

This bill that is inspiring such hysteria in Democrats would cut just one-tenth of 1 percent, or one one-thousandth of the Federal budget.

Now, back in the day, Democrat President Bill Clinton signed into law a rescissions package that was 10 times larger as a percentage of total government spending. Yet today's Democrats can't bring themselves to even contemplate cutting just one one-thousandth of the Federal budget.

And let's remember what kind of cuts that we are talking about here. We are not talking about making difficult decisions about essential Federal programs or gutting foreign aid. We are talking about modest cuts to funding that has been used for things like promoting vegan food in Zambia, funding a pride parade in Lesotho, teaching children how to make environmentally friendly "reproductive health" decisions, making aid more considerate of "sexual orientation and gender identity," and funding a "One Health Workforce," curriculum, which includes material on "environmental racism" and the importance of DEI. The list goes on and on.

Thankfully, the Trump administration has stopped these ridiculous wastes of taxpayer money. Now, it is time for those of us in Congress to do our part and make sure that the budget reflects these commonsense moves, something that every Member of this body should be able to agree on.

The United States is facing serious budget issues. We saw an incredible growth in spending under the Biden administration, which took what should have been a temporary elevation in spending under COVID and essentially made that the government's new baseline—permanent spending.

In 2024, Federal spending was a staggering 54 percent higher than 2019. My Democratic colleagues may not want to acknowledge it, but we have a serious spending problem in this country. And the very least we can do, in response, is to target some of the egregious misuses of taxpayer dollars that we are addressing today in this bill.

In his recent "Dear Colleague" letter, the Democrat leader claimed—in defiance of abundant evidence to the contrary—that Democrats "support ridding our federal [government] of waste, fraud, and abuse."

Well, here is a chance for the Democrat leader and his caucus to put their money where their mouth is. If they really support eliminating waste, fraud, and abuse, they can join Republicans and pass this legislation.

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. 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.

INFLATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Now, Mr. President, Americans woke up this morning to a troubling headline: "U.S. Inflation Accelerated in June as Trump's Tariffs Pushed Up Prices." That is what the New York Times said this morning.

We have said from the start that Donald Trump's tariffs are a national sales tax on working- and middle-class families, and now these tariffs are causing inflation to rise, as many of us feared. And there is too large a chance that this tariff increase is just the beginning as increased chaos on tariffs rise.

Tariffs raise the price of groceries, add thousands of dollars in additional cost to the average household, and Trump's chaotic approach does nothing—nothing—to make our economy stronger.

Even worse, real wages are down for June as Americans pay more for groceries, electricity, healthcare costs, and that is before the "Big Ugly Betrayal," which will steal people's Medicaid, kill jobs, and jack up people's electricity bills.

Remember what Donald Trump said on the campaign trail? He said that if elected, he would bring costs down on day one. It is now the middle of July, and inflation is going up. That is the definition of a broken promise.

RESCISSIONS

Mr. President, now on cuts, fresh off of handing billionaires their largest tax break in modern history and fresh off of passing the most devastating cuts to healthcare and good-paying jobs ever, Republicans want to do it again. While Republicans roll out the red carpet for billionaires and special interests, they want to cut funding to local news and cut funding for critical foreign aid that keeps China and Russia at bay.

Americans rely on public broadcasting for weather alerts, and these cuts couldn't come at a worse time. The disaster in Texas reminds us that accurate and speedy forecasts are vital to protecting our country and the lives of Americans, and public broadcast is vital and often the only way to get the word out, particularly in rural America. So why the hell is the administration so obsessed with cutting these life-saving services when they are critical for keeping people safe, when we saw, when we didn't have those services working full steam ahead, how many people's lives are endangered and lost in Texas and around the country.

Public broadcasting does more. It is crucial for Americans to receive the local news for keeping track of city hall, for understanding what is happening in their local school boards, for updates on public events, festivals, educational programming, when we know that traditional television is having a lot of trouble.

To be clear, it is not just local news and public radio stations at risk; this package endangers national security,

our own national security. American aid is vital for preventing pandemics and diseases throughout the world. Foreign aid helps farmers. It helps American researchers. It helps U.S. businesses. More importantly, American aid is vital to holding the line against the Chinese Communist Party and Vladimir Putin. If Republicans eviscerate foreign aid, our adversaries will celebrate America's retreat and move to fill the vacuum.

