

country but also for this body. I understand that it may take a few moments for our Republican colleagues to watch the full video, to gather some additional facts, to come to a conclusion. But we need our Republican colleagues to be on the floor right now with us because this is not simply an assault on Senator PADILLA. This is not an assault on Democratic Senators. This is an assault on the rule of law. This is an assault on our democracy. And ultimately, we are robbing the ability of every single Senator to do our job if we are now going to be threatened with violence when we simply try to stand up for our constituents.

Now, we all have townhalls, and we are all often met with constituents who oppose us, sometimes very vocally. But, speaking for myself, I don't ask law enforcement to throw my constituents to the ground and violently handcuff them because they have a different opinion from me. You know why I don't do that? Because we don't do that in a democracy. We don't do that against ordinary citizens, and we certainly don't allow the administration and the law enforcement that works for the administration to do that to a U.S. Senator.

We will enter a banana republic if we don't find a way—Republicans and Democrats—to come together around this essential question of protecting our ability and our right as Senators to speak up for our constituents.

Now, I understand that my Republican colleagues are going to need some time to gather the facts, but we already have a statement from the Department of Homeland Security that has accused Senator PADILLA of being "disrespectful," as if that is a rationalization for violence.

Watch the video. Even if you believe that he was "disrespectful"—and, given the times, that is certainly in the eye of the beholder—that never justifies what we saw on that video: throwing anyone—never mind an elected representative of the people—to the ground to be handcuffed.

They say that he didn't identify who he was, and yet—watch the video—he clearly states:

I am Senator ALEX PADILLA.

They are going to spin this. But I am begging my Republican colleagues: Don't let them do it. Protect our ability as servants of the people to speak up for the people that we represent. Make sure that we do not normalize this kind of violence simply because the White House doesn't agree with people who dissent.

If this is how a U.S. Senator can be treated, then none of us ultimately are immune. If this is how a U.S. Senator can be treated, none of our constituents are safe.

This is a test for the country, but this is a test for the U.S. Senate as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

ALEX PADILLA

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, 2 days from today, June 14, is Flag Day in the United States. It is the day every year where we celebrate the flag, but it is not the piece of cloth that we celebrate; we celebrate core American values. And the most core American value is the one that we take an oath of office to, the Constitution of the United States.

The Constitution includes a Bill of Rights, and one of the most important pieces of the Bill of Rights is the First Amendment. It was drafted by Virginian James Madison, and it talks about the fact that there can't be laws or legal restrictions against the right of the people to peacefully assemble and petition government for redress of grievances.

That right is not something we are allowed. That right is something we are guaranteed.

My colleague and our friend ALEX PADILLA, born and raised in Los Angeles, loves his hometown—an MIT-educated, baseball-playing engineer who returned to his home, who served on the Los Angeles City Council and now serves in this body—has some very legitimate questions about why, in an unprecedented way, the National Guard and the U.S. Marines have been deployed into his city, over the objections of the mayor, over the objections of the Governor, in a historically unprecedented way and in a way such as to escalate tensions in his town rather than to reduce them.

So he decided to go to a peaceful public assembly. It was a press conference. It wasn't a private meeting to which he was not allowed entrance. A press conference's purpose is to share information with the public.

My colleague ALEX PADILLA, who goes to Wednesday prayer breakfast with me every week with a bipartisan group of colleagues, attended a public event so he could ask a question about why his hometown was being besieged by the Marines and National Guard over the objection of the mayor and the objection of the Governor.

His question was a grievance. He doesn't agree with the policies of the administration. He is guaranteed in this document the right to petition government for redress of grievances as an American, which is what we are supposed to do.

The Framers of the Constitution who put this in the First Amendment did it to protect the rights of ALEX PADILLA and all of us, but they did it for another reason. They did it because they believed it would help democracy work better, that democracy works better when people can speak freely. Democracy works better when people can profess their religion, when the press can operate freely. And democracy works better when people can gather peacefully and share their dissenting points of view. It makes our democracy work better.

