PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RELATING TO ''ENERGY CONSERVATION PROGRAM FOR APPLIANCE STANDARDS: CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS, LABELING REQUIREMENTS, AND ENFORCEMENT PROVISIONS FOR CERTAIN CONSUMER PRODUCTS AND COMMERCIAL EQUIPMENT''—Motion to Proceed

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I understand the Senate has received H.J. Res. 42 from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. THUNE. I move to proceed to H.J. Res. 42.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to H.J. Res. 42, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Energy relating to ''Energy Conservation Program for Appliance Standards: Certification Requirements, Labeling Requirements, and Enforcement Provisions for Certain Consumer Products and Commercial Equipment''.

VOTE ON MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

Mr. THUNE. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 222 Leg.]

YEAS—52

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

NAYS—46

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

NOT VOTING—2

Hawley	Whitehouse

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 46.

The motion is agreed to.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RELATING TO ''ENERGY CONSERVATION PROGRAM FOR APPLIANCE STANDARDS: CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS, LABELING REQUIREMENTS, AND ENFORCEMENT PROVISIONS FOR CERTAIN CONSUMER PRODUCTS AND COMMERCIAL EQUIPMENT''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 42) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Energy relating to ''Energy Conservation Program for Appliance Standards: Certification Requirements, Labeling Requirements, and Enforcement Provisions for Certain Consumer Products and Commercial Equipment''.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION FIRST 100 DAYS

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, we are 100 days into Donald Trump's term, and it is time that we ask the most important question, the most obvious question, but it is a question, actually, that has not been asked enough—not ''How is he doing?'' not even ''What is he doing?'' That is important too. The most important question is ''How are we doing under Donald Trump?'' The answer is ''Terrible.'' It is going very badly. In 3 months, we have become less safe, less secure, and less prosperous, and it comes down to Donald Trump.

People voted for him for all kinds of reasons, but as my friend Senator CHRIS MURPHY said, people took him seriously when he said he would lower costs and didn't take him seriously when he said he would act like a dictator. It turns out that the opposite is true. We are paying more for everything. We are paying more for everything. People's life savings and college plans for their kids are being gutted. Tens of thousands of jobs are getting cut.

Investors are looking for more stable places to invest their money. The hallmark of the U.S. financial system and economy is that we are the most stable place, the most predictable place, the best place for rule of law, to park your money, for infrastructure, for higher education, and all of that has been lit on fire in 100 days.

Unfortunately, the worst is yet to come. Trump's approach to tariffs—one day they are on, and the next day they are gone—is starting to make everything from groceries, to clothes, to cars and homes more expensive. And people are understandably worried about a recession. Consumer confidence is at its lowest point in 5 years.

You will recall that there was a global pandemic that caused people to have a low level of consumer confidence. But this is not a global pandemic; this is a self-imposed recession by one person who has a very weird idea about economic policy and nobody willing to stand up to the mad King.

This is not what people voted for. And if you voted for Donald Trump—look, a lot of people voted for Donald Trump. Most people voted for Donald Trump. I am not here to scold anybody. But people thought that whatever his other faults, Trump was going to be good for the money side of things—he was going to be good for your money; he was going to be good for entrepreneurship; he was going to be good for your 401(k); he was going to be good for the stock market; he was going to be good for investments. Here we are, and the American economy is in a free fall, threatening to drag the entire world down with it.

But it is not just the economy that is hurting. Trump, aided by his band of rogue advisers, including Elon Musk and Russ Vought, has broken basically everything, forcing seniors and disabled people to wait for hours just to get help with the benefits they have already earned. Veterans are being laid off by the thousands and facing even longer delays in getting the care they need. Trash is piling up at national parks with fewer park rangers to look after them. Drastic cuts to medical research and staff mean fewer discoveries and potentially lifesaving treatments for conditions like cancer and Alzheimer's. The national parks, the VA, the NIH, the CDC—these are the kinds of American institutions that have made us strong for generations, and they are being trashed on purpose. A proposed downsizing at the Postal Service will keep people waiting longer to get their packages and their mail and their prescriptions and their bills, especially in rural and remote areas. And none of this is saving any money. It is absolutely making people's everyday lives harder.

OK, so the economy is not doing great, support services are being cut left and right, but are we at least safer and stronger and more respected globally? The answer is no. Since his first hours in office when he froze all foreign assistance, Trump has undermined our safety and national security at every single turn. He has picked fights with neighbors and allies, weakening longstanding partnerships and forcing the rest of the world to work against us rather than with us.

I was in Europe a couple of months ago, and it was kind of jarring when our allies—and I mean our allies, our closest allies, who have always been there with us, who have defense treaties with us, who have economic partnerships with us, who have people-to-people ties—came to us and said that the biggest destabilizing force on the planet is the President of the United States.

We used to be the good guys that would respond to disasters and treat diseases around the world, but Trump has decimated one of the most successful global health programs in history—PEPFAR—leaving an estimated 1 million newborns to contract HIV from their mothers—1 million newborns contracting HIV from their mothers. What possible purpose could there be behind that?

One note to my former colleague Secretary Rubio: There is not a waiver program in place that allows lifesaving aid to flow. These organizations that provide aid are absolutely shutting down.

I was just talking to a colleague who was in Africa over the recess period, and he said kids are on half rations. Kids are half the size they are supposed to be because of what America is doing—because of what America is doing.

An earthquake hit Myanmar, and the United States sent three aid workers to assist with the disaster response, who were then fired while they were on the ground. We have three people there to help people in Myanmar, where there was a catastrophic earthquake. The ''United States'' logo is on their armbands, and they are fired and told to come home.

Guess what happened next. China sent 600 workers and has committed to delivering close to $14 million in supplies. I think that is catastrophic for humanitarian reasons. I think that is catastrophic for moral reasons. I think it is bad that the United States is causing death on purpose. But even if you don't care about that, we can at least see the geopolitical downside to vacating the scene when another country is in trouble and letting China go into the breach.

I have a friend of a friend who just texted me. They were doing good work in Fiji, and they were sent home. China came in within 2 weeks and is performing the same work. I cannot imagine anybody making the argument that that is good for the United States.

You do not counter China's growing regional influence or outcompete its economy by walking away from the world and insulting all of your friends. You don't bring peace to Gaza and Ukraine by making false promises and empty threats, nor do you win the future on issues like AI and clean energy by pretending that America, as strong and powerful as we are—and we are strong and powerful—that we can solve any of these global challenges alone.

A lot of Trump's failures, whether in domestic or foreign policy, boil down to the simple fact that he and his people honestly don't know what they are doing. There is no grand strategy that we are all somehow missing. There is no brilliant, new way of looking at things. They are just kind of messing around in the most powerful positions on the planet—the Signal group chat, the forged DOGE savings receipts, the frantic firing and rehiring of nuclear weapons workers and disease detectives.

The people currently in charge of the most powerful Nation in human history, moving trillions of dollars around, are just winging it, and their response to the frequent mistakes, no matter how serious or costly, is ''oops'' or sometimes they pretend it was their plan all along.

Trump's ineptitude is matched only by his corruption. Just days before his inauguration, he launched his own meme coin, which he encouraged supporters to buy. For those of you who are not super up on all the crypto stuff, this is the equivalent of basically saying: I have a Swiss bank account in case anybody wants to deposit money into the President of the United States' pocket. That is what this meme coin does.

After he made close to $100 million from it, the coin quickly lost most of its value. And then just last week, after Trump announced a dinner with the coin's top holders, complete with a ''VIP White House tour''—let's be very clear. There are some things you absolutely can't do. One of them is to monetize the Presidency. The other thing is to use a government building, to use the White House as an inducement to pay the U.S. President is out-of-this-world corrupt. It is the kind of thing that if you are on the Foreign Relations Committee or the Defense Committee or whatever it is and you are traveling abroad, you will have in your talking points to scold some counterpart of yours about corruption. This is the kind of thing that, up until about 100 days ago, we went around the world trying to prevent, but now our leader is doing it.

While regular people are losing money every day because of Trump, he and his family continue to get richer—and worse, if Trump has his way with the tax bill, billionaires will get the biggest tax break in history while children, seniors, and families find it even harder to make ends meet because they can no longer get healthy meals or because they have been kicked off of Medicaid.

One final point: Whether it is withholding funds that were enacted by Congress and made into law or deporting people without due process, including a 2-year-old—a 2-year-old—American citizen with cancer last week, Trump is breaking the law on a daily basis. Everyone is afforded due process in our system, and with good reason—because the moment some people are not provided due process, there is no telling who is entitled to it and who is not and, crucially, who decides who gets due process. It sure shouldn't be any individual elected official to determine whether you get due process.

This has been the worst start to a Presidency in the history of the United States. People had their own reasons for voting for Trump last fall. I have got friends who voted for Trump. I understand, for some, it was COVID. For some, it was Gaza. For some, it was the price of everything. For some, it was Biden's being too old. A lot of people had a lot of reasons, and I am not here to judge.

A good buddy of mine, a former Governor of Hawaii, used to say: You know, people vote for you for their reasons, not yours.

So I am not here to try to be vindicated. I am saying, for even those people who voted for him, all of the reasons that you voted for him, unless you were enthused about corruption, unless you were enthused about lawbreaking, unless you really hated Medicaid, unless you really wanted veterans to be laid off, unless you really wanted our standing in the world to be diminished by massive proportions in a super short period of time—unless you love that stuff, it is OK to say: This guy is not working out. He doesn't own your vote. He doesn't own your support. You cast a ballot, and he becomes the President of the United States. It went very badly. This is the worst 100 days of a Presidency in American history.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. ALSOBROOKS. Mr. President, I would like to use my time tonight to talk, as well, about the first 100 days under this administration's leadership.

You have heard my colleague already speak, and I concur with his remarks. Simply put, it has been chaotic; it has been disorganized; it has been an unmitigated disaster. Quite frankly—and I know that I am not alone in this—we are absolutely sick of it.

