

Senate Democrats will insist on vigorous oversight of the Defense Department.

#### INSPECTORS GENERAL

Mr. President, yesterday in the dark of night, President Trump fired at least 12 independent inspectors general at important Federal Agencies across the administration. This is a chilling purge, and it is a preview of the lawless approach Donald Trump and his administration are taking far too often as he is becoming President. These dismissals are possibly in violation of Federal law, which requires Congress to have 30 days' notice of any intent to fire inspectors general.

These firings are Donald Trump's way of telling us he is terrified of accountability and is hostile to facts and to transparency. Inspectors general can be vital for keeping the government honest. They are the ones who tell the truth and shed light on bad behavior, and we all know that there is nothing Donald Trump is more afraid of than someone who is independent. But President Trump, all too often, has an aversion to the truth, and when someone confronts him with truth and facts, he fires them and replaces them with loyalists.

We are a fact-based society—or we have been. If we lose that, we lose the core of America. And Donald Trump's decision to fire 12 of the Federal Government's independent watchdogs is a glaring sign that it is a golden age for abuse in government and even corruption.

When Government Agencies disobey the law in the next year and there is no independent IG to keep them in check, Donald Trump could well regret this action.

#### PROJECT 2025

Mr. President, now, on Project 2025, does anyone here remember when Donald Trump claimed he had nothing to do with Project 2025? Remember, last year, Donald Trump seemed to go out of his way to distance himself from the wildly unpopular Project 2025? Now, 1 week into Donald Trump's Presidency, that has all gone out the rightwing window.

Under Donald Trump, it is the dawn of a golden age for Project 2025, and this should infuriate working people from one end of America to the other.

Here is a Bloomberg news headline from yesterday:

"Trump's Early Actions Mirror Project 2025 Plan He Once Dismissed."

In fact, according to Bloomberg, more than 30 of the 47 initial Executive actions announced by the administration come directly—directly—from Project 2025.

Let me repeat: More than 30 of the 47 Executive actions announced by the administration come directly from Project 2025. Project 2025 is officially Donald Trump's policy playbook.

Less than a week into his term, President Trump has gone after Medicare savings for drug costs and the cap

on out-of-pocket spending for medications.

Where do you find those ideas? Well, they are right out of the 2025 playbook.

President Trump also signed Executive orders that would eliminate good-paying jobs in clean energy and opened the floodgates for big oil companies. Where do you find that? The Project 2025 playbook.

And even though President Trump said he wanted to leave reproductive care to the States, his actions tell us he was not telling us the truth. He pushed policies barring doctors from sharing information with patients about healthcare, including abortion, and is pushing anti-choice beliefs into the doctor-patient relationship here in the United States and across the globe.

So when Donald Trump threatens to roll back cost savings for prescription drugs or threatens jobs, he is making life easier for the big corporations and more expensive for average people. And where do these ideas come from? These and many, many more come from the 900 or so pages of Project 2025.

So no matter how much Donald Trump tries to convince people he had nothing to do with Project 2025, the truth has now come out. Project 2025 is the Trump agenda, and, unfortunately, it seems very likely we are going to see more of these awful proposals, in the weeks to come, from Project 2025, right into the Trump administration.

#### FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Mr. President, yesterday, President Trump traveled to North Carolina and California to tour sites ravaged by both hurricanes and wildfires. While speaking to reporters, the President mentioned the role of FEMA, saying he plans to issue an Executive order that could possibly eliminate FEMA altogether. In his words, "I think we're going to recommend that FEMA go away."

Look, if you want to talk about commonsense reforms to disaster response, that is one thing. But getting rid of FEMA entirely because of the conservative hunger to shrink government at all costs is dangerous—very dangerous. That could leave families, business owners, and local communities fending for themselves.

President Trump's proposal to get rid of FEMA has Project 2025 written all over it. Project 2025 wants to privatize some of FEMA's programs, including national flood insurance, that vulnerable communities rely on desperately. Project 2025 calls for the shrinking of the Federal Government's share of disaster aid and making the States and local taxpayers pay a far larger share. That is antithetical to how Americans stuck together and looked after each other in times of disaster.

