

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

## EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 91.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Arielle Roth, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information.

## CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant bill 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. 91, Arielle Roth, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information.

John Thune, Bernie Moreno, Lindsey Graham, Tommy Tuberville, Steve Daines, Marsha Blackburn, Joni Ernst, James Lankford, John Barrasso, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Shelley Moore Capito, John R. Curtis, Tim Scott of South Carolina, Roger Marshall, Mike Rounds, John Boozman, Pete Ricketts.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

## EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 114.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of John Hurley, of California, to be Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes.

## CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant bill 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. 114, John Hurley, of California, to be Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes.

John Thune, John R. Curtis, Tommy Tuberville, Bernie Moreno, Tim Sheehy, Marsha Blackburn, Joni Ernst, Chuck Grassley, Bill Hagerty, Cindy Hyde-Smith, James E. Risch, Pete Ricketts, Steve Daines, Lindsey Graham, Mike Rounds, Rick Scott of Florida, Jim Justice.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

## RESCISSIONS ACT OF 2025—MOTION TO DISCHARGE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session.

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

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, in accordance with title X of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, I have a discharge petition at the desk and move that the Senate Committees on Appropriations and Budget be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 4.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is pending.

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that time until 8 p.m., today, be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees and that, at 8 p.m., the Senate vote on the motion to discharge H.R. 4.

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

The Senator from Washington.

## RESCISSIONS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, 2 weeks ago, Republicans passed the most expensive bill in the history of the Senate. Why? To cut taxes for billionaires and, at the same time, to cut Medicaid and SNAP for needy families.

But now Republicans are pretending they are concerned about the debt—so concerned that they need to shut down local radio stations, so concerned that they are going to cut off “Sesame Street.” They are so concerned that they want to whack away at our global credibility and slash humanitarian aid in the process.

The idea that this is about balancing the debt is laughable. You could cut every dollar ever spent on the Corporation for Public Broadcasting since it was created and it would not cover the cost of the bill that the Republicans just jammed through. You could cut every dollar we have spent on foreign aid since World War II and that total would still fall short compared to the cost of the Republican tax cuts. Or how about this? If Republicans cut the amount in this rescissions bill every single day for a year, it still would not equal their tax cuts to help rich donors.

So I hope I have made the point. Let's stop pretending this move is about the debt, and let's stop pretending there is no alternative to passing a partisan rescissions package that cuts bipartisan funding, because I have declared, over and over, there is an alternative, which is to do what we always do and discuss rescissions as part of our annual funding bills instead of doing Trump's bidding.

Let's talk about what is at stake here, starting with the damage that these cuts would do to our communities by cutting rural areas off from local news and emergency alerts and ending high-quality kids' programming. If Republicans pass this package they are offering, they are going to slash funding for over 1,500 local news stations nationwide. These are stations that provide an enormous community service, especially in rural areas and in our Tribal communities. They cover stories that matter to families but that often get overlooked by national news. These stations and this funding reach 98 percent of all Americans, and let's not forget they also deliver local emergency alerts. Some of these local radio stations are a genuine lifeline for communities when disaster strikes.

Who among us thinks our communities should have less warning when there is an emergency?—because that is what voting for this package means.

It also means cutting off funding for high-quality kids' programming. There is a reason shows like “Sesame Street” are beloved by kids and parents. It is not just entertaining, it gets our kids thinking; it teaches them about math and spelling and caring and kindness. If Republicans let shows like this get canceled, they are going to open up the floodgates to a wave of what I call brain-rot TV that is engineered to keep our kids watching.

To my colleagues who think they have short-term temporary fixes to reduce cuts to one or two public radio stations or television stations in their States, that will not solve the problem.

And what do you say to those 120 rural stations that will lose 25 percent or more of their funding? What do you say to the dozens of rural stations that will shut down because of this bill and cut off local news, educational programming, and lifesaving services to the rural communities that we serve?

Let's not forget: The other cuts in this bill would seriously undercut our credibility on the world stage.

I thought American leadership was worth investing in; and when we voted for those funds, so did Republicans. Did Republicans forget why we thought that was important when we voted for them? Did Republicans forget that outbreaks spread if we don't help stop them? Did they forget that humanitarian assistance doesn't just prevent death, but it prevents chaos and conflict and keeps our American troops out of harm's way? Did they forget that these investments bring business to our American companies, and they

help feed the world or that building alliances and playing a leading role at international organizations allows us to advance our interests and counter our adversaries?

Set aside the global strategy for a moment. We should not be voting to let children starve or die from preventable diseases. We shouldn't be voting to go back on our word to the world. Saving a couple of pennies is not worth losing our credibility or causing millions of deaths across the globe. It is not even close.

If Republicans really care about the debt, they can start by revisiting the \$4 trillion in tax breaks they just showered on billionaires.

There is a lot more to say about how damaging these cuts would be for our country, but you don't have to take my word for it because even several of my Republican colleagues have said it themselves: They don't like this package. They are already trying to dial it back the tiniest bit, but I do know they have concerns.

Here is a tip: If you don't like it, don't vote for it. Think about who you take orders from—President Trump, Russ Vought, or your own constituents and your own communities?

