

know of no other country as their own. They grew up in our communities and contribute to our Nation and to our economy. They are our neighbors, our friends, our family members. Many of them are now even raising their own families here—sending their kids to school, taking them to soccer practice, and going to the park on weekends.

But Washington has failed them. What started out as a temporary program meant to protect Dreamers, while Congress worked to pass a more permanent solution, has turned into a decades-long lifeline for so many. Washington's gridlock and its inability to pass comprehensive immigration reform, with a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, has left them to depend on DACA. It has also opened the doors to attacks from the Trump administration and rightwing extremists.

During his first term, Donald Trump rescinded DACA and threw this critical program into a tailspin, leaving the future of Dreamers and their families to depend on court case after court case.

Can anyone in this Chamber imagine the stress, the fear, the uncertainty that they have had to endure all of these years, not knowing if they would be separated from their families or not?

In his second term, Trump has been relentless—relentless—in attacking and separating hard-working, law-abiding immigrant families, increasing fear and worry in our immigrant communities, including DACA recipients.

If DACA were to end, millions of Dreamers across our Nation would be at risk of having to leave the only country they have ever known, the only place they have ever called home. Parents would face separation from their children, leaving families forever traumatized. And our economy and communities would greatly suffer.

And just imagine—just imagine—the message we would be sending. Nevadans who have done everything right since they arrived in our State, Nevadans who were brought here as kids through no fault of their own and who followed the rules when government asked them to—who followed the rules—Nevadans who have graduated college, Nevadans who have served in the military, Nevadans who have started businesses in our communities, Nevadans who are currently protected could now lose the only life they have ever known.

So it is past time that politicians in Washington stopped using Dreamers as a political football and finally passed a law that permanently protects them. These hard-working Americans deserve to have peace of mind, and they deserve a life without fear.

I want Dreamers to know they have allies in their corner. As Nevada's Senator, I will do everything in my power to protect all of our communities and keep families—keep families—together. Since day one in the Senate, I have been pushing my colleagues to come together, in a bipartisan way, to pass a

permanent solution, one that gives Dreamers permanent protections and a pathway to citizenship—a pathway to citizenship now, now—while we continue to work on comprehensive immigration reform that this country so surely needs—surely needs. It shouldn't be a partisan issue.

As long as I am in the Senate, I won't stop fighting for it. I want everyone to know that, in the meantime, I will continue to do everything in my power to protect DACA and the thousands of Nevadans who rely on it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

RESCISSIONS

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, last week, President Trump sent to Congress a request to rescind \$9.4 billion in fiscal year 2025 and 2024 funds that a majority of Republicans and Democrats had debated and had voted for. Those appropriations were signed into law by President Trump.

I want to briefly discuss the impact these rescissions would have because of the consequences for Americans, for our relationships with other governments, and for millions of people around the world. Also, I want to speak about what this does to the appropriations power and authority and responsibility of Congress.

We are seeing, from my view, an abdication of article I authority that belongs under the Constitution to Congress and delegating that to the Chief Executive. It is a violation of our separation of powers, which is a pillar of the checks and balances that is essential to the well-being of our democracy.

First, talking about the rescissions: The White House—as it says about everything that we do appropriate money for—the White House claims it is waste, fraud, and abuse and also claims that it contributes to the ballooning deficit.

There is a contradiction here because according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, the so-called Big Beautiful Bill that the President is determined to pass will add \$2.4 trillion to the deficit—\$2.4 trillion. And that is before we add the increased debt service that will be required to pay it.

In this country, taxpayers are now on the verge of paying a trillion dollars annually in interest payments, and that is dead money. It doesn't support our military. It doesn't support our schools. It doesn't support scientific research. It is paid to bondholders, many of whom are in China.

Most of the funds that the President is proposing to cancel were approved 2½ months ago for fiscal year 2025. And there has been absolutely no showing that any of these funds—not a single dollar—cannot or should not be used for the purposes for which they were appropriated by a bipartisan majority in Congress. There has been absolutely no showing—none—of any waste, fraud, and abuse. These funds were deemed worthy of funding 2 months ago, and

the President himself agreed. He signed it.