Why do we have a national FEMA? Because Americans pulled together, not divided one another. And when an area has trouble, whether it is floods in North Carolina or hurricanes in Florida or fires in California or the devastating effects of Sandy in New York,

the whole Nation pulls together and says: We are going to help those devastated areas. We are all together in this.

Now, Donald Trump and his toying with getting rid of FEMA undoes that beautiful part of America that said: We all stuck with one another when one area had such a disaster that they couldn't deal with it all themselves.

History is clear that, when it comes to disaster response, there are some things only the Federal Government is equipped to do, and President Trump would be mistaken to ignore that.

When States get overwhelmed, when their highways are buckling, when they don't have trucks and ambulances because of flooding or fires or whatever—earthquakes—to get to people in need, FEMA comes right in. It has happened in my State. It has happened in your State. It has happened in everybody's State.

Get rid of FEMA because a group of hard-right people want to see that the wealthy people in America pay less taxes, "a la Project 2025"? Un-American to me and against the grand tradition that we have had for over a century—the tradition of each area of the country helping one another.

Eliminating FEMA without thinking of the consequences will only mean more pain and more confusion from communities at their worst times—times of crisis.

The President should back away from this threat.

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

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

#### NOMINATION OF KRISTI NOEM

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, pending before the U.S. Senate on this Saturday morning is the nomination of Governor Kristi Noem of South Dakota to be the Secretary of Homeland Security in the Cabinet of President Trump.

I have never met Governor Noem. I had hoped we would have a chance to get together, but that didn't work out. I made a request for a courtesy meeting, but we couldn't schedule it. My vote is not contingent on a person showing up in my office, but I wish we had a chance to meet and talk about the awesome responsibility she is seeking with this Department.

The Department of Homeland Security is virtually a creation of 9/11. That is when the term "homeland" starting being used in our highest levels of our government in an effort to keep America safe from 9/11 or anything like it happening in the future.

Over the years, it has accepted a major responsibility when it comes to the issue of immigration, particularly when it comes to making certain that

our border processes are orderly and reach our national goals, serve our national goals and values.

It is interesting to reflect on where we are on the issue of immigration. A starting point is, we are a nation of immigrants, period, end of quote. I am the son of an immigrant mother who came to the United States at the age of 2. I have been fortunate enough to be entrusted by my State to represent them here in first the House and now the Senate. I am honored to have that responsibility.

If you visit my office here in the Capitol, you will see behind my desk my mother's naturalization certificate. I am very proud of it. Before she passed away, I asked her if she still had it, and although she was in a compromised health position, she jumped out of her chair, was gone 2 to 3 minutes at most, and came in with a battered, old, brown envelope. I opened it, and there was her naturalization certificate, which I display behind my desk.

I might also say parenthetically that a little slip of paper came out of that same envelope. I picked it up, and it was a tiny little piece of paper that said the filing fee of \$2.50 had been paid. It was stamped "official."

I said to Mom: Why did you keep this?

She said: If the government ever challenged me, I could prove that I paid my filing fee of \$2.50.

That was my mom, an immigrant lady who worked hard her whole life; eighth grade education; raised three boys. I think we have tried our best to confirm her confidence in us and do our best to serve this country in various ways.

So immigration is personal to me. I am proud of my immigrant roots.

On my father's side, the opposite is true. The family dates back to before the Revolutionary War. But that is not unusual in America. We are a gathering of families with many different backgrounds. Immigration is a central part of who we are as Americans.

The question, of course, before us is, What are we going to do about problems in immigration? I can tell you that the problems predated Joe Biden, predated my arrival in Congress, and go back many years.

If you look at the history of immigration in this country, it is a mixed review. There are times when we embraced immigrants to build transnational railroad lines and the like, and there are times when we shunned them and said they were not welcome in this country. It goes back and forth.

We are now in a period, everyone knows, where immigration on our borders is a central issue raised in the last Presidential campaign and certainly on the minds of many voters.

I was fortunate enough a few years ago, in 2013, to join what was known as the Gang of 8, four Democrats and four Republican Senators who sat down and said: Let's write a comprehensive im-

migration reform bill. And we did. In that group were Senator John McCain of Arizona, LINDSEY GRAHAM, Senator Flake, and Senator Rubio, our new Secretary of State. On the Democratic side were myself, Senator SCHUMER, Senator Menendez, and Senators from various States joined. Senator Feinstein was one of those who worked toward reaching a goal.

