

recent passage. And a majority of Americans support congressional efforts to sanction the ICC. The most recent vote in the House was 243 in favor and only 140 against; 45 House Democrats voted for it.

Well, the Senate could have passed ICC sanctions last Congress, but the Democrat leader chose to drag his feet instead. He blocked it from coming here to the Senate floor. He refused to even allow debate.

This Congress, Senate Republicans have made strengthening our alliance with Israel a top priority. Republicans can't sit back and allow a kangaroo court to wage lawfare against American citizens or our allies. The Senate will not bend to the pro-Hamas crowd. We will stand with Israel in the face of anti-Semitism and in the face of evil, period. Will Senate Democrats join us? We will find out today.

NOMINATION OF SEAN DUFFY

Mr. President, on another matter, since January 20, the U.S. Senate has confirmed five of President Trump's well-qualified nominees. Today we will confirm the sixth.

Former Congressman Sean Duffy is the nominee to be the Secretary of Transportation. Congressman Duffy received unanimous support in the Commerce Committee. As Secretary of Transportation, Congressman Duffy will be responsible for ensuring Americans have reliable infrastructure and safe travel. His job is critical to America's economic success. From the Erie Canal to the transcontinental railroad in the 19th century, from the Panama Canal to the Interstate Highway System in the 20th century, infrastructure transformed our commercial Republic into an economic superpower.

Today, our highways, our bridges, our ports, and our airways need improvement as travel and commerce hit record highs. We need to build great things in America again. Families and businesses need confidence that they will get where they need to go.

Sean Duffy is dedicated to moving our Nation forward. As Secretary of Transportation, he will lead the Department with safety and modernization at the forefront. I look forward to confirming Congressman Duffy today and working with him during this next administration.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip is recognized.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, we can all agree that the border of the United States should be secure. And, of course, we must deport any dangerous individuals who are here unlawfully.

But the Executive orders that President Trump signed this past week don't target criminals. In fact, President Trump terminated a Biden administration policy that required immigration officials to prioritize for arrest and deportation individuals who threaten public safety or national security. Instead, President Trump has authorized

Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers known as ICE officers, to make arrests in schools, churches, and courthouses across the country. The President has reportedly even directed ICE to set quotas for arrest, ramping up from a few hundred a day to more than 1,500 per day.

These kinds of arbitrary quotas will ensure that essential workers, family members of U.S. citizens, and so many others who are no threat to this country and are not criminals are caught up in these mass deportations.

For example, just this weekend, Trump officials stated that the raids they conducted were targeted toward criminals. Yet in Chicago, a husband and father with no criminal history was reportedly arrested by ICE on his way to work. His family was only made aware that something was wrong when he didn't show up at his shift. In New Jersey, ICE agents detained and questioned a military veteran and U.S. citizens simply because they weren't carrying on their person a passport or a license. These actions, like many of the President's decisions on immigration, have nothing to do with protecting public safety or national security.

President Trump has also suspended the refugee admissions program. Why is that important? Well, because when American soldiers go overseas to represent this country and to risk their lives for the country that they have sworn allegiance to—the United States—many times they rely on local citizens in those countries to help them. That is what happened in Afghanistan. Men and women risked their lives to step forward and to help our troops, many times to risk their own lives in the service of their country and doing it for the United States. They included families of Afghans who are now facing persecution for that political decision to help the United States.

We have offered to them, after going through extensive background checks, an opportunity to come to the United States. The same thing is true with Uighurs fleeing Chinese persecution and the Rohingya fleeing Myanmar's military dictatorship. Many of these refugees literally wait for decades to come to the United States lawfully—lawfully—and all must undergo extreme rigorous vetting before coming.

But the President canceled flights for approximately 10,000 refugees who had been approved to travel to the United States after waiting for long periods of time and going through extensive background checks. This includes nearly 1,600 Afghans who had been cleared for resettlement. Many of them risked their lives for the United States' cause, and we were giving them safety and security. Those flights have been canceled by President Trump. Many of them fought alongside U.S. troops. Others are family members of U.S. servicemembers. Flights were even stopped for Afghan children who were reuniting with their families in the United States.

