

you want for your future and your country? Because we know what works. In the 1980s, President Ronald Reagan tamed inflation, cut taxes, and stood strong. It was morning in America. And then in the 1990s, in a bipartisan effort, Republicans worked with President Bill Clinton to reform welfare. Millions moved from poverty to paycheck. We need to do that again.

In 2017, we cut taxes, we rolled back redtape, we unleashed American energy, and it created the best economy in my lifetime. Middle-class incomes rose by nearly \$6,000 across the board. Energy was much more affordable. We did it before. With this bill, we will do it again.

So, today, Senate Republicans stand united: united to deliver lower prices, higher wages, and more jobs here at home. This bill that we will vote on this week opens the next chapter in our great American comeback story. Republicans are ready to get America back on track.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RUSSIA

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, where is Russia? Where is President Putin? I ask that question in light of what has been happening over the past week in Iran. Where is Russia? Where is President Putin? You couldn't find either one of them with a search party. "Dog the Bounty Hunter," all of a sudden, couldn't find President Putin. All of a sudden, even Google can't find Russia.

I thought Iran and Russia were peeps. I thought they were best friends. I mean, for decades, Iran and Russia have had a partnership where they have attacked everyone in the freedom-loving West. They are best buds.

Now, I know Iran has a relationship with China, but that is more transactional. China just likes to buy Iran's cheap oil.

With Russia and Iran, it was supposed to be a deeper, more meaningful relationship. And this isn't something new; this has been a partnership for decades.

I remember when Putin invaded Ukraine. One of the first allies he turned to was Iran, and Iran sent Russia ammunition, and Iran sent Russia artillery shells, and Iran sent Russia drones. Iran has sent Russia drones and ammunition and artillery shells every single day of the war.

So where is Russia? I mean, it hasn't been a good week for Iran. Where is Russia?

On Monday of this week, Iran's top diplomat met with President Putin and asked for help. Do you know what President Putin said he would provide?

Nothing. Zero. Zilch. Nada. Some kind of friend.

You know, it is not the first time that we have seen President Putin's true colors. It has happened before. You would think that Iran would learn. The month after Iran, through Hamas, attacked Israel back in October of 2023, Iran immediately asked Moscow to supply Iran with—because Iran knew what was coming, and so did Hamas. They knew retribution was coming from Israel. Iran asked Moscow for jet fighters, for attack helicopters, air defense systems, and training jets, and Iran was sure that their buddy Putin would be there. Putin sent them a few jets and said: Go away. Don't bother me.

Then, not long ago, when Israel took out the better part of Iran's air defense system, its golden dome—it wasn't exactly golden. It was more like tin. But the Israelis took it out. Iran asked Russia, said: Look, we have to rearm. We are naked and alone here. We need more air defense missiles to shoot down the Israeli planes.

President Putin said: Go away. Don't bother me.

What a friend.

President Putin has done it to other countries. Russia has had alliances not just with Iran through the years. I will give you a couple of examples. Armenia. Armenia and Russia were best buds, two peas in a pod, but when Armenia got in a war with Azerbaijan, once again, you couldn't find Russia with a search party.

Iran and Russia worked together to prop up al-Assad in Syria. Remember that, when the people of Syria were revolting against Assad, who had blood under his fingernails? Do you know who kept him afloat? Iran, yes, but especially Russia.

Then Assad got in trouble, and that is when he really needed Russia. He went to Mr. Putin and said: Help me. Help me.

Mr. Putin said: No. You are on your own. You can come to my country, where they can't get to you, but that is it. Too bad. I don't need you anymore.

A lot is going on with respect to the Middle East right now, but I hope the world knows what kind of friend Russia is. I hope other countries that Russia has alliances with and that Russia is assiduously courting to be a "partnership" notice how Russia reacts to their friends.

Where is Russia? Where is Putin? All of a sudden, you can't find him. Now, I am delighted with that. I am just delighted. But this was very, very predictable. With friends like Russia—I say this to every country in the world that might be thinking about partnering with Russia—with friends like Russia, who needs enemies?

ONE BIG BEAUTIFUL BILL

Mr. President, let me change the subject slightly. As you know, we are working hard on reconciliation. I suspect we are going to have a bill before us here in a few days. It is very impor-

tant. It does a lot. And I know reasonable people have disagreed over it, but first and foremost, if we pass the bill, it will represent the largest tax decrease in the history of our country.

