

get off Medicaid. They like the life—television and video games. The Democrats want them to stay on it forever, and they want the American taxpayers to pay for it.

The American people are fed up with that sort of abuse of our taxpayer dollars.

It was Democrats who gave 1.4 million illegal immigrants Medicaid benefits. How many people in our home States want that to happen? Very few in my home State and, Mr. President, I am sure very few in yours.

The California Governor—do you know what he wants? He wants to add even more illegal immigrants onto the Medicaid rolls.

Republicans want Medicaid for Americans who need it, not for 1.4 million illegal immigrants.

And it was the Democrats who spent over \$1.8 billion from Medicaid for transgender surgeries for minors. How many people in our home States think that is a use of government money?

Republicans will also unleash affordable, reliable American energy. These are the things that are making the economy strong, that lower prices at gas stations and on electric bills.

Senate Republicans are building a stronger, more prosperous America. That is why we have such good economic news and why people are saying: Yes, we are getting on the right track.

What are the Senate Democrats doing? They continue to be committed to obstructing the Republican agenda, and they say they are going to do it every step along the way. That is what we see coming from the minority leader. They want to stop President Trump from even getting his team in place. The Democrats are filibustering every one of the President's nominees.

Actually, by the end of this week, the Senate Republicans will have confirmed 74 nominees from President Trump that he nominated since January—74 nominated. The Democrats have filibustered 73 of the 74. The only one they didn't was Senator Marco Rubio. In the Foreign Relations Committee, last week, they said, "We are sorry we voted for you," because they don't like what he is doing.

I reviewed nomination records stretching back to the 1980s. Thirteen of these positions that require confirmation in the Senate have never before had a rollcall vote in the U.S. Senate—done by voice vote or unanimous consent. The Democrats have filibustered all of them. That is how obstructive they are.

They filibustered the Chief of Protocol for the State Department or the Under Secretary of Commerce for Industry and Security. These are not controversial individuals. These are people that the Democrats say we are just going to try to stop President Trump no matter what he tries to do.

They even filibustered the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, all to tie up the Senate, to waste time, and to try to slow down an

administration that is working so hard to get our country back from the last 4 years of open borders and high prices that cost them the House, the Senate, and the White House.

These aren't based on objections of somebody's qualifications for those positions. This is all meant to obstruct President Trump and obstruct the will of the voters. Lest the minority leader forget, it is President Trump who won all seven of the battleground States in the Presidential election in November of 2024.

Well, Republicans are working through it. We have confirmed every one of President Trump's Cabinet at a record pace, and we are going to continue to work on all of these qualified nominees and get them all confirmed.

We are united on whether it is confirming nominations or passing our comprehensive economic plan. We are united on our mission. We will build an America that is safe and prosperous and strong, and not just for today but for generations to come.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, one of the most important innovations that President Trump has brought to the Nation is the Department of Government Efficiency. And, of course, this has been headed by Elon Musk, during his term as a temporary government employee. But the good news is that the work of the Department of Government Efficiency—or DOGE, as it is called around here—lives on, and that is reflected in the fact that the Office of Management and Budget has sent its first rescissions package to Capitol Hill.

For those who don't follow the process of procedures here in Washington, DC, the rescissions package is important because it allows Congress to codify the important progress that the Department of Government Efficiency has made in identifying and starting to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse within the Federal Government.

And what DOGE found under the leadership of Elon Musk is a target-rich environment. During the last several months, DOGE has uncovered numerous examples of blatant government waste and abuse. These range from commonsense efficiency reforms to canceling programs that are outright nonsensical uses of the taxpayers' hard-earned money.

According to the website, the Department of Government Efficiency estimates that they identified \$175 billion in savings, or approximately \$1,100 per taxpayer.

I know some in the media have said: Well, that is peanuts; that doesn't count.

Well, tell the taxpayers who have to pay \$1,100 in additional taxes a year to fund an inefficient government that has waste and fraud within it.

The truth is, we have more work to do, and this is just a start. That, to me, is the most important point to make. This is just a start. President Trump and Mr. Musk have changed the culture here in Washington, DC, and changed the conversation.

We know that our national debt has now surpassed \$36 trillion, and that is an amount of money that I know no human mind can fully comprehend. But here is how I begin to get at it: when we start to think that we are spending more money on interest on the national debt than we are to defend the Nation, our most important job. That to me is shocking, and it is a mandate to get our spending under better control.

This isn't a matter of not taxing the American people enough. There isn't enough money to tax people for. It is a spending problem, and we need to get spending under control. We have multiple opportunities, and one of those is with this rescissions package.