We brought a bill to the floor, a comprehensive bill—I think a good one. It passed with over 60 votes. Unfortunately, after it was sent to the House of Representatives, it died without even being debated. We missed an opportunity there. It tried to address some fundamentals which I believe should be part of any immigration system in America.

I can tell you what my fundamental values are. I certainly identify myself as embracing immigration, but when it comes to the process of immigration, there are certain things that I think are absolutely essential. I think most Senators of both political parties would agree, although some would have variations on this theme.

Central to immigration reforms, as far as I am concerned, is an orderly process at the border, which means that, except in rare circumstances, people who come through that border gate in an orderly fashion are to be reviewed and carefully scrutinized before they go a step further as to their presence.

Secondly, I accept the premise, and I think every American probably joins in it, saying we never knowingly want to allow a dangerous person to come into this country, period, end of quote. Secondly, if an immigrant to this country is involved in dangerous conduct to the rest of the people who live in this country, we don't want them. They can go back to where they came from or some other place, but they can't stay here in the United States.

The third reality is one that is tough because it is easy to say and hard to live with, and that is, we cannot accept everyone who wants to come into America tomorrow. It just has to be done in a thoughtful, orderly way that is in the best interest of our Nation and the people who live here first.

We have, for example, to allow people to come into this country if they bring skills that are necessary for our future, but we have to offer opportunities to people who are already in this country, citizens and those legally in America, for an economic opportunity in the future. They are our highest priority and should be.

Having said that, the Department of Homeland Security, which Governor Noem is seeking to lead, is now embarking on a new era, the new Trump 47 era, where "mass deportation" is the catchphrase of the day.

Let me give you an illustration of what mass deportation could mean. We don't know for sure how it will be implemented, but I am very concerned.

We had a hearing this week with President Trump's Agriculture Sec-

retary, Ms. Rollins from the State of Texas. I asked her a question which I think raises a valid concern about mass deportation.

Currently, we know that we need immigrants and migrant labor as a critical part of agriculture.

When the Illinois Farm Bureau comes to meet with me, they frequently raise the issue of immigration. In what way? Well, for example, a member of the Farm Bureau has a dairy operation in northwestern Illinois. She said to me that it was the third generation of her family with that dairy operation.

If you know anything about dairy operations, they are labor-intensive. Those cows have to be milked twice a day, and you better be ready to do it and do it with frequency if you want to continue a successful dairy operation. It involves a lot of manpower. It used to be—there was a time when dairy families in my State and others had a bunch of kids because the kids were all ultimately going to be part of the family operation. Those kids are not sticking around dairy farms as much as they used to, and so those who want to keep the dairy farms in operation need workers.

It is almost virtually impossible to find American workers on these dairy operations because it is such tough work, and so migrant labor becomes a critical part of the operations in dairy.

I can recall this lady said to me: If I can't get migrant laborers to work on my dairy farm in northwestern Illinois, this is the end of it, Senator. We can't continue. I don't have enough family members, and certainly there are not kids or anyone—workers in town—who is anxious to get up at 5 o'clock in the morning and start milking cows. That is part of my lifestyle.

Similarly, a lady from the Illinois Farm Bureau said: Well, now that we are on the subject, I have an orchard in Southern Illinois. We grow peaches and apples. I will tell you that I have given up the thought of hiring any local young people to work in my orchard operation. They just won't do it.

She said: I have even got a fruit stand out by the highway. I have enclosed it, I have air-conditioned it, and I still can't get young people to man the cash registers and sell the apples and the peaches on the side of the road. They just don't like doing it. So I rely every year on migrant labor to come pick the crop and even to work the fruit stand out by the highway. That is the reality.

She said: I am done if I can't get migrant workers.

So let's put that into context of mass deportation. We estimate that 40 percent of ag workers today are undocumented. That means that literally they are working, in most cases—in many cases, I should say—without legal authority. They come regularly from Mexico usually or other countries nearby to work in the fields and go back home at a certain point. They are illegal while they are here, but they are

doing valuable work. They are paid for it. It is back-breaking work, things that people just don't ordinarily want to do.