Let me say that again because sometimes we tend to lose sight of the main purpose of the bill, of the forest as we start battling about the trees. If we pass this bill, it will be the largest tax cut in the history of America. But the converse is also true. If we don't pass this bill, it will be the largest tax increase on the American people in the history of America.

So there are two doors here. Door No. 1, pass it—largest tax cut in the history of America. Door No. 2, don't pass it—largest tax increase, \$4.3 trillion. That is how much taxes will go up on ordinary Americans—not just the rich. I know they are going to tell you that it is just the rich. No, it is not. It is ordinary Americans. It is every American.

If we don't pass this bill, you raise taxes \$4.3 trillion on 300-plus million Americans, and you watch this economy go down like a fat guy on a seesaw. We don't have a choice.

But as we are discussing reconciliation, there is another issue that I don't want us to forget about. Reconciliation is about cutting and spending, but what we call rescission is about cutting.

As you know, Mr. President, the U.S. Congress is responsible under our Constitution for passing a budget. When we pass a budget, we send it to the President—any President. The President can either veto it or sign it. What he can't do or she can't do is go through it and say: I like this; I want to keep it. I don't like that; I am going to cut it.

That is called a line-item veto. President Clinton tried it, and the U.S. Supreme Court said: You can't do it.

So the President, once we pass it, either has to swallow it whole or has to spit it out.

But one of the tools the President does have—the executive branch has, every President has—is the power of rescission.

You are going to hear that word a lot, "rescission." What does "rescission" mean? It just means the President looks at the budget, and he says: You know, I know I can't change it on my own unilaterally, but I, the President, can ask Congress to change it. I know you just passed this budget, but I think you made a mistake here. I think you shouldn't have spent this money or I think you spent too much money and we have got to cut back.

So the President can send us what is called a rescission bill, and we have got to take it up. We don't have a choice. And in that rescission bill, the President says what I just implied: I don't agree with this spending, and I want you, Congress, who put it in there, to take it out.

We can't afford it or it is wasteful spending—what I call spending porn.

We have to take up the President's request, and we can vote yes or we can

vote no, but we cannot dodge it, and it only takes a majority vote to pass the President's request.

The President has sent to us a rescission package. It is \$9.4 billion, as you know, Mr. President—\$9.4 billion. The President is asking us to remove spending that Congress appropriated for areas in foreign aid and for public broadcasting. I want to talk about the foreign aid part.

We are going to have plenty of time to debate whether we all agree with the President, but I want the American people to understand the type of spending porn that President Trump is asking to take out of Congress's budget.

The Honorable JOEY ARRINGTON, who is a Congressman—damn good one, too—he is chairman of the House Budget Committee. The Congressman put together just a few items in the foreign aid spending provisions that the President is asking us to remove. This list is illustrative; it is not exhaustive. I just wanted to point a couple of these programs out. Again, this is spending the President is asking us to revoke. You be the judge, folks. It is your money. The American people can decide whether we ought to spend their money on this or take it out as the President has requested.

Here is my chart, but I don't know if you can read it.

In fact, it is the wrong chart. Put up the other one, Nate.

I will just mention a couple of the programs.

Congress appropriated \$4 million for sedentary migrants in Columbia. The President wants us to take it out.

Congress appropriated in the—let me say, in many of these cases, we didn't appropriate the money for the specific things it was spent on. The bureaucrats did that. We might have sent the executive branch let's say \$3 million for foreign aid, and the executive branch, the bureaucrats there, under President Biden, decided how the money would be spent.

So I know Congress is not blameless, believe me, but we did not approve these specific items of expenditures. We approved the amounts in the general subject area, like foreign aid; the bureaucrats did the rest.

The bureaucrats decided to spend \$3 million for circumcision, vasectomies, and condoms in Zambia—you decide whether that is a priority; \$3 million for sexual reproductive health in Venezuela; \$2½ million for teaching young children how to make environmentally friendly reproductive health decisions—I didn't know there was any such thing as an environmentally unfriendly reproductive health decision; \$167,000 the bureaucracy has spent or is proposing to spend on free education and healthcare for migrants in Ecuador and Venezuela; \$67,000 to provide insect powder to children in Madagascar.