Make no mistake, the effort to manhandle our colleague to push him out

of the room for asking an inconvenient question, to handcuff him, is an attempt to shut him up. It is an attempt to shut everybody up if you have a dissenting view from this administration. That is why the administration has deployed the military in an unprecedented way. They want to intimidate you.

They want to make you decide that although you were granted this as a right, they want to make you afraid to exercise the right. As I conclude, I would just say this: On Flag Day, I would encourage Americans of all kinds, find a peaceful assembly on June 14—on Flag Day—and attend it and show that you are a brave and patriotic American that embraces the First Amendment to the Constitution, and you will not allow anyone to intimidate you.

I was a missionary in Honduras in 1980 and 1981, and it was an authoritarian society. And no one was guaranteed the right to assemble or complain. You might do it and be OK one day; the next day you might be arrested; the next day you might be disappeared or even killed.

That is not who we are. We need brave, patriotic Americans to stand up, just as Senator PADILLA has done, and insist upon their right to peacefully assemble and present whatever critiques or complaints they have about policies that they find to be objectionable.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

ALEX PADILLA

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I have given a lot of speeches on this floor, and this is the least prepared but the most clear I ever will be: This is the stuff of dictatorships. It is actually happening.

A U.S. Senator was manhandled, shoved to the ground, and cuffed. He identified himself:

I am Senator Alex Padilla.

That should be enough. That should be enough. A U.S. Senator who is, by the way, protected by the speech and debate clause of the Constitution of the United States and a specific statute that allows him to oversee immigration facilities, and he says: I am a Senator, and I have a question.

To CHRIS MURPHY's point, they said, well, he was being disrespectful. Being disrespectful is legal. Being disrespectful is American. Being disruptive is OK if it is just using your words and not your body. This is the stuff of dictatorships. And the thing that is making me most terrified is I see zero Republicans, except for the Presiding Officer, in this Chamber. And I understand, if it is not a member of your own party, you want some context.

There is no context that justifies this action.

ALEX PADILLA is not required to be impeccable in every single way in order

to exercise his responsibilities as an American and as one of the two that represents California in the U.S. Senate. This is the stuff of dictatorships.

One of the officers who throws him to the ground as he is clearly complying, cuffs him face down on the carpet, and they say: There is no recording in here.

It is a damn press conference. It is for recording. They didn't want to hear his speaking.

And if the internet has got it accurately, the Secretary was there and delivering her remarks within earshot the whole time. She has command authority over those agents who are arresting a leader in the legislative branch.

This is not something on the internet for us to argue about. We all know what we saw. We all know what we saw. I remain hopeful that Leader THUNE and other Republicans can walk us back from the brink, but I am not so sure anymore.

So as Trump's Department of Homeland Security raises the stakes and continues with a series of provocations to justify increasingly authoritarian actions, we have two obligations. One is to establish that as a legislative branch, we are not going to stand for this. And the other is those people who are peacefully protesting: Be very disciplined this weekend. Be very peaceful this weekend.

If we are going to win, we need to maintain the high ground. And I don't mean we blue; we Democrats. I mean we Americans who believe in this system of government. I have never, ever—other than January 6—been so outraged at the conduct of an administration.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

#### ALEX PADILLA

Mr. KIM. Mr. President, I have no words to describe just the absurdity of this moment and the dangers to our country and our Union. For us to be able to stand here on the floor of the Senate in this Chamber that many such important decisions have been made in, a place of deliberation—it is not only in this room that we as Senators should be able to voice the concerns that we have about the direction of our country and the problems that our Nation faces, that we get to be sworn in as U.S. Senators, that we try to do our best, that we are U.S. Senators—United States Senators—that we represent this entire Nation as a body.

And the idea that just—as I just saw the video—one of my colleagues here is thrown to the floor, handcuffed, humiliated—it is not a humiliation of that individual Senator; it is a humiliation of this body.

The shamefulness by which that was perpetrated, that the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security—shame upon those that instigated this, that followed through on this.