Now let's put that in the context of mass deportation. If the Trump administration decides to use the Department of Homeland Security, which Governor Noem is seeking to head, to enforce mass deportations, what is going to happen in that orchard? What is going to happen on that dairy farm? What is going to happen in so many agricultural pursuits where migrant labor, undocumented labor, is critical to the operation? Well, I can tell you, in many instances, they will be removing the very workers who pick the crop. So what does that mean to Mr. and Mrs. America? Go to the grocery store, to the produce section, and look at the selection you have today. Mark it in your mind because it may not be there tomorrow if the people who pick the crop, who grow the crop, who man and provide resources for the dairy operations are gone. Many of these farm operations will be gone with them.

I asked Ms. Rollins, who is seeking to be the Secretary of Agriculture: Are you going to warn the people in agriculture States, like Illinois and Texas, that mass deportation is a threat to their workforce?

She said: Of course.

She wouldn't answer that directly. I wasn't surprised by that, but it is an indication of the complication of mass deportation.

Take what I have just said and apply it to so many other industries. The hospitality industry is a good indication. How many people are cleaning those hotel rooms that you stayed in last night who are undocumented? A lot.

Another area that I think is really critical is when it comes to caregivers. When you leave your child or grandchild at the daycare center in the morning and head off to work or to whatever your assignment may be for the day, you entrust the most precious part of your life—that little child or grandchild—in many instances, to an undocumented worker. They don't get paid as much as most, and they have an awesome responsibility. I think every parent and grandparent would agree. You want to make sure they are good and talented and qualified and show up to work.

The same is true when it comes to caregivers for those seniors. Your mother or your grandmother went down to breakfast this morning at the care facility and luckily had by her side one of the workers or caregivers who escorted her carefully back to her room. We all know that, at a certain age, a fall can be literally deadly and cost a person's life, so you count on that worker.

Now, if you go into mass deportation and start removing the undocumented workers from childcare facilities and senior facilities and nursing home facilities, how many people will be preju-

diced and hurt by that? I am afraid very many.

So this notion of cleaning the ranks and ridding ourselves of undocumented people in this country we have to give some thought to. If they are dangerous, if they have committed a crime, no questions asked, they have to go. And it has to be a serious crime, not just an arrest for shoplifting, for example. I personally believe they should not only be charged with a crime but prosecuted. But if that happens, they are gone, period, and I think most people would agree with that.

So Governor Noem's aspiration to head this Agency comes at a critical moment in history. The economy in this country is about to change with mass deportation.

We estimate there are roughly about 11 million people in this country undocumented, meaning that they are here not in legal status. How did they get here? In a variety of ways. They overstayed visas in most instances. Some of them came across the border—that is for sure—but many of them came into this country as students or tourists and stayed, and they comprise the largest share of the 11 million undocumented people in this country.

I think we dealt with this issue in a responsible way in the bipartisan comprehensive bill. Here is what we said, and I want to make it clear that I think this is a thoughtful and sensible way to approach it on a bipartisan basis: If you are undocumented in this country, under our bill, you are required legally to step forward, to identify yourself, to pay a fee to remain in this country. You would then be registered by the government. We would know who you are, where you are. You would pay your taxes while you are working and make your contributions to Social Security and other funds. It would be enforced by something called E-Verify, where every employer in this country would be required to check and make sure that the person who is working and undocumented was, in fact, registered with the government.

That, to me, is a thoughtful way to make sure that we are safe, that we still have the workers we need, and to say to those who are here in an undocumented status: You may stay. We are not guaranteeing your citizenship, although I personally believe that they should be given a path to citizenship, but it is a starting point and a sensible one.

We would say to those workers at the dairy farm in northwestern Illinois: Keep working, but now you are going to have your own Social Security number and your own requirement for paying taxes on a personal basis, as an example.

So it is a little bit different than what President Trump has envisioned. His sounds a lot different in many respects. But it is an indication of the awesome responsibility that Governor Noem will have if she becomes the Secretary of Homeland Security.

Our border must be secure, and we certainly, as I said earlier, must deport any dangerous individuals who are here illegally. The approach that I have heard—it will remain to be seen what happens by President Trump and his DHS Secretary nominee, Kristi Noem—is not just targeted at criminals; it is aimed at legal migrant immigrants and immigrant families who have lived in our country—many of them—for decades and are pillars of our community.