Mr. President, have you ever had insect powder? Don't answer that. I don't think I am even supposed to be asking you under Senate rules. But I haven't had it.

In the area of LGBTQIA and gender programs—again, you be the judge whether this is something we ought to be spending your money on when we have got \$36 trillion of debt. "LGBTQIA" stands for "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and asexual."

The one I had to look up was "intersex." Apparently, intersex is from someone that identifies as both a man and a woman.

The bureaucracy wants to spend \$5.1 million to strengthen the "resilience of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer global movements." The President has asked us to take it out.

Mr. President, \$833,000 for services for "transgender people, sex workers their clients, and sexual networks" in Nepal; \$643,000 for LGBTQIA programs in the Western Balkans; \$567,000 for LGBTQI programs in Uganda; \$33,000 for being LGBTI in the Caribbean.

In the area of the climate, the bureaucrats want to spend—and President Trump wants us to take it out—\$6 million appropriated for net zero cities in Mexico; \$2.1 million for climate resilience in Southeast Asia, Latin America, and East Africa; \$614,700 for climate adaptation, including growing coral reefs in the Caribbean; \$500,000 in Rwanda to buy electric buses—your money; \$8,000 to promote vegan food in Zambia.

In terms of electoral assistance, the bureaucracy has some ideas about how we ought to spend money appropriated to the executive branch to help people in their elections.

The bureaucracy wants to spend \$1 million on voter ID programs in Haiti—if you know anything about Haiti, it is a mess; they are not about to have elections anytime soon—\$889,000 for electoral reforms and voter education in Kenya.

In the area of media arts and culture, the bureaucracy proposes to spend \$6 million to support media organizations and civic life in Palestine and \$3 million for Iraqi Sesame Street. This is just a taste. This list is illustrative; it is not exhaustive.

So when you see us debating whether we should reduce the Federal budget by \$9.3 billion—which the House has already decided to do, and now it is our turn—and I say what—which I have repeatedly said and continue to say is that all the President is asking us to do is cut the spending porn from the budget.

You can make up your own mind. It is your money. If you think we ought to be spending the money on this, encourage us to vote no. But if you think you could spend this money of yours better than the bureaucracy could or we could spend it on our kids or our roads or our healthcare, then encourage us to vote yes.

I see my colleague Senator WARREN is here.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). The Senator from Massachusetts.

IRAN

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, bombing another country is an act of war; and last week, Donald Trump launched an attack that could spin the United States into another endless war in the Middle East. What followed from that decision can only be described as pure madness.

Trump declared total victory. Iran threatened retaliation. Americans in the region were forced to shelter in place.

Trump's own team then admitted no one knows where the nuclear materials are and what nuclear capacity Iran might still have. Trump called for regime change, and then last night, just for a moment, we hoped and believed there was a cease-fire, only for us to wake up to frantic posts on social media by the President begging both sides to stop shooting missiles and rockets at each other.

Today, the Deputy Commander of Central Command could not describe what kind of contingency plans the Defense Department was making or even whether they did or didn't have plans for the United States to put boots on the ground in this Middle East conflict.

And a classified briefing scheduled for right now that we should be having so that all the Senators can ask questions about what has happened and what is currently happening in Iran has just been scrapped by the Republicans for another 48 hours.

There is no grand plan. There is no careful effort to develop a responsible U.S. foreign policy designed to keep us all safe. Once again, Donald Trump serves up chaos—dangerous chaos—that threatens the long-term security of the American people.

New reporting by CNN and the New York Times suggest Donald Trump's bombing of Iran failed to destroy its nuclear program.

The media reports highlight that the strikes only set back Iran's nuclear program by a few months—a few months, while risking another war in the Middle East.

Now, we all agree that Iran should not and cannot have a nuclear weapon. We are committed to that. But the only successful strategy for preventing Iran from developing a nuclear weapon is diplomacy, something that Donald Trump has been pursuing right up until Prime Minister Netanyahu began bombing Iran. That is what we need right now, for all sides to come to the table to build an agreement that is sturdy and that cements lasting peace in place.

But Trump's reckless action, backed by many Republicans in Congress, makes it more likely that this crisis escalates into a deadly cycle of violence. Trump's reckless action puts American lives at risk. Trump's reckless action risks initiating another endless war that could last months, or even decades, as it did in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We have the power to put a stop to this madness right now. Senator KAINE