

United States. And we are increasing the standard deduction for millions of low- and middle-income seniors, making their retirement a little easier and more prosperous.

We are also implementing a program to create savings accounts for newborns, with an initial deposit of \$1,000 to help parents save and invest for their children's future needs.

Mr. President, everything we are doing in this bill is for the sake of making America stronger and more prosperous. And nowhere is that more true than when it comes to the tax portion—the centerpiece—of our bill. The tax provisions in our bill—from the permanent extension of the lower tax rates to the increased child tax credit, to the permanent tax relief for small and medium-sized businesses—will help bring security to American families and prosperity to our country. Working Americans—working Americans—are going to have a better life because of this legislation.

I am proud to be a part of permanently extending and upgrading the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. With that, I want to thank Chairman CRAPO and his members on the Senate Finance Committee for their incredible work on the tax portion of our upcoming bill. I look forward to delivering permanent tax relief for hard-working Americans and American businesses in the very near future.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

DETENTION OF AFGHAN INTERPRETER

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I have come to the floor, briefly, to talk about two subjects.

One relates to a situation that I have been updated on of a gentleman who has been detained by ICE out in California, and I want to talk a little bit about it. We have to go back to “Retrograde.”

When we were leaving Afghanistan several years ago, my office spent a lot of time working with various non-profits and veterans’ advocacy organizations to do our very best to get people out of Afghanistan who had served alongside U.S. servicemembers, and we met with a lot of success. Thank God for former special operators and others who were outside of the boundary. We were literally in a network of coordinating the positioning of families to get to the Kabul Airport—HKIA they call it. It was to get them to a specific gate and get them out, them and their families.

Why were we doing that?

It was because the people who helped special operators and forces in Afghanistan had marks on them. They would

be murdered if they were found by the Taliban for supporting and working alongside American citizens, which they did, and many of them lost their lives.

OK. I just became informed over the past day about the detention of a gentleman who had worked for the military as an interpreter, I think, for 3 years directly and then had worked with a contractor. Unfortunately, he was not one of the ones who got out. He was in northern Afghanistan at the time. He was not one of the ones who was fortunate enough to get out before the Taliban was allowed to overrun Kabul and subsequently murder and kill a number of people who had worked alongside Americans for many years.

Well, it turns out this gentleman was in Afghanistan, as was his brother, and they had become targets because they knew that they were working alongside American servicemembers. They murdered his brother, so he decided to flee from Afghanistan to Iran, which was not a particularly friendly territory. Think about that. He was willing to go to Iran because it was a safer place to be than in Afghanistan, and then he subsequently got a humanitarian visa in Brazil.

He did find his way to the United States. Unfortunately, he did so illegally. Instead of being in a safe third country, he did come here. He did violate our immigration laws, but he also stood alongside American servicemembers and was getting out of a horrible situation where, I think, anyone—everyone—would agree that he needed to get out of Afghanistan. I believe he used the CBP One app to try to apply for asylum, and he was paroled here under the Biden administration—and he did abuse the parole system while he was in office. At the end of the day, we have got a guy who served alongside American soldiers, who, undoubtedly, saved American lives in the process, and who was in this country illegally but who is now in a detention center in California.

All I am trying to say, folks, is I want you to obey our laws. The majority of the time, if you come to this country illegally, then I want you to potentially be deported, but you can’t cast everybody in that same light. He was also trying to apply for a special immigrant visa under the interpreter program.

So all I am saying is things are moving quickly. It just disturbs me that we have got somebody in detention who served, by all accounts, admirably alongside American servicemen, and he probably saved their lives because those interpreters were embedded in the community. I think we owe it to this person to get him out of detention and into some status to determine what country he should go to. I am not necessarily arguing that he should stay in the United States, but I am arguing that he shouldn’t be in detention in California after his service, indirectly and directly, to our country.

That is all I have to say on that matter, but we are going to be tracking it very closely, and I thought it was important to say that on the floor.