And let's be honest. For all of his bluster, President Trump will forget about this in a week. He doesn't care about rescissions. He probably doesn't even know what it means.

If you don't like this package but you think you should do more targeted rescissions, do you know what? We can discuss that in a bipartisan way, completely separate from this partisan package.

I have been clear, and I will say it again right now: I stand ready to discuss rescissions as part of the bipartisan spending bills just as we have always done. That is the right way to go about this. How many times have Republicans called for regular order? Well, at no point in our country's history—at no point—have partisan rescissions been regular order. Anytime we have done this in the past, it has been bipartisan. Republicans should join us to make sure this does not become a bad, new first and to ensure that our time on the floor is spent considering important legislation, including our funding bills, rather than one rescissions request after another.

We are working right now to advance fiscal year 2026 bills—right now, at this very moment—and, hopefully, in a bipartisan way. We passed the first two out of committee last week. I want us to continue that work, but I really worry the passage of these bills is going to complicate the road ahead even more because, if Republicans decide it is fine to undo the last bipartisan spending deal with Trump's partisan cuts, then getting these bills across the finish line is going to get really hard. If they keep this kind of thing up, one of these days, Republicans are going to find they have broken the process.

Let me spell out what that looks like, because I think there is a misconception here that wrongly convinces some Members: It is OK; this is the straw that won't break the camel's back.

The reality is that bipartisanship doesn't end with any one line being crossed. It erodes. It breaks down bit by bit until the day there is nothing left.

Don't get me wrong. The negotiating table is always there. And in my experience, there are usually a few Members willing to stick it out and work as hard as they can to get a result.

But here is the thing. The Senate doesn't work off of a few Members. It works off of consensus building and bipartisanship. And the more bridges you burn, the fewer paths you leave to get things done. You can't just keep pushing people away and breaking that basic trust that keeps this place working. Not to mention, if Republicans pass this package of cuts, Russ Vought has made it abundantly clear he will send more. If Republicans pass this package now, we are going to be back here in a month debating whether to rip away funding for, say, after-school programs.

Instead of spending our time doing the hard work and passing laws, instead of considering the bipartisan spending bills we are working on right now, is this floor just going to be drowned in package after package of partisan cuts; fighting over how much of the last deal we are now going to unravel; fighting over whose projects get canceled, whose communities get robbed. I hope not.

I am going to end now with something I talked about during our committee hearing that we held on this package.

When I first came to this Congress, one of the hot-button issues was the line-item veto. President Clinton of my party was asking to have it. Chairman Byrd of my party was organizing against it with Republicans.

I was asked should a Democratic Senate help a Democratic President rip up the bills that we all worked together to pass. I said no. I said no, that is not how this should work. I came here to help my State and my constituents, not to weaken or surrender those responsibilities to any President.

That is as true for me today as it was then.

If my colleagues agree, which I believe many of them do, then the course we have to take here is clear. We need to reject this package outright.

That doesn't mean we can't have a bipartisan conversation about the rescissions as we now write our funding bills. That is the way that we need to do that. That is the way it has always been done. But we have to reject this new precedent of partisan, stand-alone rescissions.

If this place is going to work, if we are going to work together to serve the folks we represent back home, we have

to make choices that help us move closer together and bring more people to the table, not choices that push us apart and chip away, bit by bit, at the trust that makes this place work. Otherwise, one day, we will find we have none of that trust left.

I urge my colleagues to protect that trust and join me in voting no.

I yield the floor.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from Hawaii.

**MR. SCHATZ.** Mr. President, Republicans don't actually have to do this. I understand, as well as anybody, wanting to go along with your party's President, especially in the early months. But being part of an independent and coequal branch has to mean something. Being part of the article I branch means something very specific, and it means that we are the legislature, and we control the purse strings.

Nowhere in the Constitution does it say that if the President wants something, you must do it.

What worries me the most about this rescissions package, if it passes, is that it is one thing for the President's signature accomplishment—signature policy priority—to be supported by Republicans in the legislature. I understand that. I understand the inevitable political momentum behind that. But this isn't that.

We have now gone 6 months without a single instance of Republicans and Democrats coming together and establishing that there are some limitations on this President's power.

If you remember the first Trump term, there were a couple of moments when the legislature actually stood up to the President, overrode a veto of his, rejected a rescissions package. They stood up for their prerogatives.

Do you know what happened next? Nothing. Why? Because that is actually how the system is supposed to work.

We are not a parliamentary system. We are not a monarchy, where the President says, by tweet—by tweet: If you don't adopt this exactly how it is written, you will not receive my political support. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

And that set us on a course toward passing this legislation, which I know a dozen—at least a dozen—Republicans hate, hate.

It reduces funding for Jordan. It reduces funding for Ukraine. It reduces funding for global health. It did reduce funding for PEPFAR. It continues to reduce funding for public television and public radio.

By the way, public radio is not just National Public Radio. If you are on a reservation, if you are in a very rural part of your State, it is often not just the only radio station but the only communications infrastructure that exists in a rural area. So it is the only platform for news; that is true. It is also the only emergency communications infrastructure because, still, many places across the United States lack internet.

So MIKE ROUNDS got his deal so that his Tribes will be taken care of. I am glad for him. But there are 49 other States where your emergency communications infrastructure is about to be defunded. Nobody likes that.