Without fail, I can predict what is going to happen if President Trump pursues his approach. In community after community in Tennessee and in Illinois, we will discover undocumented people to our surprise. I didn't know that that man from Mexico, running the restaurant in southern Illinois—the popular restaurant that people love to go to on Friday and Saturday nights—I didn't know he was undocumented. I can't believe they are going to deport him. We are going to hear stories like that over and over again of people we sit next to at church, count on every day in our business dealings, see at the nursing homes, see at the daycare facilities, who will be subject to deportation.

It is not just those who are undocumented. Many times, it appears to be, they are going to say to their children, who were born in the United States and who are legal citizens under the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, that they have to leave as well. There is no basis for that to happen in law or in the Constitution, and yet I am afraid that might be the future.

We have already seen President Trump suspend the Refugee Admissions Program, which provides a safe haven for those fleeing oppressive regimes around the world, including people from Afghanistan who literally risked their lives to help American soldiers survive in that wartime context. Some of those people are being threatened now with exclusion and deportation.

Many refugee applicants wait decades to come to the United States lawfully, and all of them go through rigorous vetting. I am talking about not months but years of background checks before they can be considered as refugees in this country. When they have waited so long under difficult circumstances, that seems fundamentally unfair.

The Trump administration has already canceled flights for over 1,600 Afghan refugees who are scheduled to come here, including the families of Active-Duty U.S. military personnel and those who are at risk because they fought for the United States—on the side of the United States in Afghanistan.

I have a particular situation in Chicago, which I am honored to represent. We have a section of that city—one of my favorites. It is known as Ukrainian Village. It goes without saying that so many people from Ukraine have family and relatives in the Chicagoland area. There are great restaurants and bakeries and churches and schools. It is a vibrant part of the city of Chicago.

This is something most people don't know: When the Governor of Texas decided to send thousands of undocumented people to the city of Chicago, it caused a lot of upheaval and change overnight, and many of those people had to be helped by units of government—the State of Illinois, the city of Chicago, and others. At the same time, those 50,000 people were being slowly integrated into the local economy. Most of them now don't live in any government-sponsored facility, but they have their own lives, and they are working at this point.

At the same time that happened, another 50,000 came into Chicago from Ukraine. Because of the war in that country and the displacement of people in that war, we were offered an opportunity under the Biden administration for those Ukrainians to come to the United States under two conditions. First, they have a sponsoring family, and second, they have a job waiting for them. They wouldn't be dependent on government programs for their survival. We did that, and almost no one noticed. These Ukrainians had become part of the community in the Chicago greater region and have become part of the economy. They have been accepted and embraced. Now they face the real prospect of mass deportation as well. Where are we going to send them? Where are they going? This war in Ukraine makes it virtually impossible for them to return to what was their home.

So I hope that, as we reflect on mass deportation, we realize there are complicating factors in many of these circumstances.

Stopping the flights to America will not make life any easier for those who have applied for refugee status, and it sends a message in Afghanistan to our allies and troops around the world that we will not stand by and support and be friends with those who risk their lives for our soldiers.

President Trump has announced his plan to attempt to deny citizenship to children born in the United States if their parents are not citizens or lawful permanent residents. I don't know if I have a copy at my desk here that I am supposed to have. Oh, here it is. I would like to read to you the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. I hope everyone gets a chance to take a look at it for themselves on this whole question of whether someone can be born in the United States and become a citizen. That has been the law in this country for over 140 years. It really is a provision of the Constitution which is explicit.

Here is what the 14th Amendment says:

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside.

That is the first sentence of the 14th Amendment.

So when President Trump says that he is opposed to birthright citizenship

and challenges it, it was no wonder that the court issued an injunction or a temporary restraining order and stopped him immediately, saying—and this was a judge who was appointed by Ronald Reagan—that the Constitution is explicit.

We have to make sure that our policy when it comes to immigration is consistent with our Constitution and consistent with our values. For many years in this country—over 100 now—that has been very clear, that birthright citizenship is guaranteed by the Constitution.