This President and this administration rode in with promises of reducing costs for American families—families like the family I grew up in, with a father who worked through the night and into the morning as a newspaper delivery person and with a mother who worked as a receptionist. This President promised. He said, on day one, that he was going to reduce the cost to American families and improve their quality of life. Only, 100 days later, Americans have only seen reductions in the stock market, in their 401(k)s, and a lowered respect for the Constitution. What we have seen continue to rise, instead, are grocery prices. We are seeing the cost of living grow out of control as families experience freezes in critical funding that supports their households. We are seeing housing costs continue to skyrocket as well.

Again, we were promised the exact opposite, which is that this President knew and understood what it was for the average American family to struggle to afford the cost of housing. He

promised that he had the solution and that he was going to cause those costs to go down. Yet everyone from our children to our veterans has suffered under this administration and under this leadership. Not one promise that this administration made to everyday, hard-working, working-class families, made at the outset of this administration, has been met. In fact, they have not even come close.

And do you know what? What is worse is they don't seem to care. But do you know who does care? The American people care.

If you are a working-class American who had hopes that this administration would lower costs as they promised, I will bet you are feeling betrayed by now by the impact of the Trump tariffs.

If you spent your working life paying into Social Security, like so many of our seniors, in the hopes of having a reliable safety net in your later years, you are feeling helpless in listening to this administration's plans to raid Social Security.

If you get your healthcare through Medicaid and Medicare, you are feeling alarmed at this administration's intent to gut these essential programs.

If initiatives like SNAP and Head Start help keep your family's head above water during tough times, you are feeling frustrated that this administration is so out of touch that they would even consider eliminating this critical funding.

These emotions run deep nationally, and I have seen them felt locally. Somerset County, for example, is one of the poorest counties in my State, the State of Maryland. If that is not enough, its geography has contributed to awful flooding problems for decades. The city of Crisfield was depending on a Federal grant to finally help fix the problem. It was a funding plan that people had worked on for years and for such a long time, but this administration's rash decisions have now eliminated that plan.

These are the kinds of decisions that can leave you feeling hopeless, and when you see that your emotions and your struggles are being ignored by this President so that he can hand tax cuts to the billionaires around him who choose to grab for more money instead of holding on to some sense of morality, you feel angry. Resources may be in short supply for American families right now, but there is more than enough hurt and anger to go around. This administration is hurting Americans—the ones who voted for this President and Americans who didn't. They are hurting Americans who didn't vote and Americans who were too young to vote. They are hurting the business community, and they are hurting farmers. They are hurting cities, and they are hurting our rural areas. They are hurting law enforcement officers and factory workers. They are hurting teachers and students. They are hurting factory workers and union members. They are hurting doctors and medical professionals and researchers.

Across the political spectrum and across all demographics, the only thing we have to show for the first 100 days is losing, the kind of losing that will be felt in this Nation for years to come.

One hundred days in, look at how they have treated the very best of us—this Nation's civil servants, the Federal workers who serve with absolutely no political motivation. I have met them. I know them. Close to 160,000 of them live in the State of Maryland, and many of them have served for years under both Democratic administrations and Republican administrations, and they have one dedication, and that is to their fellow Americans. Our Federal workers keep our food safe. They explore the bounds of science to find cures to our most challenging diseases. They make sure that our veterans receive the benefits that they so richly deserve and that our seniors have access to resources that they set aside for the future.

Our civil servants do so much to boost our quality of life, and do you know what? This administration doesn't care. For the first 100 days, they have been subjected to spiteful, petty attacks. They have been caught in the crossfire of a political witch hunt. They have had their lives disrupted by these abrupt and improper firings.

My State has felt a significant impact from these firings. It is home to so many Federal workers—as I have mentioned, 160,000 of them—people who I am incredibly proud to represent. I have heard the calls from panicked workers who don't know what the future holds. I have met with distraught workers who fear that they won't be able to provide for their families.

All of this is the result of an administration claiming to prioritize efficiency. The majority of Americans is OK with finding efficiency. What they are not OK with is the cruelty that we are seeing. How you treat people matters, and this administration is more interested in celebrating cruelty than being cost-effective.

There is no better example of this administration's chaos and cruelty than HHS Secretary Kennedy. His Department and its Agencies are indispensable in the fight of keeping Americans safe and healthy. From keeping our food safe today to finding cures for disease, the mission of these Agencies and their workers is critical to our well-being. Yet Secretary Kennedy doesn't care. He has pledged to make America healthy again, but in reality, he has fired safety inspectors, eliminated food safety labels and labs, and revealed plans to take the Federal Government out of the role of keeping our food safe.

Our Nation has enjoyed progress due in no small part to our commitment to sustained research. The groundbreaking discoveries that our Nation's researchers have made have done so much for our society. At Health and Human Services, that has meant eliminating diseases that used to ravage our communities and currently means working on solving health challenges that continue to puzzle us today.

The NIH is headquartered in my State, and I know firsthand the good work that they do. We know all too well the significant role that the NIH and other health and research Agencies play in developing and deploying vaccine treatments. Only recently emerging from a devastating public health crisis, we know firsthand how important their work is.

Secretary Kennedy either doesn't know or doesn't care what his Department's mission is. He is doing the administration's bidding to eliminate funding that goes toward finding cures for cancer, Alzheimer's, and rare diseases; and in the midst of outbreaks of measles—a disease that researchers had virtually eliminated—he has pressed forward with firing thousands of vital workers in our health Agencies. This is not efficient, and it is not a profile in competent leadership. What it is, instead, is absolutely dangerous, and it is putting sensitive information and decisions between life and death in the hands of grossly unqualified people.

Secretary Kennedy's pledge to make America healthy again is another promise that this administration is either unwilling or incapable of keeping. His idea to create a national registry for people with autism is an example of what happens when incompetent and incapable leadership is in place.

This administration is full of examples like this. The callous, heartless disregard for others comes right from the top, and it is mirrored in the people who have been nominated to run the government. So we can't join them in celebrating this milestone, because there is nothing that they can hold up as an accomplishment that they have achieved on behalf of everyday Americans.

One hundred days in, we have seen what this administration is. They are disinterested in the lives of working-class and middle-class Americans, uncaring about the futures of our veterans and our seniors, unmoved by the plight of the underprivileged, obsessed with attacking our civil servants and settling scores, unable to make good on the promises that they laid out when they took control, and they don't seem to care.

But Marylanders care; the American people care, and we are tired of seeing this administration tank our economy. We are tired of seeing out-of-touch leaders dismiss the sacrifices that families across the Nation make every single day, and we are already sick and tired of seeing billionaires win while the rest of us lose. We are sick of it, and we are fighting back.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I want to say how much I appreciate the remarks of Senator ALSOBROOKS.

It is an honor to fight alongside you.

So here we are—100 days, 100 acts of corruption.

Today, I am reading into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD 100 reports of corruption from Donald Trump's first 100 days in office.

Now, when he ran for office, Trump promised repeatedly—repeatedly—that he would lower costs ''on day one.'' But instead of following through on his promise, Trump and his Trump administration have paved the way for the President, his top officials, and his billionaire buddies to personally feed at the trough of government corruption.

So count with me. In just 100 days, Donald Trump, his family, and his administration have:

No. 1, turned the White House into a Tesla dealership.

No. 2, fired independent Commissioners at the Federal Trade Commission.

No. 3, punished former officials who opposed his 2020 election lies.

No. 4, paid for the White House Easter Egg Roll by soliciting corporate sponsors who have business pending before the government.

No. 5, helped Trump's son set up a club—pay $500,000 for access to Trump's Cabinet.

No. 6, declared that there would be no tariff exceptions, then permitted Apple's CEO behind-the-scenes access, and, poof, iPhone tariffs were cut.

No. 7, created an opening for insider trading by reportedly giving Wall Street exclusive information about how trade talks were going.

No. 8, hosted million-dollar dinners between Big Pharma CEOs and their regulator, R.F.K., Jr.

No. 9, launched crypto meme coin right before the inauguration to make millions of dollars, then increased the value of those coins by signing Executive orders, making crypto a priority.

No. 10, launched a meme coin for Melania too.

No. 11, promised his ''rich-as-hell'' donors a giant tax handout and is working hard to deliver.

No. 12, weakened rules insulating government workers from politics.

No. 13, limited corporate foreign bribery investigations.

No. 14, halted enforcement of the Corporate Transparency Act—wouldn't want people to know what is going on.

No. 15, offered a private dinner with Trump himself and a special tour of the White House for the top 220 holders of his meme coin, permitting Trump and his family to profit both from the runup in the value of the coin and the increase in trading on the Trump platform.

No. 16, accepted $40 million for First Lady Melania's documentary from Jeff Bezos—way above the market rate.

No. 17, pointed to Bezos's multimillion-dollar documentary payment as a model when Warner Bros. asked Trump's team how to improve its own relationship with the White House.

No. 18, struck a deal with Amazon to stream Trump's old show, ''The Apprentice,'' which will mean more money for Trump, as Amazon is seeking tax breaks and other Federal benefits.

No. 19, coercing law firms to offer almost $1 billion in free legal work in an arrangement that experts say could run afoul of anti-bribery laws.

No. 20, started undermining Medicare's ability to negotiate drug prices after Big Pharma gave millions to Trump's inauguration.

No. 21, filed a meritless lawsuit against ''60 Minutes'' and launched a baseless FCC investigation.

No. 22, tried to get the AP to bend the knee and kicked them out of the White House briefing room when they refused to bend the knee.

No. 23, hired Defense Secretary Hegseth's younger brother to serve in a key role.

No. 24, hired a longtime former partner of Don, Jr., to serve as Ambassador to Greece.

No. 25, nominated Jared Kushner's father to serve as Ambassador to France.

No. 26, selected Tiffany Trump's father-in-law to serve as an adviser.

No. 27, appointed an oil and gas executive to lead the Department of Energy.