DOGE started out with an ambitious goal of a 15-percent reduction in government spending of about \$1 trillion. Again, this is what the media has pooh-poohed and said: Well, they haven't come anywhere near their target.

But, again, the most important point I can make is this is just the beginning. I don't see the work of DOGE being finished but, rather, being a starting place. Again, I think, perhaps, the most important contribution is it has changed the conversation here in Washington, DC. When people realize the egregious expenditures of their hard-earned tax dollars, then they say: Well, what more is there? Is this just scraping the surface?

And the fact of the matter is, it is.

When I look at some of the items included in this rescissions package from the Office of Management and Budget, I think this package will sell itself—or should sell itself—to people with any common sense.

It rescinds \$67,000—a small amount, but small amounts add up—for testing insect powder nutrition on children in Madagascar—whatever that is.

Similarly, it rescinds more than \$1 million for LGBTQI+ programs in places like Uganda and the Western Balkans. Why are we spending tax dollars in Uganda and the Balkans for programs and projects like that? Surely, it doesn't seem like a priority to me.

And if that were not enough, the DOGE recommendations, now embraced within this rescissions package, cut millions of dollars for Green New Deal-style programs, not in America but around the world. The bill rescinds \$6 million appropriated for "net zero cities" in Mexico, half a million dollars for electric buses in Rwanda, and \$2.1

million for climate resilience in Southeast Asia, Latin America, and East Africa.

Again, budgets are about priorities, and I can't imagine a world in which these would be the most urgent priorities for the Nation, as our debt exceeds \$36 trillion.

But just when you thought these programs couldn't be more absurd, they become more absurd as you look further. It rescinds \$4 million for "legume systems research" and \$3 million for Iraqi Sesame Street.

Well, I think if we were to ask my constituents back home in Texas if they want their hard-earned dollars spent for ridiculous projects like including creating cartoon shows in the Middle East, they would say "no" loudly and emphatically.

In many respects, DOGE has shown a bright light on what, for a long time, has been a black hole in Washington, DC. Taxpayers know they send a lot of their hard-earned money to Washington, DC, and I think most Americans—patriotic Americans—if they thought this money was necessary and put to good use, then they would say: OK, that is part of the price we pay for living in the most prosperous, safest, strongest country in the world.

But when they see their money spent like this, they know something is terribly wrong.

So as I say, perhaps, the most important contribution that President Trump and Elon Musk and the Department of Government Efficiency have made is to shape the conversation, both on and off Capitol Hill, about government waste.

Many of the incredibly impressive team members who were hired as part of the DOGE initiatives have been hired on more permanently in various Agencies. So DOGE is not going away, even though Elon Musk has returned back to do work on his companies and is no longer on the Federal Government payroll.

I am not sure he ever got paid, by the way. I think he volunteered his time.

If you think about this for a minute, it is quite a momentous, but in some ways paradoxical, achievement. The nature of bureaucrats in government is to grow and grow and grow. And, over time, our Federal Government has simply become so large and unwieldy. We needed something like the Department of Government Efficiency to come in and begin to, No. 1, identify the problem and to, No. 2, begin to help us chip away at some of the outlandish spending, some of which I have mentioned a moment ago. But the good thing about this change in the conversation and this change in the culture here in Washington, DC, is that the efforts of DOGE, the Department of Government Efficiency, will continue even after the current occupants of those positions move back to the private sector.

What DOGE has done is to have hired a team of people of incredible accomplishment in the private sector to help

eliminate waste, and these cost-cutting efforts have become a quintessential, whole-of-government effort within the Trump administration.

The efforts to get our spending under control, though, do not begin or end with DOGE. We need to play our part in Congress to make sure this work does not go to waste. The way we do that initially is by taking up and passing this rescissions package. Since Congress holds the power of the purse, through the appropriations process, we have the power to rescind these funds when they are shown to be not appropriately expended or used. So this rescissions package from the Office of Management and Budget is a gift on a silver platter, and I look forward to taking up the bill and passing it soon.

But when it comes to eliminating wasteful Washington spending and trying to chip away at this incredibly large debt and the interest payments we are having to make on the debt, which jeopardizes everything else important in the government, including our national security, in addition to the rescissions package, we have the budget reconciliation bill, which was passed by the House and is now being considered here in the Senate—what has come to be known as the Big Beautiful Bill.

This bill is important, as I learned from small businesses in Texas last week as I traveled around the State. I asked them: What was the impact of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that we passed in 2017 during President Trump's first term? They said the impact was pretty dramatic. It allowed them to hire new employees, to invest in new equipment, to grow their businesses, and to provide more job opportunities for hard-working Texans.