This is an end run around the article I authority of Congress: We pass a budget, and then the Executive rescinds what it is we appropriated our funds for—an enormous erosion of the responsibility of Congress under article I.

But let me just mention a few specific examples of the funds that are on the chopping block: the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. In the case of Vermont, it is called Vermont Public. It is our public radio station, and it is our public broadcasting. Every State has the Public Broadcasting System.

In Vermont—and I know we are not unique—it is essential programming that knits together our community and provided information that was crucial, constantly, when we had floods in July of 2023 and July of 2024. Federal funding is about 10 percent of our budget, but in many States it is about 40, 50 percent.

The administration is proposing to get rid of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting altogether. I totally and completely oppose that. It is the equivalent of \$1.60 for each American annually. It provides a source of local news at a time when we have news deserts all around the country. The pressure on our local newspapers, on our local broadcasters, on our local radio stations is enormous. We need public broadcasting.

I saw it in Vermont, as I mentioned, when we had the enormous benefit of the information we needed desperately to deal with the floods.

My Republican colleagues in North Carolina had a similar experience. It was local public media markets and outlets that provided lifesaving emergency alert information to ensure that victims knew which roads they could travel, which food distribution centers were open. The elimination of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting puts all of this at risk.

Another program said to be eliminated is PEPFAR. PEPFAR is a flagship HIV/AIDS prevention program. It was started by President George W. Bush. It has saved millions of lives. It has created enormous goodwill for the United States around the entire world.

The chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee has strongly opposed any rescission of PEPFAR funds, and I agree with Senator COLLINS and cannot, for the life of me, understand how anyone would support rescinding those funds that provide so much to so many for so little.

Here are some other programs: Global Health—\$500 million would be cut. These activities on Global Health protect child and maternal health. They combat HIV/AIDS and infectious diseases. We would be rescinding funds that fight malaria, Ebola, polio, HIV and AIDS, and other diseases that have been kept under control and out of the United States—in many cases, thanks to these programs—but could easily explode into full-blown epidemics.

There is \$800 million being cut for refugees, like those who are fleeing genocide in Darfur and Burma. Should we turn our back on the Afghan refugee folks who served our men and women in uniform during the course of the Afghan war?

Another cut is \$83 million for programs that have supported democracy through organizations like the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute, and Freedom House. These have all historically received bipartisan support and strong support. This rescission would put them out of business, even though we kept them in business by a bipartisan vote just 2½ months ago.

There is a cut of \$1.65 billion for the Economic Support Fund. It may not necessarily be apparent on its face, but that fund account funds our economic assistance for Jordan, which has been an incredibly important ally to kind of release pressure in the Middle East, Egypt, Indonesia, Lebanon, and other programs that combat corruption, transnational money laundering, terrorist financing, human trafficking, and wildlife trafficking. These programs also, by the way, expand and build markets for U.S. exports, creating good, high-paying jobs in the United States of America.

There is a cut of \$460 million for assistance for Georgia, Armenia, Macedonia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and other former Soviet Republics. We want them to be our friend. We are in a contest with Russia. Walking away from these on-the-edge countries, fragile countries, would send the message that Putin wants, even while he is seeking to overtake Ukraine.

There is a cut of \$496 million for international disaster assistance. That, by the way, provides lifesaving aid for victims of natural and manmade disasters, from earthquakes and hurricanes to armed conflicts. This is the United States doing its share as the major power in the world to help those who have been impacted by these extreme events that cause immense harm and suffering to people, through no cause of their own.

Also, it would cut \$202 million for some specialized Agencies, including UNICEF that has traditionally been led by an American. And the Chinese love this because where we leave, they have made it no secret that they want to replace us.

These are just a few of the examples of the irreparable harm these rescissions could cause to programs and organizations that have had longstanding bipartisan support. They serve our interests, and they promote U.S. global leadership.

I understand the White House is looking everywhere it can—except the defense budget—to find revenue, and they need that revenue to offset the tax breaks that will go, by and large, to the richest Americans. But these rescissions are thoughtless, and they are reckless.