No. 28, selected a Chief of Staff who was a big-time lobbyist for clients like tobacco and mining companies.

No. 29, named officials who had recently lobbied for oil and chemical giants to help write EPA rules. What could possibly go wrong?

No. 30, appointed Mehmet Oz, who had close ties to Medicare Advantage insurers—in fact, sold it on TV—to lead CMS to set payment rates and otherwise help out whom? Medicare Advantage insurers.

No. 31, appointed John Phelan, a major donor with no military or government experience, to lead the Navy and hand out Navy construction contracts.

No. 32, appointed Pam Bondi, a former lobbyist for a Federal detention contractor, to lead the DOJ.

No. 33, announced that the DOJ would stop prioritizing enforcement of restrictions on foreign lobbyists under the leadership of Bondi, who herself is a former foreign lobbyist for Qatar.

No. 34, appointed Howard Lutnick, who has billions invested in companies accused of illegally facilitating crypto money laundering, as the guy to lead the Commerce Department.

No. 35, appointed Marty Makary, the former executive of a company selling weight-loss drugs, to lead the FDA, which would be the Agency that would regulate his company.

No. 36, appointed Sean Duffy, who lobbied for the airline industry, to be the Transportation Secretary to regulate the airline industry.

No. 37, tapped Pete Hegseth, whose wife owns stock in large defense contractors, to lead the Defense Department and help hand out those defense contracts.

No. 38, tapped Doug Burgum, who made money from leasing land to Big Oil, to lead the Interior Department and manage the leasing to oil companies.

No. 39, nominated a Big Oil lobbyist to run the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.

No. 40, nominated as IRS head Billy Long, an aggressive salesman for a fraud-riddled tax credit who received donations after being nominated so he could clear out old campaign debts.

No. 41, tapped Paul Atkins, a former crypto lobbyist, to lead the SEC that will regulate crypto.

No. 42, appointed a former tax lobbyist to lead tax policy.

No. 43, appointed Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., who planned to get paid for anti-vax lawsuits while he was heading up HHS and could affect the outcome of exactly those same lawsuits.

No. 44, appointed a top Pentagon official who led a firm investing in defense contractors and has directed DOD to outsource as much as possible to defense contractors.

No. 45, appointed someone who lobbied to privatize Medicare to lead OMB's healthcare budget.

No. 46, installed Steve Davis to effectively lead DOGE, while also leading another Musk company.

No. 47, installed another DOGE leader to control Treasury's payment system, while still holding down his day job, oh, as a software CEO.

No. 48, handed the power over crypto policy to a White House crypto czar, who leads a venture capital firm that heavily invests in crypto.

No. 49, selected a border czar, who led a firm that got tens of millions of dollars of Federal contracts for Homeland Security companies.

No. 50, appointed Treasury Secretary Bessent, who is gutting the IRS so that it can't audit rich tax cheats because he himself is a tax-dodging megamillionaire.

No. 51, pardoned Rod Blagojevich, the former Illinois Governor convicted for corruption after his vocal support for Trump.

No. 52, pardoned January 6 insurrectionists who tried to overturn an election that Trump lost.

No. 53, pardoned a Trump loyalist found guilty of wire fraud.

No. 54, pardoned the son of a longtime Republican donor.

No. 55, pardoned a corporation that had been fined $100 million for money laundering.

No. 56, watched his own stablecoin while preparing to sign legislation that will help stablecoin and let Donald Trump oversee it.

No. 57, sold merch with Presidential branding.

No. 58, disbanded DOJ's crypto unit after business talks between Binance and a Trump-backed crypto company ramped up.

No. 59, halted SEC enforcement actions against crypto companies that enriched Trump personally.

No. 60, met with crypto executives who are asking Treasury to back off of oversight of their companies, all while simultaneously exploring a deal to list a Trump-linked crypto company's new stablecoin.

No. 61, maintain financial ties between Trump officials and Trump's media company that includes FBI Director Kash Patel, who was given a huge award of Trump media company stock.

No. 62, nominated Attorney General Bondi, who owned $2 million in DJT shares.

No. 63, paid the Education Secretary almost $1 million in Trump media company shares.

No. 64, nominated Intelligence Board nominees who have millions in Trump media company shares.

No. 65, selected a special envoy to the Middle East who wants to develop real estate in Gaza while running his own real estate firm while he is Special Envoy to the Middle East.

No. 66, appointed an FBI Director who consulted for the Qatari Government.

No. 67, picked that FBI Director, even though he also received millions of dollars from a Cayman Island holding company with ties to China.

No. 68, decided to cancel the Direct File Program. The cancellation of this program that lets taxpayers file their taxes online for free will help the bottom line of Intuit, which charges people for filing their taxes and that gave $1 million to Trump's inauguration.

No. 69, took its largest inauguration donation from a poultry company that was under DOJ's scrutiny. After the donation, the SEC approved its parent company for the New York Stock Exchange.

No. 70, dropped a probe into sexual misconduct allegations against Trump's Education Secretary's husband.

No. 71, hosted dozens of foreign Federal and State officials at Mar-a-Lago, helping enrich Trump.

No. 72, hosted a GOP retreat at another one of Trump's resorts, for which Trump's resorts get paid.

No. 73, circumvented the normal contracting process to pick a company with close ties to Trump's former campaign manager.

No. 74, awarded a $30 million ICE contract to Trump insider Peter Thiel.

No. 75, continued developing new Trump properties overseas, including in Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

No. 76, hatched a plan for the State Department to pay Tesla $400 million.

No. 77, accepted a $4 million inauguration donation from a GOP megadonor and then nominated him as UK Ambassador on the same day.

Did anyone miss the message here?

And Donald Trump took actions so that he could advance the personal interests of his ''co-President,'' Elon Musk. How? Well, he fired EEOC leaders that were investigating and suing Tesla. He illegally fired the NLRB Chair, which had filed a complaint against SpaceX, one of Musk's companies. He gutted the CFPB staff and fired the Director after they investigated complaints against Musk's companies. He gutted the Department of Labor office investigating Tesla and SpaceX and fired the USAID inspector general who launched a probe into satellite terminals made by Musk's Starlink.

No. 83, targeted the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration staff who were reportedly ''a thorn in Tesla's side.'' That is enough to fire them.

No. 84, said Musk would self-police his conflicts of interest—yeah, right.

No. 85, pressured the Administrator of the FAA, which fined Musk's SpaceX, to resign.

And No. 86, permitted Musk to keep his financial disclosure hidden. And, by the way, I have a new bill to fix that one in particular.

No. 87, allowed Musk's Starlink to start working with the FAA after Musk criticized the FAA's air traffic telecom system.

No. 88, made Musk's SpaceX the frontrunner for a new, lucrative Golden Dome contract.

No. 89, stood by Musk when his X executives told an advertising firm to increase ad revenue, threatening that Musk could interfere with their pending merger if they didn't play along.

No. 90, permitted Musk to join Trump's interview with the Air Force Secretary nominee while SpaceX held billions of dollars in contracts with the Air Force.

No. 91, permitted the National Transportation Safety Board to share news related to the airplane crashes in Washington and Philadelphia only on Musk-owned X.

No. 92, permitted the Social Security Administration to share important public communication only on X.

No. 93, dropped the Department of Justice's anti-discrimination complaint against Musk's SpaceX.

No. 94, fired FDA staffers reviewing Elon Musk's Neuralink clinical trial applications—a lot of benefits for Elon Musk there.

And for our closing six moves that make every bit of this corruption even harder to root out, Trump got rid of the cops on the beat.

No. 95, fired 18 inspectors general who make sure that Federal Agencies follow the law.

No. 96, fired the head of the Office of Special Counsel, who protects whistleblowers and makes sure that civil service laws are followed.

No. 97, fired the head of the Office of Government Ethics, who watches to see that the President and his administration follow the laws on conflicts of interest, bribery, and other ethical issues. The guy is gone.

No. 98, fired DOJ prosecutors who worked on the January 6 investigations.

No. 99, sidelined DOJ's office that reviews the legality of Executive orders.

And No. 100, gutted DOJ's office that prosecutes misconduct by public officials.

That is 100 corrupt acts in 100 days. Americans deserve accountability. We need to fight back—all of us.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I have a question for my colleague from Massachusetts, if she would yield for a question.

Ms. WARREN. Of course.

Mr. MERKLEY. In your knowledge of American history, has there ever been a Presidential first 100 days that showed this level of corruption that we are witnessing with this administration?

Ms. WARREN. I appreciate the question. I want to say here that I have never seen, anytime in American history, this level of corruption over 8 years in the White House, much less in just 100 days.

This level of corruption is everywhere, all the time, and it truly undermines the ability of our country to function. It undermines our economy. It undermines our position in the world. It undermines the economic stability of our families. And it undermines our entire democracy.

I thank the Senator for the question.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I appreciate the Senator's speech in laying this out.

I am going to address another aspect of the first 100 days, which is about the phenomenal strategy of President Trump to undermine our Constitution; to undermine the separation of powers, the checks and balances, for the purpose of creating a strong-man state, which is also just an extraordinary, extraordinary experience to be living through.

The first 100 days of the Trump administration have plunged our Nation into a constitutional crisis unparalleled since the Civil War. How bad is it, and how will we respond? How will this Chamber respond? How will the House respond?

Our democratic Republic, with its separation of powers and checks and balances, is sliding into an unaccountable strong-man state.

To the first question—how bad is the constitutional crisis?—I summarize: worse than we could possibly have imagined. It is an authoritarian takeover, emboldened by a subservient majority in Congress, a deferential Supreme Court, and an aggressive, authoritarian President.

We all know that strong republics can slide into corrupt strong-man states. Witness Venezuela. Witness Türkiye. Witness Hungary. It can happen gradually. It can happen suddenly that Congress becomes a rubberstamp, that the courts defer to an aggressive Executive, the press softens its criticisms, and other institutions tread ever so carefully.

