

Sheehy
Sullivan
Thune

Tillis
Tuberville
Wicker

Young

[Rollcall Vote No. 389 Ex.]

YEAS—50

NAYS—46

Alsobrooks Hirono Sanders
Baldwin Kaine Schatz
Bennet Kelly Schiff
Blumenthal Kim Schumer
Blunt Rochester King Shaheen
Booker Klobuchar Slotkin
Cantwell Luján Smith
Coons Markey Van Hollen
Cortez Masto Merkley Warner
Durbin Murphy Warnock
Fetterman Murray Warren
Gallego Ossoff Welch
Gillibrand Padilla Whitehouse
Hassan Peters Wyden
Heinrich Reed
Hickenlooper Rosen

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

NAYS—46

NOT VOTING—2

Duckworth McCormick

Alsobrooks Hirono Sanders
Baldwin Kaine Schatz
Bennet Kelly Schiff
Blumenthal Kim Schumer
Blunt Rochester King Shaheen
Booker Klobuchar Slotkin
Cantwell Luján Smith
Coons Markey Van Hollen
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Durbin Murphy Warnock
Fetterman Murray Warren
Gallego Ossoff Welch
Gillibrand Padilla Whitehouse
Hassan Peters Wyden
Heinrich Reed
Hickenlooper Rosen

NOT VOTING—4

Crapo McCormick Murkowski
Duckworth

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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 Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 184, Joseph Edlow, of Maryland, to be Director of United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security.

John Thune, Eric Schmitt, John R. Curtis, Tim Scott of South Carolina, Bill Cassidy, Jon A. Husted, Steve Daines, Marsha Blackburn, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Ron Johnson, John Barrasso, Tim Sheehy, Mike Rounds, Bernie Moreno, Pete Ricketts, Jim Justice, Bill Hagerty.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Joseph Edlow, of Maryland, to be Director of United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. MCCORMICK), and the Senator from Arkansas (Ms. MURKOWSKI).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 50, nays 46, as follows:

It is called a rescission bill or a rescission package.

President Trump has sent us a rescission bill, or a rescission package, asking the U.S. Congress to cut the budget by roughly \$9 billion, and that is what we are going to start voting on today.

Now, \$9 billion is a lot of money—except when you compare it to the overall Federal budget. Nine billion dollars, despite the fact that it is a bucketload of money, is one-tenth of 1 percent of the Federal budget—one-tenth of 1 percent of the Federal budget. It gives you an idea of how big the Federal budget is.

I think most people—most adults, anyway—understand that in life, what you say doesn't really matter. What you say doesn't really matter. It is what you do that demonstrates what you believe. That is certainly true in politics, and that is certainly true in Washington, DC. Ignore what anybody in Washington, DC, says. Ignore it. If you want to understand their behavior, look at their behavior. In Washington, DC, as in life, what you do is what you believe, not what you say. What you do is what you believe, and everything else is just cottage cheese.

Now, President Trump—whether you voted for him or not and whether you like him or not—ran on a platform of reducing the size of government, and the people elected him. Since day one, the President, if you have paid attention to the news, has been working very hard to reduce government spending, and he has reduced a lot. He started out with the DOGE program, with Mr. Elon Musk. Mr. Musk, of course, has left, but the quest to reduce government spending—wasteful government spending, which I call spending porn—continues.

Every Republican in the U.S. Senate has voiced approval of what the President has done. Every Republican—every one of my colleagues, myself included—has said to the President: Attaboy, Mr. President. Go get 'em. Keep issuing those Executive orders. Reduce the spending. We are spending too much money. We have got a \$37 trillion debt. Keep going, Mr. President.

The President has, but he has been doing it through Executive order. There is only so much you can do through Executive order. An Executive order, issued by a President, expires when the President is no longer in office. The only way to permanently reduce spending is to have Congress act, and that is what the President is asking us to do in this rescission bill.

What you do is what you believe, and everything else is just cottage cheese.

The rescission package that the President has sent over—we are going to start considering it today. And after listening in some cases for years but certainly for the last 100-plus days since President Trump has been in office—after listening to my Republican colleagues talk about the importance of reducing spending, it is gut check

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BANKS). On this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 46.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Joseph Edlow, of Maryland, to be Director of United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

RESCISSIONS

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, also, with me today is Mr. Will McCarthy, one of my colleagues from my Senate office.

Today, we are going to start talking about and voting on the rescission package, and I want to talk about that for a few minutes.