The worst part is that these rescissions cuts are only the beginning. This package, as bad as it is, is a piece of a larger puzzle for Republicans. Their goal is to use rescissions, impoundment, and pocket rescissions to eradicate any bit of bipartisanship out of appropriations and will pave the way for deeper and even more serious spending cuts on things like healthcare, food assistance, energy, and so many other areas. In fact, many in the Freedom Caucus claim that Donald Trump and Republican leaders promised these deeper cuts by these means in exchange for their vote on the "Big Ugly Bill."

We know that Donald Trump and Russell Vought want to send another rescissions package later this summer. Are they going to make more cuts to Medicaid? Are they going to make more cuts to education or nutrition services or aid for veterans?

Republicans didn't bat an eye when adding \$4 trillion to the debt to lower billionaires' taxes, but suddenly, when it comes to local news and rural radio stations, they suddenly balk. They say it is waste. That is disgusting.

FEMA

Mr. President, on FEMA, search and rescue efforts continue in Central Texas 11 days after the devastating July 4 flooding. We continue to pray—to pray—for every life lost. We pray for the families, and we honor the brave first responders who have been on the ground day after day after day.

But honoring those we lost demands accountability. It demands making sure this never happens again. The more we learn about what went wrong, the more one thing becomes painfully clear: Donald Trump, Secretary Noem, and the Department of Homeland Security have failed—failed—in their basic duty to protect Americans from natural disasters.

After spending months demonizing FEMA, after openly calling for it to be dismantled, after shedding thousands of staff and canceling billions in funding, Trump and Noem's disastrous policies have come back to haunt Americans battered by disasters.

This latest tragedy happened in Texas, but the problems go far beyond Texas. This is a nationwide FEMA failure, a systemic issue across the Agency that Donald Trump has made much, much worse. So today, I am calling on the Comptroller General of the GAO, the Government Accountability Office, to immediately investigate, one, how FEMA's funding cuts, staffing cuts, and policy changes contributed to the

failures in Texas, and two, to assess the risks their actions pose for future disaster response nationwide.

The facts are alarming. FEMA contracts stalled while survivors called for help. Vital staff positions sat vacant. Rescue and recovery efforts were bogged down by bureaucratic chokepoints. These aren't just breakdowns; they may constitute a dereliction of duty by those entrusted to protect the public in times of crisis.

The American people have a right to know: Did these reckless decisions cost lives? Are we now more vulnerable when the next storm, fire, or flood strikes, wherever it strikes? A comprehensive and urgent review is not just warranted, it is essential.

Americans do not support the administration making radical DOGE cuts to Agencies like FEMA. These cuts have devastating consequences in life-and-death situations like a natural disaster. Americans do not support chaos from the government when disasters strike. They do not support redtape that leaves families stranded and communities battered.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND GROK AI

Mr. President, now on DOD and Grok AI, just days after Elon Musk's AI model Grok glorified Hitler, pushed Nazi propaganda, and spouted anti-Semitism, Elon Musk's company was handed a \$200 million DOD contract to deploy Grok—to deploy Grok—in our national defense systems. Soon, the same AI model that called itself “MechaHitler” and recommended a second Holocaust will be used in the Pentagon to “address critical national security challenges.”

This Musk contract is not just wrong, it is not just offensive, it is dangerous. The Trump administration must explain how this happened, the parameters of the deal, and why they think our national security isn't worth meeting a higher standard.

NOMINATION OF MICHAEL G. WALTZ

Mr. President, on Mike Waltz, this morning, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is hearing testimony from Donald Trump's nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Mike Waltz. If that name sounds familiar, it is because the same Mike Waltz was fired as the National Security Advisor a few months ago after sharing military plans in a group chat with a journalist on Signal. Mr. Waltz was part of the crack team that grossly mismanaged national security during the opening months of the administration, from Signalgate, to Ukraine weapons and intelligence pauses, to outsourcing Air Force One to a foreign country.

He must directly answer for these debacles in front of the American people before assuming a critical role on the world's stage. With so much going on around the world, Mr. Waltz must acknowledge these failings and prove he is ready to collaborate with our partners and go toe to toe with our adversaries at the U.N.