However often we have witnessed this happening elsewhere, however, we always thought that it could never happen here, not in the United States of America. It could never happen here because our commitment to the separation of powers is too secure, our 250 years of dedication to a democratic republic too established for it to ever happen here.

But the last 100 days have shown us that we were robbed. So tonight, I am ringing the alarm bells. The danger is clear. The danger is present. This crisis calls upon every patriot, every individual who cherishes a deliberative republic, every institution—whether it is Congress or the court or the people or the press or the university or the law firm—to use their heart and mind and sinew, their clout and their connections, to resist this authoritarian takeover and save our Republic.

In only 100 days, Trump has aggressively pursued five strategies to advance his authoritarian powers. The first strategy has been to willfully violate a host of Federal laws.

One hundred days ago, on January 20, I sat in the Rotunda of the Capitol, just down this hallway, halfway between here and the House of Representatives, for Donald Trump's inaugural address. It was not a traditional address. A traditional address is when the President lays out a vision and says: Here in our democracy, I will be working with Congress to pass laws to provide a foundation to implement that vision.

That is the way it works when power is divided between a court and an Executive and Congress. But instead, the speech that President Trump gave just down this hallway in the Rotunda didn't talk about working with Congress. It didn't talk about passing laws. He spoke only of governing by Executive order, as if he was already a King.

Well, governing by Executive order is exactly what he has done, with 26 Executive orders on that first day and over 130 Executive orders and counting as of now. And many of those Executive orders directly violate laws on the books.

He fired 17 inspectors general, violating a law that allows a President to fire an inspector general only for cause and with 30 days' notice to Congress.

He fired members of the Boards that lead independent Agencies, violating the law that provides these members with established terms and says that they can only be fired for cause.

Trump's targets have included Gwynne Wilcox of the National Labor Relations Board, Rebecca Slaughter of the Federal Trade Commission, and quite a few others.

Trump violated the Antideficiency Act when Elon Musk and DOGE sent the ''fork in the road'' email to 2 million Federal employees, offering a buyout with pay through September 30, committing funds beyond the March 15 deadline that the law allowed.

Trump violated the Privacy Act of 1974 when Trump, Musk, and DOGE accessed sensitive personal information from the computers of the Social Security Administration.

Trump violated a 2018 law banning reductions in indirect costs covered by the National Institutes of Health research grants when he capped those rates at 15 percent.

The mastermind behind this strategy of deliberately, willfully breaking the law, time and time and time again, is one man. His name is Russ Vought.

Who is this man? He directed the Office of Management and Budget in the last year of Trump's first term. He is an architect of Project 2025, and he is leading the Office of Management and Budget for Trump's second term.

As the ranking Democrat on the Senate Budget Committee, I interviewed him in my office before his nomination hearing, and he was very clear, very direct about his viewpoint. He is a proponent of the fringe unitary executive theory that says the President has complete authority over every element of the executive branch. The President, he believes, can ignore any detail in law passed by Congress and perhaps ignore any order by the courts that constrains how the President manages the executive branch.

Vought anticipates that when Trump's lawbreaking reaches the Supreme Court, a deferential Court will legitimize his unitary executive theory and hand vast power to President Trump.

Mr. Vought's deliberate desire to break the law and violate the separation of powers caused me to label him the most dangerous man in America. He is a direct threat to the entire vision of our Constitution.

I led a 30-hour debate here in this Chamber on his nomination to put a spotlight on him and on his ideas, but it was a party-line vote. Every one of my colleagues across the aisle looked to their loyalty to President Trump over their loyalty to the U.S. Constitution.

The second Trump strategy to expand the power of the President—the authoritarian power of the President—is to usurp Congress's article I power of the purse by impounding the funds that Congress has dedicated in law and long passed in the Senate and passed the House and signed by the President, impounding funds in those laws for specific programs. This is illegal. It violates the law, and it is unconstitutional, and it violates the separation of powers.

You know, Nixon tried this. He impounded funds for the EPA for fiscal year 1973. The Supreme Court ruled, when this case finally reached it in Train v. City of New York, that impoundments violate article I of the Constitution, which so clearly—this Constitution so clearly gives the power of the purse to Congress.

And when Congress passed the law in 1996 that gave the President a line-item veto on program funding, the Supreme Court ruled again, in Clinton v. City of New York, that Congress could not give to the President the power the Constitution reserves to this Chamber, to Congress.

It is worth noting that Trump had a choice. Instead of illegally impounding funds, he could have sent a legal rescission request to Congress. And there is a good possibility, perhaps a probability, that the Republican-led House and Senate would have passed that rescission. A rescission formally undoes a law by Congress reconsidering it. But he deliberately—he, being Trump—deliberately chose the illegal path of impoundments, the unconstitutional path of impoundments in order to put a case before the Supreme Court so the Supreme Court could rule—Trump and Russ Vought hope—for the unitary executive theory of power, the vision of a strong-man rule in our Nation rather than government by the people.

Note the parallel. Trump fired thousands and thousands of employees across this country. He could have done it legally through reductions in force, RIFs, but he chose to do it illegally. Why? To put a case before the Supreme Court so the Court could enhance the power of the President of the United States of America. It is that hope that they have for that deferential Court.

Trump and his team have impounded funds for so much now. There are so many cases in the courts. Court ruling after court ruling are saying: This is illegal. You cannot do this. This is unconstitutional.

But he just keeps doing it.

Electric vehicle charging stations, impounded. Security systems to Ukraine, impounded. Program funds for sanctuary cities, impounded. Immigration lawyers for 26,000 unaccompanied children, impounded.

But the most tragic example of impoundment is Trump's attack on the U.S. Agency for International Development.

On February 3, Elon Musk posted that he and DOGE had ''spent the weekend feeding USAID into the wood chipper.'' Musk was bragging that he and Trump had destroyed an Agency in a single weekend, in violation of the law. They fired almost all of USAID's employees and canceled more than 5,000 contracts, crippling America's delivery of lifesaving aid around the world and, I might add, crippling relationships that create soft power for the United States of America to accompany the hard power of our military.

In February, a senior USAID official Nicholas Enrich estimated that a yearlong pause in AID's programs could cause between 71,000 to 166,000 additional deaths just from malaria, with huge increases in deaths from tuberculosis and infectious diseases like Ebola. Shortly after making these estimates, Enrich was fired.

Speaking the truth in this administration is a cause to be fired because the truth scares Donald Trump. He doesn't want the truth. He just wants

his power and everyone to be in line behind it.

Another study estimates that shutting down USAID over 15 years could result in 25 million additional deaths worldwide. That is a hard number to digest—2 million more deaths from tuberculosis, 8 million more deaths from malaria, from malnutrition and other causes, and 15 million more deaths from AIDS, with PEPFAR shut down. And those 15 million deaths from AIDS generate 14 million additional orphans.

Just let that sink in. One illegal decision in one weekend by Musk and Trump putting AID in the wood chipper could result in millions of deaths. Illegal defunding and dismantlement, done in one weekend, to an Agency that constituted only one-third of 1 percent of our national spending in 2024 could result in more deaths than World War I.

Now you may say: Is this some crazy theory on the internet?

It was a study put together by prestigious medical organizations, groups like the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, the New York University Grossman School of Medicine—serious people, serious modeling, serious understanding of what USAID does around the world.

And do you know what else his decision did? It created an enormous opportunity for China to move in and say, ''You can't count on the United States of America, but you can count on China,'' hugely undermining our standing and influence in the world.

That is what was done illegally in one weekend.

A third Trump strategy for amassing Executive power is to attack the constitutional power of the courts. The Founders gave the courts the power to address ''all Cases, in Law and Equity, arising under this Constitution,'' and that power includes the ability to strike down laws that violate the Constitution. It includes the ability to invalidate Executive actions that violate the laws or violate the Constitution. But for the court's check—this crucial check on Executive misuse of power—to be effective, the President must follow the decisions of the court, and that is why the oath of office is so important. You are taking an oath to the Constitution that lays out this structure of accountability.

But President Trump is stiff-arming the court. He is not honoring the Constitution. He is not honoring his oath to the Constitution.

He ignored Federal Judge James Boasberg's order not to deport Venezuelan immigrants to El Salvador, refusing to keep the planes on the ground or turn them around. He ignored the judge's order to provide details regarding the flights to El Salvador. And in a stunning stiff-arm to the Supreme Court, he refused to facilitate, after a 9-to-0 Supreme Court decision saying he must do so, the return of Kilmar Abrego Garcia from El Salvador despite the Court's order.

In yet another confrontation with the Supreme Court, Vice President Vance claimed in February that ''judges aren't allowed'' to check Executive power.

Then, in March, Trump called for the impeachment of Judge Boasberg, calling him a ''crooked'' judge, a ''troublemaker and agitator.''

What in Trump's mind is a ''crooked'' judge? One who is actually ruling on the law because the last thing Trump wants is a judge who honestly rules on the law. He wants subservience.

This call for impeachment of a judge provoked a rebuke—a rare rebuke—from Chief Justice John Roberts, who said:

> Impeachment is not an appropriate response to disagreement concerning a judicial decision. The normal appellate review process exists for that purpose.

Calm language to address a massive constitutional violation.

Over the last 100 days, Trump has brazenly signaled to the courts that they should not interfere with his management of the executive branch.

A fourth authoritarian strategy by Trump is to attack the free press and free speech. Benjamin Franklin wrote that ''whoever would overthrow the liberty of a nation must begin by subduing the freeness of speech.'' Apparently, President Trump was paying attention because he is seeking to overthrow the liberty of our Nation, and he is trying to subdue the freeness of speech.

One of his tactics is to intimidate the free press by suing them. He sued the Des Moines Register for an inaccurate poll predicting he would lose Iowa. He sued CBS News for $10 million because he disliked its editing of an interview with then-Vice President Kamala Harris on ''60 Minutes.'' And he sued ABC News because George Stephanopoulos said on the air that Trump had been found liable for ''rape'' when, in fact, he had been found liable not for ''rape'' but for ''sexual assault,'' under the detail of the law, in the E. Jean Carroll lawsuit.