Some people are pissed off about NPR's coverage or PBS's coverage. Come on. You defund an Agency because you disagree with their editorial choices? Which country is this? Which country is this?

I want to tell you something a little technical, but I think it gives away the whole game.

So I am the top Democrat on the Foreign Ops Subcommittee. What does that mean? We do funding for USAID, the State Department, and a few other things. When we do the appropriations process, we get letters from every other Member. They are private letters. A lot of people sign them, and they say: Could you please give more money to whatever it is—maternal and child health, or malaria prevention or the PEPFAR Program, the initiative to prevent HIV-AIDS transmission. We get a bunch of letters saying: Please, plus-up this; please plus-up that—bipartisan letters.

And we are trying to write a bill that accommodates all these needs. A lot of people who are about to vote to cut all this stuff are, on the side, writing me a letter saying: Please, increase these accounts.

And why does this matter? This matters because nobody is voting—I shouldn't say "nobody." Many, many people are not voting their conscience tonight, and that is just a fact.

There is a characterization in poker: When you know you are beat and someone puts money in on the river, and you call anyway, it is called a crying call. You give away your money sort of crying.

This is a crying call. This is a "I know I am beat; I vote aye."

And here is the thing: We don't actually have to do this. President Trump's attention is famously divided. If something pops up next week, he will be on that thing next week. He did not wake up every morning thinking: I want to defund UNICEF; I want to defund PEPFAR.

His attention will be divided. And the moment the legislature stands up for itself, usually what he does is—he understands power—he says: OK, those guys were asserting themselves. They are a coequal branch of government, and I am going to have to move on from this.

Why do I know this? We literally did the same thing. There was a rescissions package, which nobody remembers. Why? Because we quietly—with Dick Shelby and others, appropriators all—said: No, we hold the purse strings here. We write the laws that determine appropriations. We are not going to do this thing on a bipartisan basis—enact a spending plan—and then come in on a partisan basis and say: You know, that wasn't actually the spending plan; that

was just the spending cap. And the administration is going to come in and do whatever it wants on a partisan basis.

So what happened? They rejected the rescissions package on the motion to discharge, which is happening in about an hour and 5 minutes.

Then, do you know what happened? Nothing—nothing politically, nothing substantively, except that we kept the appropriations process alive. We kept the filibuster alive. We kept bipartisanism alive.

And in this instance, it is not just about this institution. It is literally about people being kept alive.

For the last 5 months, because of the United States' actions, tens of thousands at least—maybe hundreds of thousands—of babies have gotten HIV-AIDS from their moms because we pulled funding, because Elon Musk had some bug in his ear about USAID, and one weekend he said, "We are going to feed this thing to the wood chipper," and because Democrats, too, and pundits decided: Do you know what? Foreign aid isn't so important to voters.

I don't care if it is important to voters, if it ranks No. 1, No. 2, or No. 3. We are the United States of America, and one of the reasons that we have such a strong reputation is because we do things that are right because they are right, not because our voters are going to reward us immediately, not because we get some geopolitical advantage but because we are the damn good guys. And right now, we are ratifying a bunch of decisions against our will.

We don't have to do this. Donald Trump will move on to the next thing tomorrow. And if it is not on this thing, which has low salience for the voters and is 18 months from the next election—if it is not on this—at what point are my Republican colleagues going to stand up for this branch of government?

I remain ready to work with anybody on anything. I have talked to Chairman GRAHAM about the possibility of literally enacting these rescissions, or at least a portion of them, in the State and Foreign Ops markup, and yet they choose this legislative violence.

We don't have to do this. We don't have to operate under the assumption that this man is uniquely so powerful. He is the most powerful President. He owns the legislature in a way that no President has ever owned the legislature, and we all act like we are just sort of observers, like clicking on the TV and seeing how our fantasy football team is doing this Sunday.

We have agency tonight to reestablish that we are the article I branch of government, and that means something.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

MR. KELLY. Mr. President, now is the time that we should be investing in the future of our country and helping American families get ahead, but what we have in front of us this week does

the opposite. It is a bad deal that puts America in retreat at home and abroad. It makes our country poorer and less safe.

When I reviewed what we are about to vote on, I thought about my granddaughter Sage. She is 4 years old, and, like a lot of kids her age, she watches one of the many educational programs that air on PBS. Her favorite is "Daniel Tiger," a show that teaches kids everything from treating others with kindness to brushing their teeth, with Daniel's friend Jodi Platypus. These are lessons every child should grow up learning no matter where they live or how much money their parents make.

But what is in front of us today is a proposal to totally decimate the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which supports local PBS and public radio stations. I don't get this. These are the stations that air children's educational programs like "Daniel Tiger" and "Sesame Street," which help kids learn how to count and how to read and how to spell.

In an era where cable is getting more expensive and monthly subscriptions just add up, free educational programming like this is so important. It is how parents in Arizona and all across the country give their children a head start regardless of their ZIP Code or their income.

If anyone thinks this is just about cartoons, then they haven't spent enough time in rural America. In Arizona, my office is hearing from rural and Tribal leaders about how essential public TV and radio are in their communities. These are areas where broadband is still limited and cell phone service can drop out for miles.