Kristi Noem, the Governor of South Dakota, has said she wants to end birthright citizenship. She has described the southern border as a war zone and called unauthorized immigration an “invasion.” Governor Noem was the first Governor to deploy the National Guard to the southern border and sent them a total of eight times during her tenure. I was disappointed she refused my request to meet as I wanted to ask her a few questions about those decisions.

As I said before, we need to secure our border, so I worked for years to pass bipartisan legislation. But we also need to protect millions of noncitizens who Americans rely on each and every day.

Immigrants make up 40 percent of our agricultural workers and 40 percent of our home health aides. They are an outsized percentage of the childcare workforce and farm workforce in America. If they are gone, the cost of daycare for families is going to go up because there will be fewer workers.

Immigrants have been a key part of the American success story. Our Nation, I believe, needs them more than ever, in a thoughtful way.

Remember the three elements that I stand for, and I hope most people agree: One, we need an orderly process at the border; No. 2, no dangerous person should ever be allowed knowingly into this country or allowed to stay if they are seeking permanent immigrant status; and, No. 3, we cannot accept every person in the world who wants to come to America tomorrow. It has to be a thoughtful, orderly process, consistent with our values and consistent with our obligation to American families.

They do not deserve—those who are here—to live in fear each day. Any real solution to immigration challenges must give them stability and a future that they can count on.

Americans deserve a real fix to our broken immigration system that protects American workers and treats immigrants fairly.

This pending nomination is a critical one. It may be the hottest topic in Washington today. I look forward to the opportunity to meet Governor Noem at some point to hear more about her intentions.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARSHALL). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, everybody knows that except for Native Americans, this great Nation of ours is a nation of immigrants.

We are one of the most welcoming nations in the world, maybe the most welcoming to immigrants, because about a million people come here every year legally.

My family has been blessed by two: a daughter-in-law of 45 years from South Korea and a granddaughter-in-law of about 6 or 7 years from Ethiopia. I have learned much from them. And I think America is great because of the people that come here.

But we are also a nation based on the rule of law. We have not seen that immigration law enforced over the last 4 years. So I am going to be voting for Governor Noem because she is committed to enforcing our immigration laws.

I think Secretary Mayorkas felt in his heart that America ought to be a land of opportunity, the opportunity for anybody who wanted to come here. He said he was enforcing the laws, but we know that he wasn't enforcing laws because you saw, every night on TV, people crossing the Rio Grande coming to this country and violating our laws as they entered.

We all know that if you are going to be a sovereign nation, you have got to control your borders. We can't have millions of people coming here in violation of our laws—people who are on the Terrorist Watchlist, people with criminal records, everybody just willy-nilly coming here. We are that land of opportunity but also a land of the rule of law.

We are seeing deportations going on now with priority on people who are criminals or on the Terrorist Watchlist. We are hearing some economists and some business people saying our economy is in jeopardy if we deport these people, but no employer is going to hire somebody on the Terrorist Watchlist if they know that they are. No employer is going to hire somebody with a criminal record if they know about that criminal record. So let's talk about the impact of deportation on the economy after people with criminal records, after people who are on the Terrorist Watchlist, and the 1.2 or 1.3 million people who have been adjudicated who did not meet the test of our law so they could legally be in this country, to have those three categories of people deported. Then maybe let's talk about the impact on the economy after that. But I think that is quite a few months down the road.

One other reason that I am voting for Governor Noem—and this is a repeat of what I said last night on the floor of the U.S. Senate in regard of Pete Hegseth being Secretary of Defense. When these people who are nominees come to my office, I point out to them a couple of things: No. 1, I always say, You are going to be asked if you will answer our letters. And everybody for decades has been saying yes to that.

And I point out to them how they ought to really say “maybe,” because I use the last 4 years of the Garland Department of Justice as an example, showing these nominees, when they come to my office, a pile of about 158 letters that the Department of Justice and the FBI haven’t appropriately answered, even after they said they had answered all of our letters.

Now, that may be tongue in cheek—“maybe”—when I tell them that. But I think we have a responsibility to make sure in our constitutional job of oversight to see that the laws are faithfully executed and when we contact the administration when we think things are wrong, that we are entitled to an answer.

This isn’t a problem just in a Democrat administration; this is also a problem in Republican administrations.

So I asked the new Secretary of Defense that question. He said he was going to be diligent about that. And I discussed the same thing with Governor Noem as well because we ought to have cooperation of the executive branch of government in Congress doing its job of oversight.