It is something that all of us collectively need to stand against. This isn't about partisanship. It is about what does this institution, what does this body mean and whether or not our words and our actions, as dictated by our oath that we swear to the Constitution of article I, as well, that lays out what our job is, that that is very much under threat right now.

I feel for my colleague. I don't know what is happening right now. I hope that we are able to get greater clarity about that, but what we see and what we saw on that video transpire, I hope that is something that every American in this country sees, that they see the actions that have taken place.

As someone who has worked in other nations—I worked in diplomacy and national security; I worked in nations with authoritarian leadership—I never thought I would see anything like this here at home—transpire here in the way that we saw it unfold.

Again, the humiliation befalls our body as a whole. Now the question is, What will the Senate do to stand up for ourselves? That is something that I hope every single Senator is thinking about right now.

This is not a time to put your finger up in the air and figure out which way the wind is blowing, to try to think through what type of reaction might come from the White House if we speak out against this.

This is a time for us to stand up together and stand up for each other and for this institution. And not just right now. It is about: What credibility do we have as a body going forward?

And I know, I get it. I am new here. I am one of the newer members here. I came here—I wanted to serve in this body because of what it stood for. I wanted to serve in this institution because I believe that this is an institution of incredible honor, integrity.

And even at this challenging moment in this country's history, we need this body to be able to come together.

So I call on all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to condemn this action, to stand united with one voice, standing up for ourselves. Otherwise, we will just cast ourselves to the margins of irrelevance in this Nation right now.

What point is it for us to stand up and show up to work every day if this is the kind of treatment that can befall any of us in this day, right now, in this country? I am outraged, and I hope others are too.

This is not a time to be silent. This is a time for us to be united and show the rest of the country what this institution means. Otherwise, we might as well go home. I, for one, want to fight for my colleague, fight for each other, fight for the Senate, and fight for our democracy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

#### ALEX PADILLA

Mr. KELLY. Mr. President, I have to say this week stood out for me personally with some positive notes and some real downers.

The week didn't start great. We saw the President of the United States—for the first time, I think, in possibly my lifetime—send troops without a request from the Governor into a State because people were protesting.

And, sure, some could make an argument that maybe a few protesters got over somebody's perceived line, but they were largely peaceful protests.

What the President did is beyond his authority. It is illegal. And it was not a good start to the week, I have to say.

I also have to say there was some positive things this week. I got to meet your grandson. I think he said he was 15 years old. He got to go to the Air and Space Museum, a place that I love, a place that makes our country stand out in the best of ways. It shows what we can do when we work together, when we bring the full force of the United States behind doing things that are positive.

We sent people to the Moon in the 1960s. Your grandson got to see some of that hardware over at the Air and Space Museum.

But I also have to say that the end of this week was rather outrageous and horrific, and it was brought to the American people, I strongly believe, because of the attitude of this President and his ability to just work outside of the boundaries of what most Americans feel are in accordance with our values and our ethics.

What happened today to Senator PADILLA was outrageous. It was violent. It is a scary thing to see happen in the United States of America.

ALEX PADILLA is a great guy. He is thoughtful. He is passionate. He is just trying to serve his constituents in the best way he knows how by doing the thing that is in our Constitution—freedom of speech, article I—by exercising his constitutional rights and his rights as a U.S. Senator to ask some questions of government officials. He was doing his job.

His job is oversight, oversight of the Department of Homeland Security. This is in a Federal building, and this didn't happen in isolation. The Trump administration has arrested a mayor and a Member of Congress and a labor leader.

The other day, I think, I mentioned the one highlight of this week, which was your grandkid, and the low light—besides this, at the end of the week—is what happened at Fort Bragg the other day: the President of the United States going to a U.S. military base and using soldiers as political props.

That is not who we are as a country. And I have to say, what I saw today is leading us down a dangerous path, and we cannot retreat to partisan corners. Senator SCHATZ mentioned that, other than the Presiding Officer, I don't think there are any other Republicans