In those places, public radio is often the only daily and sometimes even weekly news source, and it is certainly the most reliable way to receive emergency alerts. During wildfire season, which is raging right now in Arizona, those alerts can mean the difference between safety and tragedy. Public radio also delivers severe weather warnings, road closures, and critical public health information.

These cuts will lead to rural public radio stations laying off staff, reducing programming, or even shutting down entirely. Rural public radio stations are twice as dependent on Federal funding as nonrural stations are.

There are dozens of stations that rely on the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for more than half of their funding. Three of them are in Arizona, and they are all on Tribal land—KNNB in Whiteriver, KGRH on the Navajo Nation, and KUYI on the Hopi Nation. Why on Earth would Washington take that away?

While this proposal rips investments out of rural America, it also makes us all less safe.

It is the right thing to do. It is also strategic. USAID and our international partners are often the first line of defense against pandemics, wars, and starvation. You can't put a price on

that good will and the stability that these programs create for America and the conflicts and humanitarian disasters and the refugee crises they prevent.

I saw that myself when I was a young midshipman at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy during my second year at sea. It was a voyage through the Red Sea, off the coast of Egypt, and I was carrying a load of grain on a 1,000-foot-long ship. These were taking crops grown by American farmers from the United States of America to feed starving children in North Africa.

Cutting this off doesn't just lead to starvation and disease and suffering, it also creates instability, a vacuum that gets filled by terrorist groups and warlords, a gap for China or Russia to take advantage of.

One way or another, we are going to end up having to pay for it, and tomorrow's price will be higher. In the meantime, America is weaker, and we are less safe.

This is not a serious plan for deficit reduction. What it really says is this: If you live in a rural area, your access to public safety information doesn't matter. If you are a child whose family can't afford streaming services or reliable internet, your education doesn't matter. If you are someone who wants a safer, more stable world, you are out of luck.

I don't accept that. Arizona doesn't accept that. We should be building a country where, no matter where you live, what you earn, or how connected your ZIP Code is, you can get the information and support you need to stay healthy and informed. All of us, Republicans and Democrats, should be able to work together on that.

I urge my colleagues to think about what is really at stake here, what is at stake for families, and what is at stake for our leadership in the world, and please vote no, because this isn't how we move forward, this is how we fall behind.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, what is the pending business before the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to discharge H.R. 4.

Mr. WICKER. What the Chair has just said is that we have—there is a rescission package which has been sent to us by the administration. It is in the committee now. The next vote would discharge the committee and bring that rescission package to the floor. At that point, if I am not mistaken, we would then have another vote to proceed to that bill; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. WICKER. I don't want to leave my colleagues in suspense. I intend to vote for the motion to discharge after much contemplation and to vote to then proceed to the bill, and I do so with reservation.

First of all, I applaud the administration for asking for rescission of \$9 billion in unnecessary spending. I have made the statement that I would vote for a bill that was twice that size and even larger. I think we can find that much waste. But this is an unusual procedure. It hasn't been done by the Senate and the House. It hasn't been successfully done by an administration since the George W. Bush administration in 1992.

Nine billion dollars is a tiny fraction of what we spend, no question about it—a fraction of a fraction, actually. But there is a big difference that has troubled me, and it is the reason I come to the floor tonight expressing concern in spite of the fact that I will vote in the affirmative on these two motions tonight.

When George W. Bush proposed rescissions back in 1992, he listed specific programs that would receive specific amounts of cuts, and it was a rather thick proposal. But Members on both sides of the aisle in both Houses had exact information about what programs would be targeted and where the cuts would be made and by what amount.

That is not present in the proposal before us tonight, and that troubles me because it concerns me as, perhaps, approaching a disregard for the constitutional responsibilities of the legislative branch under article I. Congress has the power of the purse; the President has the power to enforce.

In this situation, there is a specific amount stated that will be rescinded, and then, basically, we are given a number of areas where the cuts will come from, but this Congress will not be allowed to choose those specific cuts. They will be done by somebody in the Office of Management and Budget in the White House. And in this situation, it will amount to the House and Senate basically saying: We cede that decision voluntarily to the executive branch.

And so I have expressed concern about this. And in meetings that I have been in attendance with our team on this Republican side of the aisle, I am not the only one who has expressed those concerns. There are Members of my party who will vote no tonight—I think a relatively small number—and I don't fault them for voting no. There are also Members who are very concerned, as I am, about this process and who are requesting of the administration: If we do this again, please give us specific information about where the cuts will come. Let's not make a habit of this. Let's not consider this a precedent. But if you come back to us again, Mr. Director of the OMB, if you come back to us again from the executive branch, give us the specific amounts and the specific programs that will be cut. And that has been my concern.

Nevertheless, I choose to be mindful of those concerns, but to answer to a larger imperative at this moment, and that is to realize that we are in a budg-

et crisis and that we have an unsustainable national debt and the amount of this bill is a small step toward addressing that. And so, at this moment, I think that imperative outweighs my concerns about the lack of information that this Senate and our brothers and sisters in the House have about where the cuts will be made.

I hope in conversations with the executive branch today, I hope in conversations over lunch between the OMB Director and Members of the Republican Senate caucus, that the point has been made: Next time give us the specific information.