As the Presiding Officer knows, under our Constitution, Congress passes a budget. We send that budget to the President of the United States, whoever that might be, and the President executes, or implements, our budget.

On occasion, under Federal statute, the President has the authority, after we have passed a budget in Congress, to look at the budget and say: You know, I don't need all this money to accomplish the goals that Congress established and instructed me to accomplish.

So the President can contact us and say: Congress, I would like you to rescind some of the spending in the budget that you sent to me.

time. It is gut check time because what you do is what you believe, not what you say, and now my colleagues and I have an opportunity to really support the President.

Now, I don't know if this bill is going to pass. I do not know if it is going to pass. I mean, I have heard a lot of wailing and the gnashing of teeth and whining and that civilization is going to melt if we cut one-tenth of 1 percent of the budget. That is coming from some of my Democratic colleagues, and they are entitled to their point of view, but I want to put this in context.

After all of us on my side of the aisle have told the world that we need to reduce spending, if we vote against this rescission package and refuse to reduce spending by one-tenth of 1 percent of the budget, we ought to hide our heads in a bag. We ought to hide our heads in a bag.

What kind of spending is the President asking us to reduce, to eliminate? That is important because not all government spending is wasteful, but a lot of it is. That is why I call it spending porn. I am going to read you some of the appropriations that the President is asking us to eliminate from the current budget, and you be the judge. Let the American people decide.

The President is asking us to eliminate \$5.1 million of taxpayer money in the American budget, the Federal budget, that is there to "strengthen the resilience of queer global movements."

The President is asking us to rescind \$6 million for media organizations and civic life for Palestinians.

The President, in light of our \$37 trillion budget deficit, is asking us to reduce spending—to reduce a program—in the amount of \$3.9 million for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex population in the Western Balkans.

The President is suggesting that we eliminate a program of \$1 million for voter ID programs in Haiti.

This is your money, folks.

The President is asking us to reduce the budget by \$3 million which is appropriated for "sexual reproductive health in Venezuela"; \$3 million for circumcision, vasectomies, and condoms in Zambia.

I didn't make this stuff up; it is in the budget.

There is \$3 million for "Sesame Street" in Iraq; \$833,000 for transgender people, sex workers, and their clients in Nepal; \$882,000 for social media mentorship in Serbia and Belarus; \$3.6 million for pastry cooking classes, cyber cafes, and dance focus groups for male prostitutes in Haiti.

How many Americans do you know think we should be spending their money to fund male prostitutes in Haiti? But there it is in our budget—bigger than Dallas—and the President is saying: Cut it out.

We have \$6.2 million for Venezuelan migrants in Colombia and \$500,000 to buy Rwanda electric buses.

I love Rwanda. If they want electric buses, they have got a budget.

There is \$300,000 for a pride parade in Lesotho; \$300,000 for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex advocacy in Uganda; \$500,000 for biodiversity in Peru.

I could keep going. I could go the rest of the day and night.

I know what you are thinking: How in God's name—on God's green Earth—did this spending porn get in the Federal Government's budget? Why would Congress put it there?

Well, I am going to tell you why: We didn't. When we pass a budget, we pass budgets based on programs or agendas or line items. We don't put in there that we would like to spend \$5.1 million on strengthening the resilience of queer global movements. We appropriate money by Agency or line item. For example, we might appropriate money for the Economic Support Fund or, if you look at our budget, you will see money appropriated for the United States Institute of Peace. If you look at our budget, you will see money that Congress has appropriated for migration and refugee assistance. Then this money goes to the bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy takes the money that we have appropriated, for example, to the Economic Support Fund, and they decide to give it to their friends—usually nongovernmental organizations—to fund these nonsensical items that I just spent a few minutes reading.

Congress didn't vote to spend \$3 million on sexual reproductive health in Venezuela; we voted for a program that the bureaucrats took and spent on sexual health, reproductive health, in Venezuela. That is not an excuse, but I get that question all the time: Why did Congress vote to do this? We didn't. The bureaucracy did. It is a giant, rogue beast.

The point is, Trump caught it, and his people caught it, and the President is saying: Get rid of it.

With all of these programs, this spending porn, we would be better off taking this money and spending it on scratch tickets and blackjack. We would be better off taking all of this money that I just talked about and spending it on scratch tickets and blackjack. At least taxpayers might have a chance of getting a return. That is how out of control this is. But if you listen to some of my colleagues, they say: Oh, my God. If we cut \$9 billion—if we cut this spending porn—civilization is going to melt.