Trump hasn't just launched suits; he is succeeding in compromising our free press. ABC bent the knee, agreeing after Trump won and fearing for how Trump might misuse Presidential power, to pay Trump that $16 million to settle the case involving Stephanopoulos, even though Trump had, in the view of experts, little chance of prevailing in court.

And last week, Bill Owens, the executive director of ''60 Minutes,'' resigned, citing encroachment of his journalistic independence in the face of mounting pressure from Paramount, CBS's parent company, again potentially for fear of the misuse of Executive power that would compromise the success of Paramount.

A reported possible source of that pressure is from Shari Redstone, Paramount's controlling shareholder, who is reportedly eager to settle this issue to secure the Trump administration's approval for the multibillion-dollar sale of Paramount to Skydance.

Trump further pressured the press by playing favorites with access to White House events, barring the Associated Press from the White House press pool for continuing to use the name Gulf of Mexico instead of Gulf of America. It is a style manual question, and Trump doesn't like that a free press can choose its own style.

A judge ruled on April 8 that, under the First Amendment, if the government opens its doors to some journalist, it cannot shut those doors to other journalists because of their viewpoints. The Constitution, the court said, requires no less. But a week later, the White House was still excluding AP from the press pool.

In yet another action against the press, Trump has silenced the Voice of America. The Voice of America was created to counter propaganda from authoritarian governments in the Second World War. The Voice of America has grown to be a powerful check on disinformation from authoritarian governments. It broadcasted in 40 languages, bringing facts to bear against that propaganda from those strongman states.

But now Trump has canceled that powerful counter to authoritarian governments around the world.

He is attacking free speech as well as the free press. Like many of us here, I was in the House Chamber last month for Trump's State of the Union Address when he claimed to have ''brought free speech back to America.'' That is completely wrong. The opposite is true. He has sought to end free speech in America, taking control of content at the Kennedy Center, the Smithsonian museums, canceling programs, firing employees, even scrubbing Federal websites simply because of words he doesn't like.

But most egregiously, Secretary of State Marco Rubio is using a 1952 Red Scare law—a McCarthyist law—to strip students and others of their visas and deport them, students like Mahmoud Khalil at Columbia University or Rumeysa Ozturk of Tufts University. Neither was accused of a crime. Both had simply exercised free speech. I think every Member here would have assumed that a student has the right to express their opinion on an issue because we are here in the United States of America.

You know, many of us grew up hearing the phrase: I disagree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it. That is the conviction behind free speech. I don't like what you say. What you say even makes me angry. But I defend your right to say it. I defend your right to have that opinion because we live here in the United States of America, where we honor free speech.

It is the freedom of the individual, and it is an important check on power that people can express it, can express it without having their documents canceled, without being arrested as they

leave a classroom, not being swept off to some prison halfway across the country because you say something the government doesn't like. But all that has changed here in the United States of America because students who are saying things the government doesn't like are being swept off the street and transported halfway across the country and held in prisons in preparation to deport them.

This particular 1952 Red Scare McCarthyist law being used by the Secretary of State says an alien can be excluded if ''the Secretary of State personally determines that the alien's admission would compromise a compelling [U.S.] foreign policy interest.''

''[A] compelling [U.S.] foreign policy interest.''

How does a student expressing an opinion on a campus somewhere compromise a compelling U.S. foreign policy interest? Does it compromise our foreign policy interests when I say I disagree with some foreign policy venture? I have said it about Democratic Presidents, that I disagree with them. I have said it about Republican Presidents, that I disagree with them. So has virtually every single Member of this Chamber. That is freedom of speech. And we don't expect or believe that compromises the United States; we think it makes it stronger to have an actual debate of ideas, opinions expressed and hopefully considered.

It is an extraordinary law that came from another era where free speech was under attack. It is an extraordinary power to have vested in one person—the Secretary of State—that power to punish free speech. It is a chilling attempt to silence free speech that presents viewpoints out of favor with this administration, and it is wrong. It is wrong under our Constitution.

I would hope that every single Member of this Chamber would share the view that when they hear someone speaking with whom they disagree, they would still stand and defend that person's right to say it.

Note that there was no due process for students Rubio disfavored, just as there was no due process for the Venezuelan immigrants Trump sent to El Salvador.

''Due process''—those two words. What does it mean? And maybe it sounds like legal mumbo-jumbo. Due process is the guardian of our freedom. It means you cannot be grabbed by the government at their will, tossed into a van, and thrown into a prison because they cannot do so, they cannot take away our liberty or our rights without a fair, public process. That defends our freedom.

It is about freedom, but this administration isn't about freedom. They are about power, authoritarian power, about creating a strongman state. If we want to preserve freedom, we damn well better defend due process vigorously.

The fifth authoritarian strategy by Trump is to target other power centers in our communities, including law firms and universities.

Trump has attacked a host of major law firms, in some cases hamstringing the firms by suspending their national security clearances and therefore making them unable to represent their clients in key cases. He has done this to punish their past association with individuals or cases that threatened his power or to sway them from using their skills, their legal skills, in new efforts that might threaten that power.

The attacks that Trump has launched on law firms have generated some results. Skadden, Arps and Paul, Weiss have capitulated, agreeing, among other concessions, to end diversity policies and contribute millions of dollars of pro bono work to conservative clients. It is extortion. That is what this administration is involved in. They are using the power of the Presidency to take away the ability of law firms to operate in order to extort them to contribute free services to causes the President favors.

Well, these law firms—Skadden, Arps and Paul, Weiss—are not alone. As of a month ago, nine firms had surrendered, nine firms had bent the knee, agreeing to provide $1 billion in pro bono legal work for causes preferred by this administration. Again, it is extortion, and it is misuse of the President's power.

But some of the law firms actually believe in an America where a President cannot exercise this sort of extortion. Perkins Coie, Jenner & Block, and WilmerHale have fought back. They are challenging Trump's authority to do this. Impressively, more than 500 other firms have stood with them, signing briefs denouncing Trump's extortion.

Trump and his team have also pressed to reshape policies at universities by launching investigations of their practices and freezing millions or billions in their Federal grants—$510 million in Federal grants frozen at Brown University; $175 million in grants frozen at the University of Pennsylvania; $210 million frozen at Princeton; $2.2 billion in Federal grants frozen at Harvard University.

Some universities, like Columbia University, have capitulated. Others, like Harvard and Princeton, are fighting back.

A sincere compliment to Princeton President Christopher Eisgruber, who published an op-ed in The Atlantic when the first attack occurred on Columbia University. He called on presidents to ''speak up and litigate forcefully to protect their rights.'' He said: This won't be the last university that is attacked. Not soon after, his own university was attacked. He noted that this attack on universities is ''the greatest threat to American universities since the Red Scare of the 1950s.''

Looking back on these 100 days and these five strategies to convert a robust Republic, our robust Republic, with its checks and balances, into a strongman state, it raises a number of questions—questions that I hope folks will ponder.

First, Trump nominated a man, Pete Hegseth, to be Secretary of Defense who is fabulously unqualified for the position. He fired several highly capable, top-tier military leaders, including Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, CQ Brown, and the Chief of Naval Operations, ADM Lisa Franchetti. These firings make plain that Trump doesn't value these professionals' management—nonpartisan management of our Armed Forces.

Is Trump seeking to fill these top tiers of our military with loyalists? If that is what he is up to—replacing these highly professional, impartial managers of our military enterprise with loyalists—what additional authoritarian risks does this pose for our Republic?

Second, what has the Supreme Court unleashed through its Trump v. United States decision? Last summer, less than a year ago, at the beginning of July 2024, the Supreme Court found some invisible ink in the Constitution. Grab your Constitution. Take a read of it. Where does it say in here that the President is above the law?

Our Founders were terrified that a President would try to become a King. They had just escaped one King; they didn't want another. Instead, they had a theory of the world: Equal justice under law—equal. For the powerful and the nonpowerful, for the rich and the nonrich, equal justice under law.

It is carved into the stone above the pillars of the Supreme Court, which, if you go out the doors I am pointing out to my right and you continue down the hallway, there is another set of doors, another set of stairs, and you can see the Supreme Court straight across from here, and you can read ''equal justice under law.'' That is the principle. But I will tell you what—that Supreme Court last year decided no equal justice under the law. In fact, the President has complete immunity from committing a crime as long as he calls it a government act.

It is invisible ink in here somewhere, but I will tell you, the Founders are rolling over in their graves at this betrayal of the Constitution by this majority in the Supreme Court. Think about what they have done. You take this immunity from being accountable under the law and you pair it with pardon power, and you now have an entire executive branch that considers itself immune from the law, which helps explain some of the items I went over before—how there are deliberate and willful violations of law by this administration.

Quite a challenge for the future of our democracy has been created by the Supreme Court, but the Supreme Court will have a chance to redeem itself. It never really considered how the combination of the new power they found in invisible ink that a President is above the law combined with pardon

power has completely destroyed the foundation of law in our Nation—an executive that considers itself not accountable.

A third issue is the stretching of laws that really don't even begin to convey the power that Trump has claimed.

We are all aware of the tariffs that he is setting and tearing down day after day. Tariffs are up. Tariffs are down. Tariffs over here. Exceptions over there. Oh, iPhones? Too important. Let's create an exception. Oh, cars are too expensive. Let's create an exception. Who knows? It is certainly not a foundation for companies to invest in America because it is chaos.

He is using the 1977 International Emergency Economic Powers Act as a legal basis to set tariffs. But read the act. It says nothing about powers of tariffs, nothing that gives the President the ability to raise and lower tariffs on one fiat after another. It provides power for sanctions and seizures, not tariffs. It has never been used by any other President to set tariffs.

There is no precedent for it, and there is no language in the law that serves it.

Or let's see him reaching further back into history, using the 1798 Alien Enemies Act. That act was passed when our early Members of Congress were afraid that France would invade the United States, and they wanted to be able to deport French citizens who might help the French invasion, should it occur.