And so I come tonight to express to my colleagues the reason that I have been so concerned about this, the reason that I understand why some of my colleagues will choose to vote no.

But realizing that we are about something larger and, in this instance, I think the message that we send to our fellow countrymen, to our colleagues in the House, and, yes, to the executive branch, is that the need for the cut in \$9 billion overrides the specific objections that I have. And for that reason, I will vote yes.

I expect the first motion to pass, and then we will proceed on. And perhaps, for the information of our staff and our pages, we may be here late tomorrow night.

But I appreciate the opportunity to explain my concerns and my reason for overcoming those concerns in this instance.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. SCHMITT. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of President Trump's rescission package. In a time of extraordinary debt, this bill is a first step in a long but necessary fight to put our Nation's fiscal house in order.

But it is about much more than just that. This package isn't just about how much we spend but about what we spend it on. It is about whether or not we are still a sovereign nation of people in command of our own destiny. It is about whether elected representatives can act on behalf of the people they serve or whether or not they just yield to a vast bureaucratic apparatus of permanent Washington.

We cannot accept a system that forces us to fund our own decline. Let me begin with something simple: We are \$37 trillion in debt. We are borrowing money from our grandchildren to fund bloated bureaucracies and radical leftwing activists. While the actual American people are working long hours to afford groceries and gas, their government has been writing checks to leftwing propaganda outlets and spending billions overseas on countries that hate us. Enough is enough.

This rescissions package is our opportunity to drain the swamp, not just in theory but in practice. It claws back nearly \$10 billion in spending—9 billion—including billions for radical NGOs, hundreds of millions for foreign

interests, and, yes, the taxpayer funding that props up corrupt and ideologically captured institutions like NPR and PBS.

And let's talk about that for just a minute because no part of this debate has sparked more hysteria and more outrage from the left than defunding the so-called public broadcasting. Why? Because they know exactly what is at stake. NPR and PBS are not neutral media outlets. They are the closest thing we have ever had in this country to Pravda. They are the arms of the leftwing activist class, taxpayer-funded platforms for political propaganda masquerading as journalism.

Don't take my word for it; take it from Uri Berliner, a veteran NPR editor who recently blew the whistle on what is actually happening behind the scenes there. In a stunning expose, Berliner described how from COVID to Hunter Biden's laptop, to the Russia hoax, NPR simply refused to consider any facts or perspectives that didn't align with the progressive party line. Even asking questions about the company's editorial bias was "treated as evidence of disloyalty."

Berliner took a survey of the ideological makeup of NPR's editorial staff in Washington, DC. The final tally was 87 Democrats and 0 Republicans—0 Republicans, not a one.

Then there is the new CEO of NPR, Katherine Maher. Before she took the job, she spent years denouncing America, praising censorship, and advocating for the most extreme and grotesque forms of far-left politics. She described the First Amendment as the "number one challenge" to combating disinformation, called President Trump a "deranged racist sociopath" and celebrated when he was banned from Twitter saying, it was "satisfying to deplatform fascists."

Now she is running America's National Public Radio, funded, in part, by your hard-earned tax dollars. That is nothing short of obscene.

Why are Americans being forced to subsidize institutions that hate them? Why are truckdrivers in Missouri paying for Ivy League grads in DC to tell them they are bigots? Why are we, as conservatives, spending billions of dollars to leftwing radicals that want to run us out of the public square?

There is no good answer to these questions. The fact is, we shouldn't be. And President Trump's rescission package is a huge first step toward ensuring that we never do it again; that NPR and PBS are just the beginning.

This package also takes aim at the insanity of our foreign aid budget. We are sending billions—billions—to every interest under the Sun, except for that of our own country.

Here is a taste of what this package defunds: \$18 million for gender diversity in the Mexican street-lighting industry; \$2.4 million to make international disaster aid more considerate of sexual orientation and gender identity; \$2.2 million to reduce xenophobia

toward Venezuelan migrants; \$3 million for Iraqi "Sesame Street"; \$4 million for sedentary migrants in Colombia; \$6.2 million to address the needs of Venezuelan migrants in Colombia; \$33 million for the U.N. Population Fund, including funding for transgender tampons in Bangladesh, LGBTQ campaigns in Rio, and third-gender community centers in Southeast Asia.

And that is not even to mention the \$800 million that this package cuts from the Migration and Refugee Assistance Account, which funds the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, a program that has been at the center of the gigantic NGO industrial complex that has been driving the mass migration crisis in this country on taxpayer dime.

Americans never voted for any of this. They were never even asked. But the entire system is bankrolled by their money. Our own citizens are being pushed out of jobs, swamped by Third-World immigration, and told they are racist for complaining about it when people like Katherine Maher say something and criticize them.

We send billions overseas to promote transgenderism and DEI and spend billions here at home to help import millions of illegal immigrants and pay the salaries of people who hate us, all while our own people are told there is no money for safe streets, decent roads, or a secure border.

The people who run these programs see the Federal budget not as a means to serve the American people but as a piggybank for a global leftwing revolution. The administrative state in Washington, DC, is the beating heart of this revolution. It redistributes hundreds of billions of dollars a year from Middle America to a radical ecosystem of NGOs and activists working to undermine our civilization.

