl that she and her husband adopted from foster care, and she has special needs, and she has a rare form of diabetes. Her daughter was diagnosed and treated, thanks to Medicaid.

Now, along with her husband, who served in the U.S. Navy for 23 years, Quianna works every day to provide for her family, and she is afraid that her daughter is going to lose her healthcare. She finished her remarks at this townhall by comparing Medicaid to a house that Republicans are planning to burn down. She said—and this is a quote, Mr. President. She said:

Would you mind telling your colleagues in Washington that when they're burning down this house, there are people still inside? My kid is inside.

When she said this to me in front of this room of over 100 people, sharing her most personal story, the room went silent. Everyone turned and listened because it was a mother pleading for us to help protect her child in the most straightforward terms. And I told her I would bring this back and share it with all of you.

So, again, let me repeat:

When they're burning down this house, there are people still inside. My kid is inside.

These words from Quianna Brown, a mother and a hard-working Arizonan, should resonate loud and clear on this floor.

Samia from Sierra Vista—this is story No. 2—is the mother of two children, a 15-year-old daughter and a 12-year-old son. Her son only has one kidney and severe scoliosis. Both of them, both of the kids, are autistic and were diagnosed with a rare tumor disorder which cripples their bodies' capacity to stop the growth of tumors. The result is that their chance of getting cancer is 85 to 95 percent. She knows that the best chance her kids have of beating cancer and surviving is to find it early. And Medicaid has allowed her to get the frequent screenings that her children need.

She shared that both her children meet the burden of placing them in a long-term care facility, but thanks to Arizona's Medicaid paid caregiver program, she can care for them at home. That is a success.

Medicaid is a literal lifeline for her kids. I think about her knowing exactly what she needs to do for her kids

to keep them healthy and the worry that she faces if she thinks about what would happen to them without it.

Story No. 3 is about Tiffany Leslie Pasillas from Marana. Also she cares for her 6-year-old daughter Aiyana at home. Aiyana is immunocompromised. She is nonverbal. She can't walk, and she requires care 24-7. Tiffany shared that without Medicaid, she would be forced to limit care and evaluate whether she could continue to care for her at home—or would she have to place her daughter in a specialized facility for her severe needs?

In Tucson, AZ, I heard from Chad Durns, who is living with multiple sclerosis and is unable to work. He relies on Medicaid to afford his MRIs and his infusion treatments.

When he spoke at the townhall, he talked about the potential costs of his healthcare if he lost his Medicaid coverage. Through tears, he said:

The level of cost of those things would be devastating for a guy like me.

"A guy like me." What are folks on the other side of the aisle talking about doing? They are talking about hurting Chad and guys like him. For what? To give more tax giveaways to rich people, to billionaires.

Here is story No. 5. And this is about Amalia, who is the daughter of Crissy McGann. Amalia is a 5-year-old kid who uses Medicaid to receive care for a rare genetic disorder. She said that she is terrified—so the mom is terrified—that the services her daughter depends on and allow her to thrive would be cut or reduced and called the proposed cuts disastrous for the disability community.

Disastrous, devastating, burning down a house with kids inside—that is what Arizonans had to say about these plans to gut Medicaid.

And these stories exist in every single State, in every single district, red or blue, all of them. But here is the thing: Only some of us seem to care to listen.

Now, I invite all of my colleagues, especially my Republican colleagues negotiating this plan, to listen to the people they represent. Listen to their concerns. They are real concerns that are affecting real people, people that cannot afford to pay for expensive healthcare.

So that instead of pay-fors or line items, maybe you will think about Quianna and her kid or Chad who has MS or the countless other folks whose lives will be flipped upside down if they lost Medicaid.

We are representatives of the people. We are here to make people's lives better, not to ruin them. So to my colleagues, I urge you: Stop trying to burn down the house. Your constituents are inside.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WYDEN. The Senator from Mississippi.

#### UKRAINE

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to offer some remarks