But Trump is using that as the legal basis for deporting Venezuelans, saying: There is an invasion of Venezuelans.

Well, clearly there is no invasion by the Venezuelan Government. This act was used, shamefully, in World War II, in particular, to lock up Japanese-Americans in concentration camps, and it is being used shamefully and inappropriately now.

It raises the question: What other ancient law is the President and Russell Vought going to dust off and use in a way that was never intended?

Whatever emergency power law—and there are 25, several dozen laws that provide emergency power—is the President going to dust off and say this gives me some additional ability? How might those laws be used in ways to reinforce the strongman state and erode our Nation?

And might the President invoke the power in article II, section 3, a power that is in the Constitution that says that the President can adjourn Congress? Of course, it was never intended to undermine the ability of laws to be crafted here or Congress to serve as a check on Executive power. It has never been used, in fact, by a President ever, but what is this President going to do with that power? Might he—given how he is stretching other laws, misapplying them in situations for which they were never intended—deliberately adjourn Congress to advance his goal of the strongman state?

And let's ponder a few questions that are specific to our Congress. Will Trump's impoundments and rescissions destroy the congressional process for drafting bipartisan spending bills? For fiscal year 2025, the year that started last October 1, the Senate Appropriations Committee passed 11 of the 12 spending bills out of committee in an overwhelmingly bipartisan fashion. In fact, most of them were passed unanimously out of committee.

That was possible because compromises were struck. Compromises were the priorities of both parties, compromises for priorities of different regions of the Nation with different concerns.

Just think about the difference in types of natural disasters that strike different parts of our country. Some States endure hurricanes, others grapple with earthquakes. The Pacific Northwest, where I come from, battles wildfires. Different parts of the country have different needs. Different parts of the country have desires to have those needs met, resulting in compromises in these spending bills.

But if Trump is allowed to impound the funds for programs for the priorities of his political opponents of either party, then that destroys the foundation for these compromises since no Senator can be assured that the deal they are striking—you get what you need, but you agree to help me get what I need for my part of the country—no one can be assured that that compromise will be honored.

Second, what is the most effective way for Congress to confront Trump's authoritarian exercise of power? In the second week of March, just a month ago, with the authority for government spending set to run out on March 15, the Senate Democrats had the ability to reject the spending bill written by the House Republicans that created a massive slush fund for Trump to use as he pleases to reward or punish specific States or specific congressional districts.

Some on the Democratic side of the aisle here in the Senate argued Democrats should not block this bill because it posed a potential shutdown, and that shutdown had political and policy risks, given that Trump might love the opportunity to operate a shoestring government with the President deciding what constitutes essential services.

Others on the Democratic side of the aisle here in the Senate argued differently, believing that the risk to our Nation was much greater if we let Trump's authoritarian ambitions go unopposed and that history teaches us that the best time to confront an authoritarian is right away, before he amasses even more power.

Both of these arguments had some merit. We will face this decision again soon when the existing continuing resolution runs out on September 30. That will be a critical moment for Congress to confront the President and not hand him more power. We should be preparing for that moment now.

A third question specific to the operation of Congress: Over the next several months, the national policy debates are likely to be dominated by Republican pursuit of a reconciliation bill, a fancy term for a bill that has a special fast-track, simple majority, no filibuster path through the Senate. This bill is designed to cut $2 trillion from programs families use to thrive—healthcare, housing, education, good-paying jobs—gifts $2 trillion in tax breaks to the richest Americans. So families lose and billionaires, they win. That is the philosophy of this bill.

It also abandons the use of nonpartisan calculations of how much a specific policy will cost and instead decides to engage in smoke and mirrors so the American public won't realize what is being done. And it will explode the national debt, adding 7 trillion of additional debt over 10 years and 52 trillion of additional debt over 30 years. Families lose; millionaires win. And America's future is deeply damaged, perhaps drowned in an ocean of red ink created by this bill.

You know, it was stunning at the inauguration, the one that happened just down this hallway in the Rotunda, to see President Trump with a lineup of billionaires standing behind him. Some countries would call this oligarchs—oligarchs standing behind him.

Will Congress really pass a bill that takes away 2 trillion from families to give 2 trillion in tax breaks to the very richest Americans to buy the support of oligarchs? Is that what we are headed to—a strongman state in which Congress acquiesces in buying the support of the oligarchs?

We saw this happen just yesterday and today. Amazon was going to put up honest impacts on its website saying how much Trump's tariffs would add to the cost of products so people could see why they were being charged so much for things that were much cheaper a little while ago, but Trump in this relationship with the oligarchs called up Jeff Bezos, the owner of Amazon, and said: That is bad for me. Don't do it.

Here is what is going on. Trump is doing what is good for the oligarchs, 2 trillion in tax breaks for the richest Americans, and then he is asking them to do his bidding, and that includes not being honest with the American people about the impact of his tariffs.

The first hundred days of Trump's administration has made clear that his quest for authoritarian power is a threat to the framework of our Constitution, to the separation of powers, to the checks and balances that must be fiercely resisted, fiercely resisted by Congress.

And I call my colleagues across the aisle: Remember your oath is to the Constitution. You did not take an oath to the President of the United States, not to one individual. That is what people do when they kneel to a King, and we are not a kingdom. We are a Republic, fiercely resisted by the courts, fiercely resisted by the people through

mass action. The press needs to channel AP, not CBS. The universities need to channel Harvard, which is resisting, not Columbia that bent the knee. The law firms need to channel Perkins Coie, not Paul, Weiss, which capitulated.

And to the American people across the country who are angry and disturbed by what is happening, who want to stop this authoritarian takeover, I have three suggestions:

Get off the couch. You can't help change the world curled up in a fetal position on your couch.

Second, fiercely hold your elected representatives accountable with your phone calls, with your mail, with your demonstrations outside their office. Hold your representatives accountable. That is what you get to do in a free nation.

And, third, join affinity groups. Being angry and frustrated alone is depressing. Being angry and organized with others is energizing and effective.

Next year, the United States of America will celebrate its 250th anniversary. Let it be a celebration of our determination and our effectiveness in confronting and turning back Trump's authoritarian assault, a celebration of the reenergization of our constitutional framework and the vision of government by the people, not by the powerful.

We are participants in a 250-year relay of democracy, where the responsibility to govern ourselves has been handed from one generation to the next. We inherited it from our parents and our grandparents. Let's pass it on to your children and our grandchildren.

When Ben Franklin was leaving the Constitutional Convention, he was asked: What type of government do we have?

He responded:

A republic, if you can keep it.

Let's keep it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, we are closing things out here till midnight, but I do want to thank my colleague from Oregon for his passion for this country.

We all do dream of that world where, in fact, the people in this country can once more have a say in what is happening; that we do not have this chaos that is actually not what they bought into.

I just came back from a 19-county trip across my State, and people came up to me all the time and said: You know, I voted for you, and I voted for Donald Trump. But I voted for him because I thought he was going to bring costs down. That is not what is happening right now. Or I thought he was going to do something about housing because we don't have enough housing in rural Minnesota. Or I thought he was going to do something about childcare.

They actually, understandably, thought it because it was the stuff that he talked about in the campaign. But that is not what has happened in these first 100 days. In fact, what do we have? We have got costs are up; ask anyone in the grocery aisles. Corruption is up; look at the budget being proposed, $50 million in tax cuts for millionaires. And, yes, chaos is up.

Sadly, retirement savings are down. When you look at what has been happening with the market, we haven't seen this kind of decline in the first 100 days—I don't think it has been since Richard Nixon that we have seen this kind of a drop.

So in his campaign, the President promised ''to lower prices on day one.'' Instead, Americans are paying more today than we did on January 20. And then you look at the tariff taxes: $4,000, $4,000 per family, $200 of that an increase in groceries. That is what it is; it is a tariff tax.

At the pharmacy, prescription drugs will cost Americans an extra $70 a year, and clothing prices will soar more than $900 a year.

Look, Elon Musk is going to be able to afford that. Millionaires, billionaires, OK, they can afford this doubling of certain prescriptions. They can afford things going up at the grocery store. Agriculture prices going up like they were—they can afford that. But regular people, people who aren't in the Trump Cabinet, can't afford that.

When you talk to people out there—I am not talking about activists, as much as I am excited that they are showing up at things. I am just talking about people that maybe have never even gone to a townhall meeting before.

I had one case where a farmer was sitting next to a woman who had one of the signs that said ''This is not normal.'' She is right, it is not normal, but he didn't know what that meant.

He said to her: I am normal. What do you mean?

She said: No, it is not normal.

Well, he wasn't an activist. He was just someone that is worried that his whole life's work is going to go to waste because he is a soybean farmer, and that market is going to dry up where he sells his soybeans in China because, guess what, they are going to look to buy from Brazil.

People are worried about costs and their own families. They are worried about healthcare access and the impact of Trump's tariff taxes on the economy; people who live on fixed incomes, and suddenly those costs are ballooning or they saved in a 401(k) or some other retirement savings, and that has gone down to where they didn't expect it. Then they try to call Social Security to figure out what they are going to get or they are getting or they have a spouse who died.

One man who I met with—I could not believe his story. He has worked with Social Security before. His wife died in January after a long illness, and he emailed, and they asked for his fingerprint. He couldn't do that online, but he kept emailing. Then he called. Then he finally had to drive into Brainerd, MN, to get to the office. Then he finally ended up having to call our office, and we figured it out for him. That is happening now.

I think about the businesswoman Beth Benike from southern Minnesota. She is an Army veteran and the owner of a little company called Busy Baby and this year's Minnesota Small Business Person of the Year. She is feeling really good about that. She has a business where she gets mats for highchairs so these little babies can't throw things over. Many of us who are moms remember that. All of a sudden, in come those tariffs.