For too long, the Federal Government has been hijacked by people with no loyalty to the country they are supposed to serve. Today, we have a chance to change that.

This isn't just about saving money; it is about taking back control. Every single dollar we claw back from the NGOs and the foreign aid swamp is a dollar we take away from the people who are waging war on our country. It is a dollar we can use to secure our border, rebuild our Nation, and restore the promise of America for the next generation.

The left is alarmed by this bill. They should be.

Unlike generations of many who came before us who would talk a big game and then get to DC and do nothing, President Trump is actually serious about ending their taxpayer-dollar gravy train, and this rescissions package is a major part of delivering on that promise. This is just a first step, but it is a big one.

For a long time, Washington has only ever moved in one direction: More spending, more control, and more power for the bureaucrats. And as per-

manent Washington grows, the citizen shrinks.

This rescissions package reflects President Trump's promise that the American Government will, once again, serve the American people, not the other way around.

It is a time to remind the bureaucrats, the NGOs and the foreign lobbyists and their friends in the media that the American taxpayer does not exist to subsidize their ideological pet projects. We are not a tax farm for global leftism. We are not the world's piggy bank. We are a sovereign nation, and it is time we started acting like one once again.

The American people didn't send us here to protect the status quo. They sent us here because they know the status quo is broken. They sent us here to fight and deliver for them, and that is exactly what this bill does. I urge my colleagues to join me in voting yes on this package.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, just days after handing billionaires their largest tax break in modern history and fresh off passing the most devastating cuts to healthcare and jobs ever, Republicans want to keep this going. They want to gut funding for local news stations and radio; they want to reward communist China and Putin and eviscerate foreign aid—all to give tax breaks to billionaires. They say these cuts are necessary in the false guise of eliminating waste, but anyone can see that is not true. It is just to pay for tax cuts for billionaires.

Americans are done listening to Republican lectures about wasteful spending after they added \$4 trillion to the debt to cut taxes for billionaires.

For Republicans to turn around and slash local news and public radio in the name of fiscal responsibility is a vindictive swipe at rural America, where these stations are needed so badly. It will leave rural communities twisting in the wind.

The Republican credo seems to be, cut and cut and cut now, and ask questions later. Cut healthcare for 16 million Americans. Cut food assistance to hungry kids. Cut good-paying energy jobs. Let the CCP get ahead of us. Never mind the destruction these cuts will have. Never mind the trillions Republicans just added to the debt to finance their billionaire giveaways. Never mind the kids who will go hungry or the families that will lose insurance or the people who will get sick and die. It is all worth it, Republicans seem to think, so long as billionaires and special interests pay less in taxes.

Now, with this rescissions package, Republicans want to keep going. Cut local radio stations. Cut local TV stations. Cut national security funding. Cut funding for some of the most beloved programs in America. These cuts

are just a piece of the larger Republican puzzle, where they will use rescissions, impoundment, and pocket rescissions, and that will pave the way for even deeper and more serious spending cuts on things like healthcare, food assistance, energy, and so many other areas, and other democratic safeguards will no longer be around.

If you eliminate the Democrats from the process, there is no discussion, there is no argument, and there are no safeguards that can help the average American. It is just the billionaires running rampant, getting what they want.

If you want to understand the Republican playbook, take a look at how they attacked foreign aid. At the very beginning of this administration, Donald Trump and Elon Musk illegally shut down billions in foreign aid. When they were criticized for it, they hemmed, they hawed, and they lied about their actions. The courts had to step in.

Now that these programs have fiscal 2025 dollars, Republicans are trying to do it all over again, this time through a cynical rescissions package. They are passing this law to get the outcome they wanted in the first place: gutting U.S. foreign aid.

Let me be clear. This is not just about foreign aid, as important as it is, this is the playbook that Republicans will do across the board. They will do it with healthcare. They will do it with the Department of Education. They will do it with our schools, our veterans, our housing. They will do it to research dollars. They are slashing them.

I have heard of more instances of great research projects that could have saved lives that are now on hold and can never be brought back again because of the greed of billionaires and the obeisance of Republicans to go along. It is amazing—cutting medical research, where America has always led the world. But now we are going to give that lead to China with what the Republicans are doing.

They are already using impoundment. They are using rescissions. They are using pocket rescissions to poison the bipartisan appropriations process, to break the law to steal funds that Congress appropriated. They are doing it on a party-line vote. Worse, they are letting Donald Trump decide for himself which programs to defund. That puts everything at risk—healthcare, education, food assistance, public health. Everything—everything—becomes at risk. That is what will happen if a package like this is allowed to become law.

Returning to this week's bill, what do this week's cuts mean for families back home? Well, tens of millions of Americans rely on public broadcast for weather alerts, local news, keeping track of city hall, educational programs, and so much more. This affects most badly rural America, including Native communities.

These cuts couldn't come at a worse time. The floods in Texas remind us that speedy alerts and up-to-the-minute forecasts can mean the difference between life and death. For millions, public radio and local TV are sometimes the only way to stay up to date.

Why the hell is this administration so obsessed with gutting those funds that save lives? It is probably because of some whim of Donald Trump's. And he often governs by whim. But then it has disastrous consequences because Republicans just bow to those whims even though they are without factual basis. They don't look at the facts. They don't care about the facts. Donald Trump wants it; let's do it.