Leadership of the United States is not solely a function of military power. Soft power really makes a difference, and it is a function and a power that we have to use our resources to act as a full force multiplier for democratic principles for free markets and for building alliances.

If these rescissions are approved, we will be asked to explain why Congress did an about-face literally in a matter of 2½ months and ceded U.S. global engagement influence to China. None of us want that; all of us will get that.

The President likes to talk about his historic mandate. He did win. It was 2 million votes out of 152 million cast. It was a small margin of victory—the smallest by a Republican Presidential candidate since the 1900s. My point here is not so much the size of the mandate. Whatever the mandate, a President should embrace the responsibility that he or she has to the entire country, and that includes folks who didn't vote for him.

I do not believe even those who did were voting to risk the lives and their children's lives by cutting funds to stop the spread of Ebola or measles or West Nile virus. This wasn't a mandate to shut down programs to defend democracy where it is under assault. This was not a vote to withdraw from UNICEF. This was not a vote, necessarily, to turn our back on the world's refugees, including, in particular, Afghan refugees who saved the lives of our men and women in uniform.

In the talk about wasteful spending, we are with everybody. I have yet to meet a Member of the U.S. Senate who is in favor of waste, fraud, and abuse. But we have got to identify it and then attack it, not assert the deficit justification for ending a program like PEPFAR that has proven to be efficient and effective in saving lives at very little cost.

The final point I think all of us have to consider is the one I made at the beginning, and that is about the article I responsibility of Congress.

Alexander Hamilton warned about the excessive power that could reside in any one branch of government and that for the well-being of our democracy, we had to maintain that competition between the branches, which required them to exercise and assert the authority that was given to each branch in the Constitution.

Of course, article I gives to the Congress the power to tax and the power to spend, and it is absolutely essential that we do that carefully and wisely because our constituents are the ones who are going to pay the bill through taxes we assess, and they are the ones who are going to receive the benefits through appropriations we make.

To abdicate that power, which is essentially what rescission would accommodate for the Executive, is to turn over that power to the President. And it is not just a matter of being this President; it is any President.

In order for us to meet our responsibilities, we have to adhere to our constitutional responsibility under article I that we are the ones who are subject to the will of the people—in the House, every 2 years; in the Senate, every 6 years—to account for how we tax and how we spend. Let's not dodge by delegating that power to the Executive.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

DACA

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am here to join my colleagues—with thanks to them, most especially to Senator DURBIN—to highlight the impact of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, which for the last 13 years has benefited countless young people who have come to this country as infants or young children, brought by their parents before they could even speak any language, some of them, and many of them here knowing only English, only the neighborhoods where they live now, only this country as their home.

DACA has offered safety, security, and hope to thousands of people, including 3,000 active DACA recipients living in Connecticut alone. They are our friends and neighbors. They are students, nurses. They have all kinds of jobs that are important to our community and our State in Connecticut. They are key members of communities, having lived in the United States for an average of 26 years—that is right, 26 years on average. Ninety-one percent of DACA recipients in Connecticut participate in the Connecticut labor force.

Mr. President, 92 percent of DACA recipients have a high school diploma, and 81 percent have some college education. In Connecticut, 30 percent of DACA recipients are married, 17 percent have children, and there are 6,000 U.S. citizens living with DACA recipients.

Let me tell you the stories of two DACA recipients in Connecticut.

Agnes was brought to Connecticut when she was 9 years old. She worked hard in school and qualified for a Rotary Club scholarship to attend Western Connecticut State University. Because of DACA, she was able to obtain work authorization and get a job upon graduating college.

She says DACA eliminated the uncertainty she felt as a child and allowed her to pursue opportunities she otherwise would not have. She is now a U.S. citizen, married, with two beautiful boys. She owns a home. She manages a global team at a commodity trading company in Connecticut.

Another DACA recipient who also came to the United States when she was 9 years old said DACA was “monumental.” It gave her a sense of independence. It allowed her to build a future for herself that she wanted and aspired to have. She can't imagine what her life would have been like without it.

In 2009, before she graduated from college, she learned about the DREAM