Stopping these flights makes America less safe. It is needlessly cruel to American families waiting to be reunited with loved ones. It also sends a message to allies supporting our troops around the world that we will not protect them if they face retribution for helping the United States.

Additionally, President Trump is attempting to deny birthright citizenship to children born in the United States if their parents are not citizens or lawful permanent residents. This is a clear violation of the Constitution.

I want to read the first sentence of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. It is explicit. It reads:

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.

One sentence is clear as can be.

This order has been blocked. The order by President Trump has been blocked by a judge who was appointed by President Ronald Reagan. Listen to what he said about the lawsuit challenging birthright citizenship and the 14th Amendment's explicit language:

I've been on the bench for over four decades. I can't remember another case where the question presented is as clear as this one. This is a blatantly unconstitutional order.

I was disappointed to see White House border czar Tom Homan come to Chicago recently with ICE agents, arresting immigrants and asking them questions even after they had requested to speak to an attorney. Do you know who accompanied him on this raid? Dr. Phil. Dr. Phil—a TV doctor—is not an M.D., but for some reason, he was invited to go along with this raid.

Now, do you remember the many speeches given by President Trump, during the campaign, about dedicating himself to ferreting out the young people who were murderers and rapists and drug dealers and the mentally ill who were dangerous to the United States? I took him at his word that that is what he set out to do.

Apparently, Dr. Phil is an accomplice in this effort. He, obviously, has been invited to go along for the ride—on a raid involving people who would be dangerous to the United States? If this mass deportation is truly focused on dangerous individuals—murderers, rapists, drug dealers, and the mentally ill—Dr. Phil has as much business being on these raids as he does performing surgery. Why is he there? In fact, he could complicate the situation. We are talking about a legal process and the possibility of criminal prosecutions following. So to have this television character come along for the ride is dangerous and makes no sense.

I am concerned that these sweeping Executive actions will leave those arrested by ICE, including those with lawful status and U.S. citizenship, with little opportunity to even state their cases and show that they belong in this country.

Let's be clear: 90 percent of undocumented immigrants have no criminal

convictions—90 percent. Immigrants make up more than 40 percent of home healthcare aides and children's assistance, daycare. An outsized percentage of them and the agricultural workforce are undocumented. Immigrants are a key part of America's success story.

I do not want a single dangerous person to remain in this country or to be allowed to seek permanent residence here—period—but there are many who have been here for periods of time, who have paid their taxes, who have followed the law, and should be part of America's future.

Our Nation needs immigrants in many important places. Come to my State of Illinois and ask the agricultural organizations. They will tell you flat out that, without the assistance from migrants and immigrants, they just can't do their work. Whether they are running dairy operations, orchards, or regular agricultural pursuits, they need a helping hand, and many times, the only ones who will come to help them are those who come from other countries.

They put food on our tables, they care for our children, and they help care for our parents and grandparents. Many of these people are Dreamers who grew up alongside our kids and have gone on to serve our Nation as members of the armed services, as doctors, and as first responders. They believe in the American dream, and I will continue to fight to protect them for as long as I serve in the U.S. Senate.

There is no room in this country for dangerous people, but there is plenty of room for those who aspire to make this a better nation. We should be fair in making a distinction and in realizing the difference is significant.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, last night, incredibly and lawlessly, the Trump administration announced the virtual halt to all forms of Federal financial assistance. In an instant—one instant, one blink of the eye—in the dark of night, Donald Trump has shut off billions—perhaps trillions—of dollars that support small businesses, that support families, that support police officers and firefighters, that support hospitals and rural hospitals in particular, that support our localities, our States and cities, our schools, and so much more.

Why? Why did Donald Trump do this? Simple: to fund tax cuts for the ultrawealthy. This decision is lawless, destructive, cruel. The President must

rescind this order at once, and Congress must act if he refuses.

Make no mistake, this is Project 2025—Project 2025—by another name, and the danger of having someone like Russell Vought, the chief cook and bottle washer of 2025, in charge of OMB is frightening—frightening—to just about every American family in terms of what it could do to them.