So some big businesses and their CEOs have a red carpet to the White House. You know, Tim Cook—I am glad he saved his phones. But he is able to make a call to the President at any time, and he can go in there. Beth Benike at Busy Baby doesn't know the President's number. She can't just waltz in there. She can't just go and make a call and make sure that they are going to take care and make an exemption for her Busy Baby gear.

Maybe the other ones got to go to that special, secret investment meeting at J.P. Morgan with the Treasury Secretary. That soybean farmer at the townhall meeting was not invited to that meeting. The owner of Busy Baby was not invited to that meeting. So they don't actually know. Maybe they revealed what countries are close to trade agreements.

Today, the Commerce Secretary claimed he has an agreement with a secret country—his words—secret agreement. But my constituents who are living on the margin, who, maybe because of input costs for their business or their farms or their ranches or because of a weather event for farmers or because of avian flu for some of our poultry producers—they are just on the edge. They are on the edge, and they just barely make it every year or maybe one year, they have a really good year.

But these tariffs for them came out of nowhere. They actually never would have believed that this would have been going on as long as it has.

You know, one of the problems is that even if it gets fixed, a lot of those markets may not come back because we have become undependable to other countries.

If we continue along this path, as we have already seen—the farmers told me: Sometimes, because we need consistency, we figure out what crop we are going to plant, what seeds we are going to plant. But we are really not sure. It is a guess for us now because we don't know about soybeans with China or ethanol—40 percent goes to Canada. But we don't know which ones we are going to get the trade agreement with.

They need consistency.

So what happens when they don't have that consistency? Well, they

freeze their investments. They don't buy new stock. They kind of keep what they have. Who loses out? Customers will lose out, yes, but the people that work there lose out. They start laying people off. That is what you are seeing. There are more announcements today about laying people off.

The supply chains get messed up. They don't know—one of my major manufacturers, about 20 percent of their parts come from China, but they employ nearly 10,000 people in America, and they put stuff together. They don't know which parts are going to be available or not because they probably don't get them directly from one company. They don't get them directly from China; they get them from someone in the middle who doesn't know if they are going to get them. There is an incredibly complex supply chain in this country.

We learned during the pandemic the hard way, the sad way, what happens when that supply chain gets messed up. If just one thing is missing, a piece of a part that goes on some furniture manufactured in North Carolina, but they need some parts from somewhere else, then you can't have it at the room and board in Minneapolis. That is what got messed up during that time with the supply chains.

Those were the simplest examples.

When you have this intricate supply chain, as leaders of this country, when we take out things like tariffs, we do it in a targeted fashion, but we also do it in a smart way, and the best way to do it is with trade agreements.

One of the things that always confused me about the President going after Canada the way he has—we congratulate Prime Minister Carney, who just won his election. One of the things that really confused me about these attacks on one of our biggest allies, the incredible country of Canada—the attack of calling it our 51st State—it was this country, Canada, that fought alongside our soldiers in two world wars; it was this country, Canada, that was there as the first ones on the ground outside of America after 9/11; it was this country, Canada, that, on their Embassy, had draped for years, when others sometimes didn't even want to admit they were America's friend, ''friend, ally, partner.'' That is the country you are going to mess around with?

In my State, it is the top trading partner, and it actually eclipses the next three added together. This is the State—my State—that is the fourth biggest ag-exporting State in the country, that has multiple Fortune 500 companies but also has very successful small- and medium-size businesses.

So that is the messing around and the chaos we are talking about. That creates a situation where some of our best friends who love coming to America for vacations—they will go to Minnesota to go fishing even though they have a lot of lakes in Canada. They will go to Vegas. They will go to our national parks. They will go to New York City. They will go to see one of their Canadian hockey teams play an American hockey team. But do you know what is happening now? They are not just booing at those hockey games. What is happening now is they are canceling their trips, so they are not coming at all. It is viewed as a sign of patriotism because of what President Trump has been saying about the people in their country. They are predicting a 70-percent reduction in Canadians coming to America.

I was just up in a small town on the North Shore of Lake Superior in Minnesota. They have already seen like 15 percent down in just 1 month in border crossings. Average tourists, when they visit from another country, spend $4,000 in our country. That is going to restaurants—waitresses, waiters, jobs, chefs. That is money spent on going to small community theaters or going to the Mall of America in Bloomington, MN. That has a huge number, in normal—normal—conditions, of Canadian visitors.

That is the mess just with one country. I could use similar examples with Mexico—40 percent of corn to Mexico. I could use examples from some of our best allies—Japan, South Korea, Europe—countries that have stood with us through thick and thin. But just slap a tariff on it, and say it is paused but keep it in place. What is this going to do to, yes, our national security but also to our relations with the rest of the world?

That is why, when you see these public opinion polls, two-thirds of Americans say they don't like these tariffs or tariff taxes across the board—so many polls in the last week assessing these 100 days. Americans say they don't like the way Donald Trump has handled this economy—nearly two-thirds of them say that. His approval rating is down to lower than any President in the last 80 years since they started to do polling. People have noticed. It is their livelihoods.

Unfortunately—I would love to tell them: Hey, that is going to turn around tomorrow. They have these secret deals. They are going to negotiate.

I don't actually believe that anymore. I never really did.

But then to compound everything, you have this billionaire budget going on. To pay for these tax cuts—I think it is $37 trillion total in 30 years, but when you take out the tax cuts for people making under $400,000—some of the ones that I strongly support—when you take those out, you are left with about $25 trillion. You have $25 trillion added debt in those 30 years.

What is it all about? How are we going to find ways they think will pay for these tax cuts for these millionaires and billionaires? Well, why not do it on the backs of working Americans? Because that is the proposal from over in the House, where they have suggested hundreds of millions of dollars—something like $800 billion—$800 billion. And the way they have done it, the Congressional Budget Office has looked at it, and they say the only way this will work is if you make reductions to Medicaid. Eighty million Americans are on Medicaid. In my State, one out of two people in nursing homes is on Medicaid. One out of five people overall in our State is on Medicaid for their healthcare.

One constituent from Mora, MN, told me that Medicaid helps her afford a direct-support professional for one of her daughters who has a complex developmental disability. You have people who are in nursing homes.

This is what is interesting about this. It is not just our seniors who are on Medicaid; it is our family members. When my dad got sick late in his life—he lived into his nineties—he was in a nursing home. I knew exactly the day his savings were going to run out. We calculated it because we knew that the place he was staying didn't take Medicaid. I knew the exact day, the exact week, the exact month we were going to move him. We were going to move him to Catholic Charities. They said they would take him. It was about a year after he died that that date hit, but I knew that date. So many families know exactly what I am talking about. That is real—if we start messing around with Medicaid—the effect that is going to have on families.

Then there is food assistance, which is big-time on the chopping block. I think the farm bill estimates for the Senate bill would be about $1 billion down, but in the House, it is $230 billion. Food assistance for 42 million Americans, including 16 million children, 8 million seniors, and 1 million veterans is on the chopping block.

If you cut that in this reconciliation bill, if that gets cut under the Trump budget and it gets transferred to the States—Texas alone—let's say you have 20 percent. That is a number that was thrown out in the House. Texas would have to take out of the State budget over $1 billion. This is in part because of the escalating costs of groceries—$18 billion overall for the Nation.

When we talk about costs being up, we talk about real people, not just what is happening with Wall Street and the shock it meant to the market and the stocks going down. It is real people and their livelihoods.

What else is up? Chaos is up. Yes, the billionaires' budget is cruel, but so is the chaos that people are experiencing every day.

Social Security—I used that one example already. They proposed stopping phone service on a number of Social Security claims. There was so much pushback from AARP and seniors, I heard that they rolled it back some, but it still does not allow the phone answerers for certain things.

I mentioned the widower, the 79-year-old from Crosslake who couldn't get the Social Security benefits after his wife died. That is unacceptable.

They have also attacked food safety inspections, cutting medical research out there, of course, when all those probationary employees were fired and then, of course, brought back because of court orders because this wasn't legal, because we in Congress, Democrats and Republicans—a Republican-run House and a Democratic-run Senate—had actually authorized that money and put a budget together that passed the Congress and was signed into law.

Servicemembers, classified battle plans on unclassified Signal chats, releasing the address of a secret CIA facility, sharing the names of 200 CIA officers in an unclassified email, planning to lay off 80,000 employees from the Department of Veterans Affairs—that will, of course, increase wait times. You can't decimate this. You could—as a CEO would do, you could go in there and say: OK. How can I do more with less? Where do I want to move employees? What are my important priorities?

That is not what happened. DOGE came in there and did this before most of those Cabinet members were even in.

When our soldiers sign up to serve, when people in this country want to serve our country, there is not a waiting line; and when they come home to the United States of America and they need their benefits, they need a job, they need healthcare, they need a place to live, there should never be a waiting line in the United States of America.

But no amount of chaos has blinded Americans to this issue of corruption. There have been attacks on the rule of law, attacks on our Constitution, attacks on our system of checks and balances. Of course, as I have discussed before, one of the President's first acts was to pardon those who attacked law enforcement heroes, who defended our democracy and the Capitol on January 6. He has used our justice system to reward friends and punish who he considers his enemies. I have multiple examples of this.

I think of one guy Chris Krebs, who was running the Agency that made sure that our cyber was safe, that our elections were safe. He did this during the last Trump administration, and he did a good job. He worked with the military, and he came out of this and said after that election that, in fact, it was a safe election. It was exactly what Bill Barr, President Trump's Attorney General at the time, said—that it was safe. This made the President mad. He fired Chris Krebs. All of a sudden, just in the last month, he mentions Chris Krebs again—the guy who had the audacity to make sure that our elections were not broken into by a foreign country, that we didn't have data stolen—and he says he should be investigated.

Or how about the taking away of security clearances on people whom he doesn't like? Or how about just deciding ''this university I am going to go after, not this one. I will go after that one. I will go after that one.'' One of the things I have seen that I believe we didn't see at the beginning of all of this that is worth noting is more and more other universities that aren't being targeted have come together, all signing a letter saying: No. This isn't right. Or law firms, the ones who aren't being targeted, saying: Wait a minute. This isn't the rule of law. You should be able to represent clients even if they are people you don't agree with.