The truth is that unless we extend those expiring provisions soon, all of that will go away, and they will have to begin to cut employment, they will no longer be able to grow their businesses, and they will no longer be able to provide additional benefits to their employees.

So the tax cuts that we will implement in the Big Beautiful Bill will allow those small businesses and individuals to prosper and, in turn, grow our economy, which will benefit everybody.

We also have savings opportunities in the Big Beautiful Bill, things like eliminating the Inflation Reduction Act, which was inappropriately named. I don't know from what Agency or corner of the Capitol—behind a door that is unnamed—these names come from, but the idea of the Inflation Reduction Act from its inception was laughable because it did nothing to reduce inflation. In fact, it made it worse by pouring gasoline on the fire.

The fact of the matter is, Bidenomics resulted in an incredible amount of additional spending, which created 40-year high inflation, and now that is sort of baked into the cake in everything we do here in America—when you

go to the grocery store, for small businesses in terms of their inputs and the things they need in order to produce their products. If you ask folks in the agricultural sector, everything they use for inputs to grow a crop or to produce livestock has all gone up thanks to the wasteful spending of the Biden era.

So we need to begin to cut back on some of these wasteful spending projects, and the so-called Inflation Reduction Act is an important place to start.

We also need to do smart things when it comes to some of the other expenditures of the Federal Government—for example, so-called means-tested programs. We sometimes refer to that generically as "welfare"—in other words, the safety net to help people who need a helping hand.

Government does have a role to play, but these are means-tested programs, which means that only people below certain economic levels qualify. Over time, we know that able-bodied adults who should be working and contributing to the economy, contributing to their families, to their communities, and to the Nation are receiving these benefits and are not working at all, and that has to change. That has to change. So particularly in our means-tested programs, there has to be a work requirement for able-bodied adults.

Plus, if you talk to employers around the country, as I have in Texas, they say: One of the biggest problems we have is a shortage of people willing and able to work. We have good, well-paying jobs, but we can't find the workforce to fill these jobs.

Well, the third means by which we are going to begin this process of controlling our out-of-control spending and our national debt is in the appropriations process. Of course, this is an annual process where we consider how to fund the Federal Government, and, like everything else in the budget process, it is a matter of choosing our priorities. But this is only 28 percent of what the Federal Government spends. Historically, we have ignored the other 72 percent when it comes to spending, but we are going to deal with that in the Big Beautiful Bill.

In addition, Congress has traditionally passed, as part of that 28 percent, 12 individual appropriations bills to fund the Federal Government. No. 1, of course, on that list of priorities is national security.

Of course, under Senate Democrats, we frequently punted this responsibility and passed something called a continuing resolution, which was on autopilot, instead of full-year funding measures that were debated in the Appropriations Committee, with bipartisan support, and then debated here on the floor and passed into law. Instead of that, we just passed continuing resolutions, which is an abdication of our responsibility as the holder of the purse strings under our government.

But while we often think of the appropriations process as strictly a

spending process, it does not have to be that way. We can also use this appropriations process to enact further spending reductions, and I think we should.

So we have three bites at the apple, at the spending apple: rescission, reconciliation—the Big Beautiful Bill—and then appropriations. I hope the House and Senate will take full advantage of each of these three opportunities to begin the process of reducing our deficit and debt because, as former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Mike Mullen said maybe about 10 years ago or so, “The biggest threat to our national security is our national debt.” That prediction at the time has come true when we are spending more money on interest on the national debt than we are on defense.

There is no better time than the present to begin to remedy this situation, and it is up to Congress. We can’t look over our shoulder or look around the room and say: Who else will protect us and save us from this unsustainable trajectory? It is up to us.

While the formal Department of Government Efficiency Task Force may have concluded, the work of DOGE lives on. As a founding member of the DOGE Caucus, I will keep doing my part, along with all of my colleagues, to bend the spending curve. I urge all of my colleagues to join us in that effort, particularly by passing this rescissions package and then eventually, in the coming weeks, the Big Beautiful Bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MCCORMICK). The Senator from Texas.

WAIVING QUORUM CALLS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum calls with respect to the Bowman and Walsh nominations.

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

Mr. CORNYN. Thank you.

My apologies to my colleague from Massachusetts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

NOMINATION OF MICHELLE BOWMAN

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the nomination of Michelle Bowman to be the Federal Reserve Board’s Vice Chair for Supervision.