There is one other thing in our budget that the President is asking us to cut. He is asking us to cut a little over \$1 billion for what I will call public broadcasting. When I say "public broadcasting," I am talking about the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. I am talking about the Public Broadcasting Service, or PBS. I am talking about National Public Radio—NPR, as we call it.

We spend anywhere from \$500 to \$600 million a year on public broadcasting.

Why do we do that? Well, we started doing it years ago—at least 50 years ago—at a time when there were only three television stations and a few radio stations and newspapers. A lot of folks in rural areas didn't get the television stations. They didn't get any news at all. They might live far enough away from a major city that they didn't even have a daily newspaper.

So Congress said: You know, we want everybody to know what is going on in the world. We are going to start public broadcasting, and we are going to give them money every year, and they won't have to run ads because we are going to spend taxpayer money to give to these radio stations and television stations. That was 50 years ago.

Today, American people have access to all forms of media: streaming, cable TV, network TV, TikTok, Twitter, newspapers—those that are left. No one is in a news desert anymore. So why are we spending money on public broadcasting, \$500 million a year?

The other factor is, it is undeniable that Public Broadcasting has become political. Unless you have been a huge disappointment to your parents, you understand if you listen to Public Broadcasting, that it is representing today one political point of view.

The president of NPR—no one would mistake her for Walter Cronkite, I can assure you—her name is Kathleen Maher. This is her position. She is supposed to be delivering the news objectively, but this is what she has said:

Trump is a deranged racist sociopath.

The president and CEO of NPR thinks that America is "addicted to white supremacy." She has denounced the use of words "boy" and "girl." She says that is "erasing language for non-binary people." She contends that the United States was founded on the basis of "black plunder and white democracy." That is who is running the show over there.

She is entitled to her beliefs. This is America. You are entitled to believe what you want.

NPR and PBS and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting are entitled to publish and broadcast what they publish, but not on the taxpayers' dime. When we owe \$37 trillion—and we really owe that money—we have no business spending half a billion dollars a year, giving it to any form of media. We don't fund CNN. We don't fund FOX News. We don't fund newspapers. Why are we funding PBS and NPR and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting?

All the President is saying: I don't want you to do that anymore, Congress. I don't want you to fund any form of media. PBS, for example, is right to publish what they want, but Congress shouldn't give them taxpayer money to do it. Let them go raise money in the private sector.

The President is right. The President is absolutely right.

That is all this rescission bill is going to do. It is going to bring a little bit of sanity back to our appropriations process.

I am going to end on this note. I am going to end as I began: What you do is what you believe, and everything else is just cottage cheese.

I have been here 10 years. Every one of those 10 years, but especially in the last 100 days since President Trump was reelected and started talking about reducing spending, I have listened to all of my Republican colleagues encourage the President and say: That is great. We have got to reduce spending. We have got to reduce spending.

Well, here is your chance. Here is your chance. It is gut-check time. You either believe in reducing spending, or you don't. You either support spending porn, or you don't. We are going to find out who does and who doesn't here in about 3 or 4 hours.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, the Department of Homeland Security has an extremely important mission: to keep Americans safe. Under that mission, the Department is tasked with two critical jobs: border security and disaster response.

Our current Secretary of Homeland Security, Kristi Noem, has failed both. In her short tenure, Secretary Noem has overstepped, underperformed, and endangered the lives of countless Americans. I believe it is time for Secretary Noem to resign or for her to be fired.

Secretary Noem has undermined FEMA's work and, in so doing, endangered disaster victims. Just a few months ago, Secretary Noem said in a Cabinet meeting:

We are eliminating FEMA.

And she meant it. She meant it. We saw evidence of that in what happened not just in Texas but in North Carolina, New Mexico, California, Kentucky, Hawaii, and Vermont, where FEMA is absolutely crucial to helping people in communities and businesses recover from disaster.

We need FEMA. It is only the resources of the Federal Government that can surge resources into affected communities. We can't lose that function and that capacity. When you need safety from a flood, when you need to start the long road to recovery, you need the support of the Federal Government. No State, no community can do this alone.

I have seen from our experience in Vermont that FEMA, in fact, must be reformed. It must not be destroyed, as Secretary Noem has suggested.