I have been at law firms. I know what this is like. I may not agree with every client that our law firm represented. And I have also been in politics. I might not like a story that was written about me. I might not like what has happened in a certain race, but I don't go after the media and say that they are enemies of the state, which is what the President's FBI Director did.

The President has also—as you know, while the administration has agreed with some court orders—OK. Great. It is important for probably most of them—they just pick out ones they are not going to agree with here and there. That is not how the law works.

Access to personal financial data that was given to Elon Musk and illegally firing independent watchdogs from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the Consumer Product Safety Commission to inspectors general, to the FTC. Why would you fire the very people who are rooting out the waste and fraud that you claim you want to root out? In 2023 alone—I will use the example of the FTC—the FTC returned more than $330 million to consumers who lost money from scams and deceptive business practices.

We always had a Commission and Commissioners from both parties. They didn't always agree on everything, but it was actually a functioning Agency. They are actually the ones who are bringing that case against Meta right now, which was supported by both Republican and Democratic Commissioners. Unfortunately, the President fired the two Democratic Commissioners illegally. They are contesting it, but that happened.

Another example: Since it was established just 14 years ago, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has returned more than $21 billion to Americans. Why would you want to get rid of that? President Trump is attacking these consumer watchdogs while giving Musk deals and while giving tax breaks and tariff exemptions to those who just happen to have a connection to be able to get them.

This is not what the American people voted for. The American people might disagree greatly on issues, but they did not vote for costs going up. That is for certain. They wanted costs to go down. They did not vote for someone who is engaging in: Hey, I am going to get rid of this person because I don't like him. I am going to cut off this grant because I don't like it. I don't like this program, even though Congress authorized it. Even though it is illegal to stop it, I am going to try.

They didn't vote for that, and they certainly didn't vote for this chaos. Life is hard enough right now without having this chaos.

So what is happening? The courts and the Congress are constituents. That is what is happening. So when you look at these court cases across the country, there have been over 200 so far. There have been over 100 instances where judges—and this is really important to know that there are major cases handled by judges appointed by President Trump himself where those judges said: No. This is wrong. Under our laws, this is wrong and under our Constitution.

There have been cases by Bush judges and, yes, Reagan judges, including a very recent one by Judge Wilkinson, who is a revered conservative judge on the circuit court, who upheld the district court's decision and said the district court judge had done the right thing under the law when it came to the wrongful deportation of a man who they have now admitted was a mistake. They have made very clear that he shouldn't have been deported, that it was a mistake. Then when they tell him that they should, in fact, remedy their mistake by bringing him back and U.S. Senator CHRIS VAN HOLLEN actually went to the country to get his constituent and was able to meet with him, it became very clear they could get that guy who was mistakenly deported back. That is called when you follow the law and you do the right thing, because, in America, the President is not King. The law is King.

How else do we hold them accountable? Congress. We are holding people accountable when we do oversight hearings, but now we just avoid it. We hold them accountable when we have votes, just like had happened on the Canada tariff bill that Senators KAINE and WARNER and I put forward. It basically said the President didn't have the authority to say there was an emergency at the Canadian border, because there wasn't. Four of our Republican colleagues stood up—Senators COLLINS and MURKOWSKI, whose States border with Canada, and then Senator RAND PAUL and Senator MITCH MCCONNELL, in Kentucky, which does a lot of ag. I know they have a lot of soybeans; they have a lot of exports; they also have bourbon that was being taken off the shelves, Kentucky bourbon, in the country of Canada. They understand that that is really hitting their constituents in a big way, and they stood up when it came to tariffs. It passed. Now it is sitting over there in the House of Representatives in the Speaker's freezer somewhere next to the frozen peas. I don't know, but nothing is happening right now on that, and it should, because we should actually have votes on this. Then if the President wants to veto it, go ahead. Then we could override his veto if people stood up, and this madness would stop about the Canadian tariffs. We could go

back. We are not saying we don't negotiate things. Negotiate them in the reauthorization of the USMCA, which was one of the President's crown jewels when he negotiated that. I supported it. But why not do it that way instead of rubberstamping everything that he does?

We are also doing this with our constituents by our side, and this means, to me, yes, some of the loudest voices in the room with the big townhalls and people at the microphone. Someone I ran into the other day who was not used to politics called them open mic events. Yeah, those are happening, but what is more important to me is some of the smaller ones in small towns of 1,000 people, in rural towns, with people showing up from local businesses, with people showing up from the Farmers Union, from the Farm Bureau, with people explaining what is going on in their lives in a real way, people telling the stories of trying to call Social Security. Or the two women I met who are in the middle of cancer trials that have been incredibly successful, and no one gave them a chance to live at the University of Minnesota, and they went through this cancer trial, and now they don't know what is going to happen because, while some of those cuts were put off, when you start threatening the universities, when you start threatening the funding that makes those cancer trials possible, when you have so much chaos and you want people to leave and you gave them all these buyouts and you say: Please go away, they are going to find other jobs, especially people in the medical profession where we know it is hard to keep people because they have other opportunities.

That word ''opportunity'' is really what people ask me about. What do you think we are not talking about enough when it comes to this chaos? You know, maybe we are not talking enough about what is going on in the world. I think people are starting to do that. But I think what people are not talking enough about is this opportunity that we are squandering away because of the mapping of the human genome.

Because of the investments Democrats and Republicans made together the last 11 years, every year we have increased funding to NIH—this incredible development of personalized medicine. So when you find out you have cancer, they can better figure out what your treatment should be and try to use the least invasive procedure possible, as happened to me, so that you can get through this with the breast cancer, with a lumpectomy, and you can get through it with just 5 days of radiation. You can be back at work that night. You may be a little tired, but you can.

That never would have happened 20 years ago. I don't know if I would even have been standing here. But because we invested as a country in the technology and in the work that had to be done, we are where we are, and now we are on the cusp, thanks to that mapping of the human genome, the personalized medicine, all the information we are gathering, and, yes, AI, if done and used professionally and ethically. We are on the cusp of leading the world again when it comes to curing rare diseases and when it comes to the next great big thing.

But that is not going to happen if we suddenly pull back, and people start quitting all of our research facilities and go do their clinical trials in other countries because it is more dependable, which is what is happening right now. That is not going to happen if FDA inspectors—which it is very hard to get these doctors and medical professionals who can look at medical devices and make a decision. That is not all going to happen if they start leaving because of the negativity coming from the White House about their work, because of the forced departures, because the incentives put in place cannot keep them there, which is what we should be doing rather than incentivizing them to leave.

On the day of the inauguration, I had the opportunity to speak for, like, 4 minutes, and I picked every word really carefully. I knew it was an important event. I knew what my role was—I would have done it no matter who won—but on that day, I made three points, and I think they are still more relevant than ever. I wanted to pick three things that I thought would stand the test of time.

The first was that, before this and certainly now, our democracy has been a hot mess. There is a mess of division, and I think it has gotten much worse. But it is our job as citizens, especially as elected Representatives, to be the ''shelter from the storm,'' to quote Bob Dylan, a great Minnesotan. A shelter from the storm—that is what our democracy should be: a place where people civilly debate things and come up with a compromise and get through all this, and it is still on all of us, especially in the U.S. Senate—what has been called the world's great deliberative body—to do that.

The second thing: In America, the inauguration is not held in a gilded palace. It is not held in an executive office building. It is held in the ''People's House.'' It is held in the Congress for a reason because we have three equal branches of government. That means we have a court that decides the law. That means we have a Congress that should be able to show its weight. And all of these Representatives, duly elected in each State and each congressional district over in the House—and show its authority on behalf of the people whom we represent. That means taking on these tariffs and votes. That means making sure this is a fair budget for the people of this country.

And the third and final thing that I believe will stand the test of time is, remember that day in the Rotunda and there were all those powerful billionaires in that room and there were also the people's representatives in that room, but the thing that we had in common, from a freshman Member of the House of Representatives to the President of the United States that day, is the power did not come from within that room; the power came from outside of that room, from the people.

So what you are seeing right now in the form of, yes, townhalls, also in the form of rallies, yes, but also in the form of regular people writing our offices, burning up the phone lines, showing up at events, talking to you at a grocery store, talking to you on Main Street, and they are saying: This is not OK, Senator; this is not OK, Representative; I need you to do something about it. That is the power of the people from outside this building. That is the power of the people who gave us the honor of serving in this building.

So as we look at these first 100 days of this chaos, of these costs going up, of the retirement funds going down, we still have to remember why we are here. So instead of throwing our hands up in the air, either side, and saying: Oh, what can I do? This is our moment in the U.S. Senate to stand up, our moment to stand up on tariffs, our moment to stand up on this budget. All we need is, like, four Republicans in the House of Representatives to stand up and say ''enough is enough'' and listen to their constituents instead of rubberstamping what this President wants. This is truly our moment to do that.

With that, I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

REMEMBERING JAY BYERS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, on Maundy Thursday, the Lord called home one of Iowa's best and brightest civic leaders and a beloved husband and father. A native son of northwest Iowa, Jay Byers passed away at age 54.

Maundy is derived from the Latin term mandatum, which means commandment. On the night before His betrayal and arrest, Jesus gave his disciples a ''new commandment'' to love one another as he had loved them, John 13:34. By all accounts, Jay's life was deeply rooted in servant leadership. He lived his life in service to his family and to others, sharing his outsized leadership gifts to make his community, his alma mater, and his State a better place.

I was honored to know Jay for several decades—first, as a congressional staffer to Congressman Leonard Boswell and later as he joined and eventually took the helm of the Greater Des Moines Partnership. In this leadership capacity, our paths would cross many times over the course of a decade to collaborate on issues important to the 11 counties and affiliated chambers for whom he spearheaded priorities, including the partnership's annual visit to Washington, DC.