ALEX PADILLA

Mr. President, the last thing I am going to leave you with is, I sat on this floor yesterday while Senator PADILLA was speaking, and I have to tell you that the events that occurred—and I am saying this because now I hear about a dustup in New York. Folks, ALEX PADILLA I consider a friend, and I believe that he was very, very—his emotions were on—at a 10—because of some of the things that he has seen occurring in terms of ICE detentions and ICE raids. I agree and disagree with him on some of the policy.

But, folks, we have got to get to a point where elected officials have to take some responsibility for their actions. We have press conferences here all the time. We have a weekly press conference out here with leadership. We have got a press room on the third floor. I wonder if we are actually saying it is OK for me to run out here and interrupt Senator SCHUMER, while he is giving his opening statements, to a presser to ask him a question. I think that that is inappropriate. I think it would be inappropriate to do it to my Democratic colleagues up in the press room on the third floor. I think it would be inappropriate for me to go out and do that out in the field.

So I guess what I am trying to say here is, why don’t both sides own up to the fact that they both own some responsibility for what happened there. Senator PADILLA should have found a better way to elevate his concerns to the Secretary of Homeland Security rather than going in there and having that dustup. Having said that, there were clearly people in that building who knew he was a U.S. Senator. So the minute he was removed from that situation in the briefing room, they should have treated him with respect and allowed him to disperse. It was disgusting to me to see somebody wrestled to the floor—anybody but particularly a U.S. Senator who is in a Federal building.

So I would just say to those who are tempted now to think that they can act like they are off the hinge and that they should interrupt a press conference or threaten police officials to arrest them: Think twice. Step up and be leaders. If you have got a point, don’t go trying to trend on social media by getting in somebody’s face. If you want to make a point, that is what you do. If you want to make a difference, then come to the Senate floor and try to figure out how to get your policies through. That is how this place should work.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the MAGA Supreme Court majority seems

to have forgotten one of its jobs is to protect Americans from discrimination.

The Republicans' cruel crusade against trans Americans infringes on the rights of parents and the rights of kids. Once again, Republicans use these issues to divide America and distract them from their plans to rip healthcare away from millions of people. We will keep fighting to protect the rights of all Americans.

CLASSIFIED BRIEFING

Now, Mr. President, on a classified briefing, as the conflict in the Middle East continues, all of us are concerned for the safety of U.S. troops and citizens and America's interests around the world.

For the information of my colleagues, I have requested a classified briefing on the situation in the Middle East, and I believe we will get one soon. I will keep my colleagues informed as more updates arise.

ONE BIG BEAUTIFUL BILL

Mr. President, on the CBO report of late yesterday, more and more, as people look at the Republicans' so-called Big Beautiful Bill, the uglier and uglier it actually gets. Yesterday, the CBO updated their projections on the impact of the House bill on our national debt and on our economy. The results are dismal. As the New York Times put in a headline, "House Policy Bill Would Add \$3.4 Trillion to Debt, Swamping Economic Gains."

This analysis is new and different because, unlike their last projection, the CBO studied how the Republicans' bill would interact with the economy.

How many times have we heard from Republicans that we shouldn't listen to groups like the CBO? It is because what they are doing so much stares in the face of truth. They don't want to hear the truth because, when people hear the truth, they don't like what Republicans are doing. So they shoot the messenger. The CBO doesn't have an ax to grind, no, and their scores have always been accepted by both parties until now.

So the bottom line is, our Republicans try to discredit the CBO because they don't like hearing the truth, but the truth must be told, and we are telling that truth to the American public day in and day out.

We are telling them that these analyses ignore the economic benefits that supposedly come from the outrageous billionaire tax cuts. Well, now we know that, even after you take into account any impact—any economic impact—of the so-called dynamic scoring created by the Republicans' bill, it is still a loser for working and middle-class families. Only the wealthy gain.

The Republican bill will send interest rates higher, particularly 10-year bonds. And do you know what that means? It means Americans will pay more and more for virtually everything. When interest rates go up, which the Republican bill will do because it makes the deficit even bigger, it will

be more expensive for a working family to buy a home, a car, to send kids to college, to run a business—everything.

The latest CBO report is a warning to Senate Republicans: Doubling down on the House's reckless spending will doom our kids and grandkids to a life of higher costs. They should scrap the Big Beautiful Bill entirely and start over.