I am satisfied that Governor Noem will, to the best of her ability, help us with our oversight abilities and even help us get answers to those left over from the Biden administration.

I think Governor Noem is very well-qualified to be Secretary of Homeland Security. I wish her well in the enforcement of law and reemphasize that a border security is very important not only for the sovereignty of this great Nation of ours, because you can’t be a sovereign nation if you don’t control the borders; and, secondly, for our national security because you can’t have people on the Terrorist Watchlist coming to this country and invading us; and also for law enforcement because you can’t have people with criminal records coming to this country.

It is a big job that is left over from the last 4 years of a Secretary of Homeland Security who wasn’t enforcing the law. I think Governor Noem is up to the task, and we wish her well as she proceeds down this road of making sure that the sovereignty of the United States is protected, our national security is protected, and we have a safe nation based upon law enforcement being able to do its job.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

#### NOMINATION OF SCOTT BESSENT

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, in about an hour or so, we are going to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Scott Bessent to be the Treasury Secretary of the United States, and I rise today to urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this motion.

A Treasury Secretary heads the Agency charged with supporting economic growth, representing U.S. interests before foreign nations and global financial markets and organizations, managing the Federal Treasury, and

overseeing financial institutions—to name just a few of those important responsibilities.

Past successful Treasury Secretaries have understood business and financial markets, as well as foreign policy, national security, budgets, and regulation.

Mr. Bessent’s impressive background positions him for similar success. He has worked for the last three decades as one of the sharpest minds in the global financial industry. He has decades of academic, professional, and leadership experience relative to these positions.

When it comes to Mr. Bessent’s qualifications, there is no room for debate. His background and training are tailor-made for this role, and he has the demeanor and character to be an effective Secretary.

His powerful presentation at his hearing about his desire to serve in government in order to make a meaningful difference was impressive to all. It includes restoring prosperity and opportunity that our Nation experienced during President Trump’s first term in office.

As Mr. Bessent stated, accomplishing key tasks like extending vital tax cuts for all Americans is literally a pass-fail exercise, and I look forward to working closely with him to ensure that we succeed.

I strongly agree with a sentiment that my colleague Senator GRAHAM shared at the nomination hearing that if qualifications—and I might add character—are one’s test, voting to confirm Mr. Bessent is one of the easiest we could ever take.

In prior Congresses, I have joined with many of my Republican colleagues in voting for well-qualified Treasury Secretary candidates put forward by a Democrat President, even though I didn’t agree with all of the positions they advocated.

Mr. Bessent’s candidacy ought to enjoy similar support, and I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join with me in advancing his nomination.

He is the right person for this job, and I commend President Trump in making such an excellent selection.

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

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

#### VOTE ON NOEM NOMINATION

All postcloture time has expired.

Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Noem nomination?

Mr. BARRASSO. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK), and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 59, nays 34, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 17 Ex.]

#### YEAS—59

Banks	Grassley	Mullin
Barrasso	Hagerty	Murkowski
Blackburn	Hassan	Paul
Boozman	Hawley	Peters
Britt	Hoeven	Ricketts
Budd	Husted	Risch
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Cassidy	Johnson	Schmitt
Collins	Justice	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kaine	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Kennedy	Shaheen
Cramer	Kim	Sheehy
Crapo	Lankford	Slotkin
Cruz	Lee	Sullivan
Curtis	Lummis	Thune
Daines	Marshall	Tillis
Ernst	McConnell	Tuberville
Fetterman	McCormick	Wicker
Fischer	Moody	Young
Graham	Moreno	

#### NAYS—34

Alsobrooks	Gillibrand	Reed
Baldwin	Heinrich	Rosen
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Sanders
Blumenthal	Hirono	Schiff
Blunt	Kelly	Schumer
Booker	Klobuchar	Van Hollen
Cantwell	Lujan	Warner
Coons	Markey	Warren
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Welch
Duckworth	Murray	Whitehouse
Durbin	Ossoff	
Gallego	Padilla	

#### NOT VOTING—7

King	Schatz	Wyden
Merkley	Smith	
Moran	Warnock	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that with respect to the Noem nomination, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action; and, further, that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Bessent nomination be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the