

shouting until you finally plugged that bottle in her mouth and she quieted down.

So now the Trump administration says, when it comes to feeding programs for babies and infants and children around the world, because they are screaming and they are hungry, just tell them we have decided to pause the program—pause the program. Parents laugh out loud when you consider that possibility.

Just last month, the Trump administration dismissed the few remaining public health officials overseeing programs for pregnant women with HIV in low-income countries. Don't tell me that you have dedicated public service to strengthening families and then take away this basic need so that mothers giving birth to babies don't have to worry about HIV-AIDS.

All the experts at the Centers for Disease Control, the State Department, and USAID have been terminated and are waiting for reassignment. That is the Trump record. That is what he will be remembered for in history if we go along with it.

Even with some funding restored, how will the critical work continue without professional staff to carry it out? Like so many White House policies, this is cruelty and madness and certainly not efficiency.

In upcoming funding bills and any rescissions effort, it will be up to Congress—all of us in Congress, not the Democrats, although we are in the minority, but Republicans and Democrats together—to protect and restore these critical, lifesaving programs that are both the right thing to do and the strategic thing to do.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on a separate topic, as I reflect on my time in public service, I have been thinking about the issues that have meant the most during my career. There are a few that stand out, including my steadfast belief that the promise of medical research funding is one of the most important. That conviction led me to join forces more than 10 years ago with a bipartisan group of Senators: myself; Senator PATTY MURRAY, a Democrat from Washington; Senator Roy Blunt, then-Republican Senator from Missouri; and Senator Lamar Alexander, a Republican Senator from Tennessee.

Our team of four, Democrats and Republicans, came together and decided to speak up and be committed to increasing Federal funding for the National Institutes of Health. The National Institutes of Health is the premier medical research laboratory in the world.

I did my best to make sure with my friends that we fought for a 5-percent increase in growth in medical research each and every year. We did it too. A 60-percent increase to NIH's budget over the last decade—60 percent,

money that is used to research and develop new ways to fight childhood cancer, ALS, Alzheimer's, you name it.

If you own a television and you ever turn it on, you can't avoid an ad for a new prescription drug. They are on all the time, with great promise, and many of them are breakthrough drugs. Did you know over 99 percent of those drugs, those new breakthrough drugs that you see on television, were developed by America's taxpayers at the National Institutes of Health. Sure, the drug companies sell them and market them, do a good job in that regard. They charge too much in most instances, but having done the basic research at the expense of American taxpayers, those drugs are available in America, as they should be.

A 60-percent increase in the NIH budget over the past decade resulted in many of those drugs being discovered and being sold to American families and bringing relief to them in ways no one imagined.

That progress and the hope it brings to patients and families is why I am absolutely dismayed to see how President Trump has dismantled medical research in America during his 100 days in office.

Was that what we were voting for last November? a cutback on medical research in America? to give up our leadership in a world of developing new cures and medicines for people who are afflicted with disease? I don't think that was the message of the last campaign at all.

President Trump has frozen funding to university labs and hospitals across the board. For example, Northwestern University in Evanston, IL, a cancer research powerhouse that earns hundreds of millions of dollars of NIH grants annually has had its accounts frozen by the NIH for the past 6 weeks.

This chart gives you an indication of what this freeze in funding means. Take a look at the numbers for funding for competitive grants and medical research: President Biden, first term President Trump, President Obama, and now down at the bottom, President Trump in his current term.

We need people to speak up in Congress, in the Senate, in the House, Democrats and Republicans. Silence is not acceptable. The amount of funding awarded in Trump's first 100 days is dramatically lower than past years, with more than \$2 billion in research funding being held up so far this year. Two billion dollars isn't just lost opportunity, but it discourages researchers from staying on the job, breaks their will to continue to dedicate their lives to finding cures for things that we, in America, view as dangerous.

President Trump has canceled hundreds of NIH-supported grants and clinical trials and placed gag orders on experts, eliminated the programs that attract young people to the field, and fired nearly 2,000 NIH scientists and healthcare professionals, 2,000 researchers. Is one of those researchers

working on a cure for a disease that will affect someone in your family? It is quite possible.