Amazingly, Senate Republicans didn't moderate the House bill at all. No. If anything, they made it worse. It is hard to believe it could get worse than the House bill for working families, but, somehow, it is. Senate Republicans are supposed to not be as extreme as the House Republicans, but in this case, they are more so.

After weeks of hearing from one Republican Senator or another saying that they would fix the House bill, that they would moderate the most extreme elements, what Senate Republicans came up with is just as bad or even worse. The Senate Republican bill is, simply put, bigger cuts, bigger betrayal.

So, today, let's look at five ways—there are many, but let's look at five ways the Senate Republican bill is just as bad or even worse than the House version.

First, healthcare.

The House bill already proposes the biggest Medicaid cuts in U.S. history. Their bill would rip healthcare away now from 60 million Americans and make over \$1 trillion in healthcare cuts.

The Senate bill would add even more roadblocks for working Americans, even parents, preventing them from getting healthcare. This bill is just repeal and replace by another name.

The Senate bill squeezes hospitals even harder, particularly rural hospitals. It crushes health centers and decimates rural hospitals.

Are my Republican colleagues going to vote for a bill that is going to close a good chunk of their hospitals in rural areas? We have a lot of rural places in New York, and let me tell you, in many of those rural counties, the hospital is the biggest employer and the only provider of healthcare. So why take them away, especially to give tax cuts to billionaires? It makes no sense, and the American people know it makes no sense. It is vicious.

It means fewer resources for hospitals to stay open and pay their staffs.

And one other thing: Even if you don't have Medicaid or even ACA, your premiums are likely to go up because of all these changes in healthcare.

The second of five of the worst things in the Senate bill is clean energy jobs.

Senate Republicans spent weeks promising they would ease the clean energy cuts passed by the House, but the Senate Republican energy package is a total head fake. It is not real. The cuts in the Senate clean energy bill are every bit as destructive as the House proposal. It phases out tax credits for wind and solar projects within 6 months.

An estimated 850,000 people in the clean energy industry would lose their jobs. Add that to the million or more who will lose their jobs in healthcare and the hundreds of thousands who will lose jobs in other areas. Guess what. When you lose 2 million-plus jobs, you are heading towards a recession. Is that what our Republican colleagues want to do—all to help their billionaires? Billionaires won't mind if there is a recession. They have a big cushion. But what about working families? It will be harder to get a job, harder to keep a job, harder to pay for increased costs. It is amazing what they are doing.

And, to boot, these energy cuts are going to surrender U.S. energy independence to China. Solar is the quickest, cheapest way to put new electrons on the grid. You cut it out, China will dominate, and they will then dominate the world in terms of solar, and they will have the American consumer at their behest. And if you think they are going to charge the Chinese people the same they are going to charge American people, forget it.

Even worse, while the Republicans are gutting clean energy, they are giving special tax breaks to the oil and gas companies. Oil and gas will be the one industry that doesn't have to pay the alternative minimum tax. Is that incredible? So they don't like tax breaks for solar, but tax breaks for the oil companies are great? That is not an all-of-the-above strategy, which so many of my colleagues talk about.

Let's not forget that AI has huge energy demands. It is going to push up the costs for Americans. So why cut off the fastest growing, cheapest, and quickest to construct source of energy, which is solar? It is all ideological. It is beyond rational economics even by the Republicans who love fossil fuels.

It is simply that these rightwing billionaires from Texas and Oklahoma who made a fortune in the Permian Basin, the Anadarko Basin, et cetera, hate clean energy because they know it is the future, and Republicans, at the cost to hundreds of millions of Americans, are bowing down in obeisance to them.

Third—and this one is very important because it has not gotten the attention it deserves—the Senate bill somehow manages to cater even more to the radical gun lobby than the House.

For those who may have missed it, and many did, in the House bill, Republicans snuck a devious provision that reverses a century of safety rules on silencers. We know that silencers are used by people who don't want people to know they have a gun—not by police, not by average citizens, but by criminals. People who go shoot up, mass shootings—they don't want people to hear their shots. And in one case, it is known that they used a silencer to kill more people.

But Senate Republicans go even beyond that. Refusing to be outdone by