Donald Trump may not appreciate the vital role of public media, but people back home know how public broadcast is indispensable.

It is not just local TV stations and public radio that are in danger. These ill-conceived Republican cuts can threaten our national security. These cuts indiscriminately slash billions in critical aid that prevents the spread of disease, fosters economic development, and expands America's cultural impact on the world stage.

Believe me, when we fight, with foreign aid and programs, diseases in other countries, in Africa or Asia, it benefits us because those diseases—in this world where people fly from one place to the other all the time, it benefits us because it will prevent those diseases from coming here.

Removing PEPFAR from the list of cuts was good but nowhere near enough. We are not fooled by a small tweak to this package. These cuts will still leave America weaker and our adversaries more emboldened. After all, foreign aid isn't just about good will, it is about our security.

Cutting foreign aid will have terrible consequences for our security. It increases the exposure of Americans to global health risks, as I mentioned. The cuts harm funding that directly benefits U.S. farmers and U.S. researchers. It will damage U.S. companies' market access abroad. It will make communities around the world more susceptible to terrorist recruitment efforts. China and Russia, meanwhile, will look on with glee.

I thought Republicans cared about being strong on national security. I thought they understood the role that the United States' soft power has in keeping the world a safer place for our values. This bill gravely undermines Republican commitments to U.S. leadership around the world—something so many people have prized.

If Republicans slash more American aid, it will leave a dangerous vacuum that the Chinese Communist Party will continue to eagerly fill. It is a fact. It is happening already in Myanmar and Sub-Saharan Africa in the race for access to precious minerals. These are places where the CCP is taking advantage of America's absence. And it will

have terrible consequences in the long term for our safety, for our security.

These rescissions are only the beginning. We know that Donald Trump and Russell Vought want to send even more rescissions packages down the line, as soon as next month. Remember, Donald Trump and Republican leaders reportedly struck up a crooked bargain. If the hard-right Members of the House Freedom Caucus agreed to support the "Big Ugly Betrayal," Donald Trump would reward them with even deeper cuts to healthcare and other things the hard right despises.

Republicans will pursue these cuts by any means necessary—through rescissions, impoundment, pocket rescissions—even if that means taking a wrecking ball to the bipartisan appropriations process to pave the way for future cuts. It could pave the way for more cuts to Medicaid, to education, to nutrition, to Agencies like the VA and more.

All this translates to working people having to pay more out of pocket while billionaires pay less in taxes. When people's healthcare is taken away, when people's local services are taken away, it adds to a family's expenses. It makes life more expensive for people who live paycheck to paycheck. It makes it harder to see a doctor. It makes it harder to afford medications. It makes it more difficult to choose between providing for healthcare or providing for groceries.

Making things even worse, Donald Trump's tariffs coming in at the worst possible time is making inflation go up—jacking up grocery prices and eating away at family budgets. The tariffs have gone up more than people expected in June, but because so many of those who buy overseas front-loaded their purchases in the first and second quarters, it is very likely the tariffs will go up much more in the next quarter.

Republicans say they fight for the middle class. They say they fight for working people. Then they turn around and take investments away from middle America and rural America and make them pay—pay—more out of pocket. Billionaires, meanwhile, have never had it so good, thanks to Donald Trump and his Republican loyalists.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. LUMMIS). The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I know we are approaching the hour that was planned for the vote on this motion to discharge this rescissions package. I just want to take a couple of minutes. I am going to be voting to oppose discharging this package from committee.

It is not that I don't think that we should be doing more when it comes to the oversight of our budget. It is not that I don't think that we should be doing more when it comes to ensuring that we are working to get our levels of spending down, but I also think that we need to be doing more as legislators,

more as lawmakers, more as Senators when it comes to our own authorities, our constitutional authorities, when it comes to the power of the purse.

We do rescissions. We do rescissions in our annual budget bills, in our own appropriations bills—in fact, bills that we are working on right now as appropriators. We have got a series of mark-ups that are going to be coming up this week. We had some last week. We do this. We look to provisions that have been included in the budgets. We look to reprogram, and we look to rescind. We do that as legislators. There is a good reason, I think, that we haven't seen a successful rescissions package before the Senate in almost 33 years. It is because we have recognized that, hey, that is our role here. That is our role here when it comes to the power of the purse.

So I have several concerns, specific concerns, about this package.

First, it is unclear to me how the specific accounts that are targeted for the rescission are going to be impacted. Neither the administration nor others have been able to provide that very clear, very transparent explanation about the programs and the priorities that are going to be cut as a result of the measure. Some changes have been proposed to protect local health programs—that is great; that is important—but I think it is important that we have those details, including the ones that are going to be absolutely zeroed out.

So how do we determine the implications for lifesaving care, for vital resources for women and children abroad?

We have got big, broad categories, but I haven't been given the comfort, if you will, that we are not impacting maternal and child health; that we are not impacting HIV/AIDS; that we are not impacting nutrition programs and programs related to tuberculosis, malaria, polio, neglected tropical disease, pandemic prevention, family planning. I think that we are entitled to have that level of detail when these funds that we have authorized, that we have appropriated, are now being clawed back. I don't think that that is too much to ask.