On Friday, the President released a preview of his budget, which proposes to slash NIH's medical research budget nearly in half, wiping out all the gains we have made in the last 10 years. That is heartbreaking. These actions are devastating to medical research across America.

We are ceding our competitiveness to China, weakening our scientific expertise as the envy in the world, and unfortunately, Americans are paying the price.

So imagine my surprise by my Republican colleagues and their reaction. What has their reaction been? Silence. Crickets. It is the "Silence of the Lambs."

It only took two or three Republican Senators in the past 2 years to join with Democratic Senators, including myself, to make a dramatic difference in medical research. It only takes three or four now to step up to say to the President: We are sorry. This is part of your budget we cannot go along with. We are not going to walk away from medical research. We are going to stand together on a bipartisan basis because it means so much.

I came to the floor a few weeks ago to announce that if Republican Senators won't stand up for NIH funding in their States, then I would. So today, I want to highlight what NIH means to one State, Arkansas.

Last year, Arkansas received more than \$100 million in NIH funding that supported more than 1,500 jobs and generated nearly \$300 million in economic activity.

Among the top-funded NIH institutions were the University of Arkansas System and Arkansas Children's Hospital in Little Rock. Arkansas Children's used NIH funding to research why kids in rural, smalltown areas were experiencing higher rates of pediatric asthma and improving their treatment options.

They also used Arkansas NIH funding to research how to limit the negative long-term impact of chemotherapy for kids with leukemia. Is that important to you? If a member of your family was afflicted by asthma or needed chemotherapy, it would be critical.

I won't speak for either Senator of Arkansas, but helping pediatric cancer survivors and asthmatic kids in small towns sure seems like something worth fighting for, and I hope the Senators from Arkansas agree with me that this is a serious mistake for President Trump to cut the funding for that kind of research.

I look forward to working with those Senators if they want a bipartisan effort to restore this medical research in Arkansas.

Last week, the Senate Appropriations Committee heard testimony from a mother whose child beat cancer, thanks to NIH-funded clinical trials and treatment. It was great testimony

by this young lady who brought her little girl with her, her 5-year-old little girl with her.

Here is what she said:

Cuts to medical research are not just numbers on a spreadsheet—they are stolen chances, unfinished stories, and futures left unrealized.

I plead with my Republican colleagues: Break your silence. Let us work together to ensure the chances for medical research are not stolen. These stories should not be left unfinished, and those futures should be realized. Let us protect medical research together. Medical disease doesn't care what your party is. It strikes at any and every family in America. Let's stand up for these families and their kids.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BRITT). The Democratic leader is recognized.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. So just a few moments ago, I joined with my Senate Democratic colleagues to stand with a group of small business owners who are living every day—every day—with the wreckage of Donald Trump's economic agenda.

And let me tell you, these small business owners are not partisans—some of them support the President. Many of the business owners I stood with in New York support the President; but right now, all of them are watching their livelihoods go up in smoke.

Donald Trump's reckless trade war is economic arson, and it is Main Street that is getting scorched.

In a few weeks, Donald Trump's tariff tax has jackked up prices, smashed supply chains, and forced small shops to make impossible choices: raise costs on their customers, lay off workers, or shut their doors for good—which some, unfortunately, are doing. While Trump's billionaire buddies get private meetings to go beg for exemptions, America's small business owners are left out in the cold—forgotten, ignored. They don't have Donald Trump's phone number—nope.

As many know, this is National Small Business Week. Thirty-five million businesses in this country employ nearly 60 million Americans. And I heard my friend the Republican leader talk about it being National Small Business Week. Well, I would say to my Republican colleagues, if you really want it to be National Small Business Week, put our legislation on the floor that exempts small businesses from the tariffs. That will make small businesses happy. An idle celebration while they are being smashed with tariffs doesn't make them happy.

In rural America, small business is particularly important. They employ

more than half of all the workers. These small businesses are the heartbeats of our towns, our neighborhoods, and our economy, but the trade war jeopardizes these businesses. Over 80 percent of businesses say that thanks to Donald Trump's tariffs, they could be forced to raise prices for consumers, and many say they would lay off employees.