In my view, we cannot have a leader in charge of FEMA who is committed to its destruction. We must have one who is energetically committed to its reform.

We have seen the result of Secretary Noem's indifference to FEMA as the catastrophe in Texas unfolded. As the waters rose along the Guadalupe River

in Hill Country, it was the people of Hill Country, as my colleague Representative CHIP ROY of Texas said, who responded heroically. They were saving lives; they were rescuing stranded children; they were comforting those who lost loved ones; and they provided material assistance and constant support.

As for FEMA, it didn't answer the phone. Secretary Noem had instituted a policy to micromanage FEMA to death. Under Secretary Noem's watch, FEMA instituted a new policy that required the Secretary's signature on any expense more than \$100,000, which, at the time of a major catastrophe, is a very small amount.

Secretary Noem had an "eyes wide open" awareness that this policy would mean it would take "a minimum of five days for front office review." In a disaster, you do not have 5 days.

Contractors for FEMA answered the vast majority of calls—about 3,000—from flood victims on July 5. But according to news reports, after contracts with those companies were allowed to lapse, that response rate fell to 36 percent on July 6 and then only 16 percent on July 7. When people needed someone to answer the phone, FEMA left 13,793 calls unanswered.

In the aftermath of disaster, people cannot wait for help. Many are homeless or living in very dangerous conditions. Search and rescue teams were waiting to be deployed. Disaster recovery centers were slow to open. Current and former FEMA employees have raised the alarm about how slow the Federal Government was to respond and support Texas. We can reform FEMA in very commonsense ways—and we must—but we cannot risk the lives of countless Americans under the mismanagement of a Secretary who has called for its elimination.

There is a second reason Secretary Noem must resign. She is failing our country on immigration. We have three fundamental issues on immigration: border security, the deportation of criminals, and the status of people who are here without legal status but are working, are paying taxes, in many cases have families, and have no criminal record.

I want to step back for a minute and acknowledge something that too many Democrats have been too slow to state: The United States does need a secure border, and President Trump has largely accomplished that.

In December 2023, there were 249,740 illegal crossing arrests between official ports of entry. That was an alltime high. Last month, that number dwindled to 6,070 illegal border crossing arrests. I give President Trump credit for that change.

The second issue is that undocumented immigrants who have committed serious crimes should be held accountable. They should be prosecuted, punished, and deported. There is widespread consensus on that.

Yet on the third issue, those who are here without committing crimes, who

in many cases were brought here as young people, we are seeing under the leadership of Secretary Noem that her response is an across-the-board embarkation on a massive and far-reaching deportation plan. There is no distinction in her policy among those who were brought here as children, who have families, who have jobs, who pay taxes, and who serve their communities.

But there is a big difference between deporting known criminals and rounding up immigrants—some of whom have status to be here, in fact, are here legally—from work sites, from schools, and from churches. This mass deportation policy is not about serving America and doing what our country needs to be strong and safe. It is, instead, about Secretary Noem accumulating the highest possible head count of deportees. It is hurting those folks, their families, and their communities, of course, but it is also hurting America and, particularly, rural America.

Our farmers depend on labor to milk their cows and to pick their crops. It is weakening our construction industry, where workplace raids are shutting down construction sites, including for low-income housing, which we so desperately need. It is decimating our healthcare workforce, in the hospitality industry in every State of the Union.

We need a Homeland Security Secretary who will help us develop a sensible policy for folks who are here without status but have no criminal record, who work, who have families, and are taxpayers.

There is no restraint. There is no nuance. There is no judgment being applied by the Department leader, the Secretary of Homeland Security, to develop a policy that makes sense, a policy that balances security and our economy, a policy that makes a distinction between law-abiding people who know no country other than the United States of America versus criminals who should not be allowed to remain in the country.

And finally, I have significant concerns about Secretary Noem's fiscal mismanagement and self-aggrandizement as DHS Secretary. This fiscal issue is particularly important in light of the billions of dollars that were allocated to that Department in the recent legislation.

Secretary Noem awarded as much as \$200 million for an ad campaign that she started, thanking President Trump for his immigration policy and warning migrants in the United States to leave, a campaign that was reportedly awarded to a Republican campaign consultant.

Secretary Noem spent \$21 million to transport 400 migrants to Guantanamo Bay—\$55,500 per person.

Do we really need to spend that much?

And several of those migrants were quickly transferred out of the facility.

There are also too many instances of Secretary Noem putting her personal