When it comes to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, my colleagues know I have been a strong supporter, and I will continue to be a strong supporter. If you don't like what is going on within NPR and you think there is too much bias there, we can address that—we can address that—but you don't need to gut the entire Corporation for Public Broadcasting. The entity—the program—that provides for so much support, particularly for those in rural places, is not just your news. It is your tsunami alert; it is your landslide alert; it is your volcano alert; it is the weather to let you know it is safe to go out and get on the fishing grounds; it is your educational programming. I am going to continue to be an advocate for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

So I have got concerns about the contents of the package, yes. I have concerns about the details that we have not been able to fully receive. But more importantly than all of that—more importantly—is our role here. I don't want us to go from one reconciliation bill to a rescissions package to another rescissions package to a reconciliation package to a continuing resolution. We are lawmakers. We should be legislating. What we are getting now is direction from the White House and are being told: This is the priority. We want you to execute on it. We will be back with you with another round.

I don't accept that. I am going to be voting no.

#### VOTE ON MOTION TO DISCHARGE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, 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 assistant bill clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 391 Leg.]

#### YEAS—50

Banks  
Barrasso  
Blackburn  
Boozman  
Britt  
Budd  
Capito  
Cassidy  
Cornyn  
Cotton  
Cramer  
Crapo  
Cruz  
Curtis  
Daines  
Ernst  
Fischer

Graham  
Grassley  
Hagerty  
Hawley  
Hoeven  
Husted  
Hyde-Smith  
Johnson  
Justice  
Kennedy  
Lankford  
Lee  
Lummis  
Marshall  
McCormick  
Moody  
Moran

Moreno  
Mullin  
Paul  
Ricketts  
Risch  
Rounds  
Schmitt  
Scott (FL)  
Scott (SC)  
Sheehy  
Sullivan  
Thune  
Tillis  
Tuberville  
Wicker  
Young

#### NAYS—50

Alsobrooks  
Baldwin  
Bennet  
Blumenthal  
Blunt Rochester  
Booker  
Cantwell  
Collins  
Coons  
Cortez Masto  
Duckworth  
Durbin  
Fetterman  
Gallego  
Gillibrand  
Hassan  
Heinrich

Hickenlooper  
Hirono  
Kaine  
Kelly  
Kim  
King  
Klobuchar  
Lujan  
Markey  
McConnell  
Merkley  
Murkowski  
Murphy  
Murray  
Ossoff  
Padilla  
Peters

Reed  
Rosen  
Sanders  
Schatz  
Schiff  
Schumer  
Shaheen  
Slotkin  
Smith  
Van Hollen  
Warner  
Warnock  
Warren  
Welch  
Whitehouse  
Wyden

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any Senators in the Chamber who wish to vote or change their vote?

If not, on this vote, the yeas are 50, and the nays are 50. The Senate being equally divided, the Vice President votes in the affirmative, and the motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority whip.

#### RECISSIONS ACT OF 2025—Motion to Proceed

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 114, H.R. 4.

#### VOTE ON MOTION TO PROCEED

The VICE PRESIDENT. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

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

The VICE PRESIDENT. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 392 Leg.]

#### YEAS—50

Banks  
Barrasso  
Blackburn  
Boozman  
Britt  
Budd  
Capito  
Cassidy  
Cornyn  
Cotton  
Cramer  
Crapo  
Cruz  
Curtis  
Daines  
Ernst  
Fischer

Graham  
Grassley  
Hagerty  
Hawley  
Hoeven  
Husted  
Hyde-Smith  
Johnson  
Justice  
Kennedy  
Lankford  
Lee  
Lummis  
Marshall  
McCormick  
Moody  
Moran

Moreno  
Mullin  
Paul  
Ricketts  
Risch  
Rounds  
Schmitt  
Scott (FL)  
Scott (SC)  
Sheehy  
Sullivan  
Thune  
Tillis  
Tuberville  
Wicker  
Young

#### NAYS—50

Alsobrooks  
Baldwin  
Bennet  
Blumenthal  
Blunt Rochester  
Booker  
Cantwell  
Collins  
Coons  
Cortez Masto  
Duckworth  
Durbin  
Fetterman  
Gallego  
Gillibrand  
Hassan  
Heinrich

Hickenlooper  
Hirono  
Kaine  
Kelly  
Kim  
King  
Klobuchar  
Lujan  
Markey  
McConnell  
Merkley  
Murkowski  
Murphy  
Murray  
Ossoff  
Padilla  
Peters

Reed  
Rosen  
Sanders  
Schatz  
Schiff  
Schumer  
Shaheen  
Slotkin  
Smith  
Van Hollen  
Warner  
Warnock  
Warren  
Welch  
Whitehouse  
Wyden

(Mr. WICKER assumed the Chair.)

(Ms. LUMMIS assumed the Chair.)

(Mr. SHEEHY assumed the Chair.)

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any Senators in the Chamber who wish to vote or change their vote?

If not, on this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 50. The Senate being equally divided, the Vice President votes in the affirmative, and the motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

#### RESCISSIONS ACT OF 2025

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4) to rescind certain budget authority proposed to be rescinded in special messages transmitted to the Congress by the President on June 3, 2025, in accordance with section 1012(a) of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). The majority leader.