Governor Bowman has served on the Federal Reserve Board since 2018 when she was confirmed as the first Governor required to have community bank experience, but during her tenure, she has consistently prioritized Wall Street over Main Street. She has weakened safeguards on the largest banks in the country and has opposed common-sense rules to promote financial stability, to protect consumers, and to drive investment in communities across this country.

Just yesterday, in another Wall Street giveaway, she voted to lift the asset cap that was placed on Wells Fargo in an effort to rein in Wells’ dec-

ades-long track record of customer abuses. She did this despite the fact that there is no public evidence that Wells Fargo has substantially changed its approach to banking.

Governor Bowman’s actions have already imposed serious costs on small businesses and families. It would be especially dangerous to put her in charge of further deregulating Wall Street now just as President Trump has pushed the economy to the edge of a cliff.

Democrats on the Banking Committee unanimously oppose her nomination as Vice Chair for Supervision, and I urge all of my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, to do the same now.

In the years leading up to the 2008 financial crisis, the Federal Reserve Board effectively abdicated its statutory role as a financial regulator and supervisor. As a result, the Agency was asleep at the wheel as dangerous risks built up in the financial system, especially in the subprime mortgage market. When the economy tumbled, families, small businesses, and even community banks suffered the consequences of the Fed’s negligence.

Congress established the Vice Chair for Supervision position after the 2008 financial crisis in order to ensure that the Fed never again ignored its financial regulation and supervision responsibilities, but in her 6 years on the Federal Reserve Board, Governor Bowman has hacked away bit by bit at the safeguards put in place after the 2008 financial crisis. Let’s take a look at her record.

Governor Bowman has weakened critical safeguards for the largest Wall Street banks. She has voted to reduce big banks’ loss-absorbing capital requirements, and she has voted to undermine the stress testing framework, both of which have left big banks more vulnerable to collapse. She has also voted to allow big banks to gamble with people’s deposits in financial markets, including through increased investments in hedge funds and private equity funds. These actions have allowed Wall Street banks to take on riskier bets and juice their dividends, boost their buybacks, and pump up executive compensation—all at the expense of financial stability.

Bowman also voted to deregulate massive banks with \$100 billion to \$250 billion in assets. That particular error in judgment came back to bite our country quickly, causing the second, third, and fourth largest bank failures in U.S. history just a few years later when these three deregulated banks—First Republic Bank, Silicon Valley Bank, and Signature Bank—all failed within weeks of each other in 2023. For a while, the entire banking system teetered on the edge of collapse.

Now, instead of learning from that near catastrophe, Governor Bowman has refused to take any responsibility for her votes that led to this banking turmoil, and she has opposed common-

sense rules to strengthen the resilience of large banks even after those failures.

Governor Bowman also voted to approve more than 800 bank merger applications, including Morgan Stanley’s major acquisition of E*TRADE and Capital One’s recent acquisition of Discover, which created the largest credit card company in America. Her lax approach to bank mergers undermines competition and increases concentration in the banking sector. That, in turn, inflicts costs on consumers and threatens the stability of the entire banking system. It also poses a direct risk to the future of community banks in this Nation.

In addition, Governor Bowman opposed even modest improvements to the Community Reinvestment Act. This is a 50-year-old law that was created to prevent racist lending practices by big banks and to ensure that all communities have access to critical financial services.

Last year, she was the only Fed Governor—the only one—to vote against a rule that would have updated the CRA regulations for the first time in nearly 30 years and would have increased banks’ investments in communities of color, in rural and Native communities, and in other low- and moderate-income areas.

Beyond her deeply troubling policy record, Governor Bowman also demonstrated a worrisome lack of independence from the White House during her nomination process. For example, at her hearing, she refused to acknowledge any economic uncertainty created by President Trump’s tariff policies, and she refused to concede any potential financial impact of those policies on U.S. financial stability. That refusal puts her at odds with Chair Powell, with the Fed staff, and with economic experts across the political spectrum. It was clear that Governor Bowman did not want to be seen even indirectly criticizing President Trump.

Ms. Bowman also stated that she plans to submit regulatory actions to the White House for review, which undermines the Fed’s independence and all but guarantees a new deregulatory bonanza for these Wall Street banks.

She has refused to answer questions about whether she met with then-President Elect Trump or his transition team while on an official Federal Reserve-funded trip to West Palm Beach in November 2024.

Look, our economy is in a precarious moment. President Trump’s disastrous mismanagement of this economy is raising costs for families, is putting jobs at risk, and is threatening to decimate small businesses across this country. Deregulating Wall Street right now would throw gasoline on Trump’s economic fire. The last thing families and small businesses need is another massive financial crash.

I urge my colleagues to oppose Michelle Bowman’s nomination.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.