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

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

RESCISSIONS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, it is astonishing, as I come to the floor, to listen to the Democrat minority leader. We just heard his comments about foreign aid keeping “Russia and China at bay.” If it were only the case.

The minority leader has a long and spirited history of wasting American taxpayer dollars. Now he wants to send taxpayer dollars overseas to pay for climate projects and vegan food programs. Apparently, that is what he means when he talks about foreign aid keeping Russia and China at bay. He forgot to mention that he wants to spend half a million dollars to put electric vehicles—electric buses—on the streets of Rwanda. He forgot to mention that he wants to spend \$6 million on net zero cities in Mexico. He forgot to mention he wants to continue to spend over \$100,000 for media training in Liberia.

Mr. President, I ask, how does that keep Russia and China at bay? He failed to mention that he wants to continue to spend \$3.3 million on civic engagement in Zimbabwe. He didn't say any of that because there is no good reason at all for that kind of wasteful Washington spending. None of that spending helps farmers or ranchers in my home State of Wyoming. None of this spending helps struggling families.

In November, Americans voted to end this wasteful Washington spending. Voters got it right. CHUCK SCHUMER gets it wrong. How many people went to the polls and told politicians to spend \$7.4 million of their hard-earned money on teaching foreign countries about environmental racism? No one.

Democrats love to hide behind fearmongering, and that is what the minority leader has done again today. Democrats never stand up and defend their spending on the merits. I don't see Democrats coming to the floor and talking about those projects that they want to see continued because they know it doesn't hold up to the least amount of public scrutiny. The American people look at this, and for them, the issue is quite simple. Their taxpayer dollars are being wasted and have been wasted for a long time. The Democrats in this body want to continue wasting them.

We still have families digging out from the worst inflation in 40 years. We have cities overwhelmed by illegal immigrants and the crime that they are bringing to these communities. People deserve to have their taxpayer dollars spent on issues that are focused on their priorities. President Trump sent Congress a proposal to rein in some of the worst wasteful spending.

How do the Democrats respond? Well, they are threatening to shut down the Government of the United States. Democrats are fighting tooth and nail to protect programs most Americans didn't know even existed and they wouldn't support if they knew they existed. That is what we are doing today: exposing some of these terrible programs and wasteful Washington spending.

It is indefensible what has happened with spending in the past with the last administration. If we have another Schumer shutdown—we have had one before—if we have another one, the American people will pay a heavy price. Seniors who rely on Social Security, military families living paycheck to paycheck, and border patrol agents will be forced to work without pay. Why? So the Democrats can continue to send Americans' taxpayer dollars to foreign countries for very questionable projects.

I heard the minority leader lecture us before about bipartisanship and regular order. Well, look at what has happened. When Senator SCHUMER was the majority leader of the U.S. Senate a year ago, the Senate Appropriations Committee—the committee itself—passed 11 of 12 appropriations bills. They did it by December of 2024, 1 year ago from now.

Many of those bills that came through the committee received unanimous support by the Republicans and the Democrats on the committee. So what happened? Well, Republicans supported getting all these bills done on time through the committee on a bipartisan basis. What did Senator SCHUMER do with these bills? He was the majority leader. He had control of the agenda of the floor of the U.S. Senate. He sat on them for 225 days. He didn't bring them to the floor of the U.S. Senate. Oh, no. He refused to bring a single bill to the floor of the U.S. Senate for a single vote not because he couldn't, because he refused to.

The American voters revolted, changed parties of the President, Senate, and the House. Now he wants to be the one to blame Republicans for gridlock. This is the height of hypocrisy.

That is what we are dealing with, Mr. President. I am all for regular order. That is why I want to commend Senator SUSAN COLLINS for her leadership now as the Republican chairman of the Appropriations Committee in the Senate. She is working in good faith. She is committed to getting the job done.

This debate is about more than dollars and cents. It is about priorities and about how we spend American taxpayer dollars. Americans didn't vote to continue the Green New Deal or even try to force it on the rest of the world. The American people voted to fix what is broken here at home. Republicans have our priorities straight. Republicans are focusing on making our Nation safer and more prosperous. Republicans are getting this country back on track.