When Project 2025 came out, it was so ridiculed that Donald Trump had to say: Oh, I don't know much about it. And now he is putting one of the main authors of Project 2025 in the place where he can implement all of these horrible, discredited, unpopular findings.

That is where they are headed, folk. That is where they are going.

Again, why are they doing it? So they can pay for tax cuts for the ultrarich by making these cuts on average American families.

This morning, I think every Senator's phone has been ringing off the hook—certainly, mine has—with non-stop calls from hospitals and police departments, volunteer firefighters, food pantries, drug treatment centers, on and on and on. If someone is going to say they are getting no calls, then they are just out of touch because it affects almost everything.

People are worried. People are scrambling. People are in panic mode, trying to figure out how this order is going to affect them. Hospitals with people on life support, food pantries that feed the hungry, police departments that patrol our streets—every one of them is worried because so many of them get Federal aid. If Federal funding is shut off, so many groups and institutions will be worried. Can they pay the rent? Can they pay their staffs? Can they keep their operations running?

Virtually, any organization—and there are millions—that depends on Federal grant money to run its day-to-day operations is now in danger. Non-profits that help disabled veterans are now in danger thanks to Donald Trump. Funding that supports our Nation's mass transit, from one end of the country to another, is now in danger thanks to Donald Trump. Hospitals, particularly rural hospitals and community health centers, are now in danger thanks to Donald Trump. Meals on Wheels, in danger thanks to Donald Trump. Even smaller programs—and I am very proud of something I passed called the Nonprofit Security Grant Program, which protects synagogues and religious institutions from anti-Semitic attacks. We just had one in our neighborhood on Sunday. They are now in danger thanks to Donald Trump. Senior centers, law enforcement, firefighters, water districts, food pantries—all in danger because of Donald Trump.

Again, their master plan: to hurt average folks from one end of the country to the another—in red States, in blue States, in suburbs, in cities, in rural

areas. To take money out of their hides—all to pay for tax cuts for the ultrawealthy—is now becoming clear. It is now becoming clear.

The blast radius of this terrible decision is virtually limitless. It is American families who are going to suffer most.

American families should make no mistake: The money being stolen from them will be spent—just not on them. It is going to be spent on tax cuts for the ultrawealthy and the biggest corporations.

President Trump must reverse this course immediately. The Budget Committee should slow down its hearings with Mr. Vought until it fully comes out what they all intend to do.

The funding President Trump is halting is not optional. Congress has approved these funds, and they are law. The President does not, no matter what he thinks, have the authority to ignore the law and ignore Congress.

Let me be clear. This is not an isolated act, unfortunately. It comes a week after Trump pardoned violent criminals who sought to overturn our election and days after Trump fired independent watchdogs across the government in a naked attempt to shroud his actions from the American people.

I can assure every American that Democrats will pursue all available options, legal and otherwise, to halt this assault. I have talked to the attorney general of New York State, Tish James. She and her association—I believe she is the head of the State association, the State attorneys general association—are going to use all of their legal power to stop this illegal act.

I implore my Republican colleagues, who know in their hearts and their minds that this is a reckless and unconstitutional action, to speak up, to join us as Americans in defense of the law, but most of all, to protect our communities and to protect the American people from this awful announcement.

DEEPSEEK

Mr. President, on DeepSeek, when the Soviet Union launched Sputnik 1 into orbit in 1957, it ignited a space race between the two world's greatest powers, and America won.

Yesterday, we faced a similar inflection point between China and the United States. This time, the prize is not like Sputnik landing on the Moon; the prize is something so important—artificial intelligence.

The recent news from DeepSeek is being called AI's Sputnik moment for America. DeepSeek unleashed something few could have imagined—an AI chatbot that runs more efficiently and was developed at much lower cost than U.S. AI chatbots. Within hours of DeepSeek's announcement, their AI chatbot was the No. 1 downloaded free app on Apple's app store.

DeepSeek's announcement makes it all but official: China is catching up with the United States on AI. It is a wake-up call that Congress desperately