Protecting small businesses has never been a partisan issue. It shouldn't be now. It is national priority. But what do small businesses hear from Donald Trump? Well, you should have listened to him yesterday. When asked yesterday if he would consider relief for small businesses, the President waved it off. He said: They are not going to need it.

Utterly condescending. Utterly dismissive. Not going to need it? Tell that, President Trump, to the small business owners I just met with. Tell that to the nearly 370,000 workers at the smallest of small businesses who have already lost their jobs.

He is in a bubble. Donald Trump has no understanding of what small business people go through.

Senate Democrats are fighting back against Donald Trump's economic disaster. Today, my friend Senator MARKEY is introducing the Small Business Liberation Act, which I am proudly cosponsoring, to exempt small businesses from Donald Trump's destructive tariffs. This bill should not be a partisan fight. It should be common sense. When 72 percent—72 percent—of small businesses say that erratic tariffs are giving them economic whiplash, it is time for the Senate to act.

Last week, Senate Republicans had a chance to stop this trade war, but they chose to stand with Trump instead. Well, we are giving Senate Republicans another chance now—by working with us to take up the Small Business Liberation Act.

Senate Republicans' refusal to stop this trade war makes them just as complicit as Donald Trump. Small businesses are the backbone of this country. It is time for Senate Republicans to grow a backbone and defend small businesses from Donald Trump's tariffs.

Madam President, now on Trump and the Constitution, yesterday, Donald Trump was asked the easiest question in the world for a President. He was asked:

Don't you need to uphold the Constitution of the United States?

Donald Trump's answer:

I don't know.

It was appalling. He doesn't know if he is supposed to uphold the Constitution? He swore an oath to that effect. He might have forgotten that.

It is hard to imagine something more un-American than Donald Trump, the sitting President, saying that he doesn't know whether he needs to uphold the Constitution. As I mentioned, just over 100 days ago, he raised his

right hand and swore in front of the Nation to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution. But no President has done more to disregard the Constitution and buck the rule of law than Donald Trump, and now he plainly admits it, almost proudly.

One of the traits of a dictator is someone hostile to all forms of guardrails and accountability, who doesn't want to hear any dissent. Well, the Constitution is the ultimate guardrail, and Donald Trump thinks he doesn't need to obey it.

Donald Trump is the embodiment of what the Founders feared: a President hostile to the rule of law, scared of debate, scared of opposition. He can't stand the idea of something restraining his power, so instead he tries to crush anything he views as opposition. That is not strength; that is insecurity—deep insecurity.

Donald Trump is putting our Constitution through the shredder, and Senate Republicans are totally silent. They are complicit. They are watching the Constitution be ripped up. They say nothing—nothing.

Ten years ago, Republicans would have been up in arms—up in arms—over the idea of a sitting President saying he doesn't know whether he needs to uphold the Constitution. Even a year ago, Republicans would have been up in arms had President Biden said “I don't know” if he should follow the Constitution. So where—where—is the outrage from my Republican colleagues today?

This much is clear: You cannot be loyal to both Donald Trump and the Constitution. The two are like oil and water. The American people deserve to know where Republicans stand—with the Constitution or with Donald Trump as he rips it to shreds.

FAA

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, on Newark Airport, for months and now especially this week, Americans flying in and out of Newark Airport have experienced increasing delays and disruptions. Airlines are canceling flights. There is a shortage of air traffic controllers. They are relying on 1990s technology in 2025. One Newark air traffic controller even said that flying into Newark is “not safe.”

Keeping the flying public safe and our national air space efficient is the responsibility of Donald Trump's FAA. They are failing spectacularly. So today, I am demanding a full Inspector General Office investigation into what happened at Newark so these problems do not get worse or spread to other airports around the Nation. I am demanding that the OIG, the Office of Inspector General, investigate answers to these questions:

One, why were Potomac TRACON, Philadelphia TRACON, and New York TRACON—the control towers in Washington, Philadelphia, and New York—excluded from the FAA's list of hard-