

Mr. THUNE. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time.

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

The bill was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. THUNE. I know of no further debate on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate on the bill, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (H.R. 1815) was passed.

Mr. THUNE. I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

#### ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2025

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m., Wednesday, July 16; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, morning business be closed, and the Senate resume consideration of Calendar No. 114, H.R. 4; finally, that all debate time be expired at 1:30 p.m. tomorrow.

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

#### ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order following the remarks of my Democratic colleagues.

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

#### RESCISSIONS ACT OF 2025

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

H.R. 4

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, the rescissions package before us reduces access to educational programming for children and locally produced public radio and television programming. It diminishes America's global leadership while eliminating lifesaving aid from the world's most vulnerable populations.

I want to spend a minute on the impact that this will have on public radio and television, including the disproportionate impact it will have on rural communities.

One in four Wisconsinites lives in a rural community, and many rely on public broadcasting for local news, emergency alerts, and free educational programming, especially for children. Wisconsin Public Radio is the primary broadcast relay for Wisconsin's Emer-

gency Alert System, including AMBER Alerts and lifesaving weather alerts like tornado and flash flood warnings. Look no further than the absolutely devastating news out of Texas. Access to high-quality information can truly be the difference between life and death. Access to local news from reporters and sources that community members trust is more important than ever.

Stripping away this funding would also endanger local news that is already disappearing in so many Wisconsin communities. In 2024—just last year—almost 20 percent of our local newspapers shut down in Wisconsin, according to a study by Northwestern University. That same study found that Wisconsin's northernmost county, Bayfield, had no local news sources at all while 22 counties across Wisconsin had just 1 local news source.

That is where public radio plays a critical role in keeping Wisconsinites connected with their communities. Stations like WXPB in Rhinelander, WI, would be under threat if this package advances—one of the few news sources producing local reporting in Wisconsin's Northwoods and Michigan's Upper Peninsula—or Radio Milwaukee, which, because of public funding, can broadcast local school board meetings for parents and families to stay in touch with what is happening in their communities.

Without Federal support for public media, this critical information could disappear for Wisconsin families. This is what public broadcasting means for Wisconsinites, but it applies to all the States that we represent. That should be reason enough to oppose this bill on the substance of it.

But the other reason is the extraordinary process that is being used to make this change and the impact it would have on the ability of this body to perform its most basic functions. If passed, this bill would represent the first time this rescissions process would be used to pass completely partisan rescissions, and in doing so, we would undo bipartisan agreements.

That is why I oppose this bill, and I hope enough of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will choose to do so as well.

The Senate passes bipartisan appropriations bills every year. They are hard, and they take months to negotiate, and it doesn't always work as well as it should. Senators on both sides of the aisle often discuss wanting to return to something we call regular order. We decry full-year continuing resolutions, or CRs, and government shutdowns. We say we want to bring appropriations bills to the floor. This isn't a pipedream, and I reject the idea that the appropriations process can't work anymore. More often than not, we pass appropriations bills within the first few months of the new fiscal year—not ideal but workable. We certainly need to work to make it better, and the full-year continuing resolution

we find ourselves in right now is a prime example of its failing, but throwing in the towel, as this bill does, would make it so much worse.

I want to highlight one example of when the appropriations process worked how it should that is particularly relevant in this exact moment.

It was just a few years ago, in fiscal year 2019, that the Labor-Health and Human Services bill—not the easiest bill—passed the Senate and was signed into law prior to the start of the next fiscal year. At that time, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Senator Shelby, along with other Republicans and in working with Democrats, vowed to return to regular order and committed to it.

In May of 2018, President Trump submitted a rescissions package just like the one we are contending with today. Enough Republicans joined all of the Democrats in opposing it. It failed, and that was the end of it.

Then, 3 months later, a combined Defense and Labor-Health and Human Services bill passed. It passed the Senate; it passed the House; and it was signed into law by President Trump on September 28—just days short of the expiration of fiscal year 2018. It wasn't the only pair of bills. Several other appropriations bills were enacted prior to October 1 also.

My Republican colleagues knew then that passing partisan rescissions packages would make passing bipartisan appropriations bills that much harder, if it would be possible at all. That is what we are debating today. The issue here is really simple: How can any minority party, Democrat or Republican, make concessions as part of these bipartisan appropriations negotiations if the majority just walks back those deals a few months later?

The answer is, it can't, and that is why we have never passed partisan rescissions packages like this before.

Passing this rescissions package will also, very likely, mean that there will be more to come. In fact, OMB Director Russ Vought has said as much. Right now, the Department of Education is withholding \$7 billion in funding that normally goes out at this time of year to the States for the upcoming school year to support afterschool programs, STEM education, school counselors, and smaller class sizes, among many other things.

Will the administration put that funding in the next rescissions package?

So, if we pass this bill, we would find ourselves right back here in a couple of months—with the President exerting his influence to pass another partisan rescissions package—or we can end this here, like we did in 2018, and deal with these issues where they should be dealt with and where they frequently are dealt with as part of the appropriations process. We can and should debate the issues raised in this rescissions package as part of the annual appropriations process. We should mark up bills

in committee and bring them to the floor.

But you cannot vote for this rescissions package and then argue for regular order or decry brinksmanship over government funding and government shutdowns or full-year continuing resolutions because walking back on bipartisan agreements like this rescissions package does will make future bipartisan agreements that much harder, if not impossible.

As the ranking member on the Labor, Health and Human Services Subcommittee, I commit to working with my Republican colleagues on their specific concerns with funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, but the concerns I have heard raised as part of the debate on this package actually weren't even raised as part of the appropriations process in the last 2 years as I chaired this subcommittee. My colleagues are saying that this is such a grave problem that we have to take the extraordinary step of rescinding funding when these issues weren't even raised when we passed the appropriations bills with this funding in it originally. That is not how this process should work.

To my colleagues, if you are for regular order, if you want this body to work better and want more bipartisanism and less partisanship, I sincerely ask you to deeply reflect on what this vote means for that goal that a majority of our constituents want from us. I urge my colleagues to vote no.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, today, we are debating President Trump's disastrous proposal to cut more than \$9 billion in funding that Congress has already approved for local public broadcasting and foreign assistance.

Not only is this bill harmful to communities in Michigan, as well as all across the country, but it also risks undermining a key part of our democratic process.

President Trump and his crony—Budget Director Russ Vought—are trying to undercut the voice of everyday Americans in our government through this process.

Americans sent us here to represent them and to act in their best interest. That is why our Constitution gives Congress—not the President—the sole power to make laws, including the power of the purse. And that is why lawmakers routinely come together to decide, on a bipartisan basis, how to allocate Federal funding in a way that best serves the people who live in our States.

I am proud to take part in that important process as a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee. And I am proud that my Democratic and Republican colleagues in the committee are working hard to advance commonsense, bipartisan funding bills that will meet the needs of all of our communities.

But Donald Trump wants to throw these bills out the window so he can

pick which communities win and which communities lose when it comes to Federal resources.

Funding laws are still laws, and Congress passed these laws with bipartisan support to direct resources to these programs. No President gets unilateral say on how any law is implemented, and no President gets to overrule Congress's bipartisan laws.

But the legislation pending before the Senate today would open up a slippery slope that would undercut Congress's authority, rob our communities of important resources, and ultimately erode the voice of the American people who elect their Members of Congress to make these decisions in their best interests.

We have to put our foot down because we know it will not stop here. Today it is funding for local public media, but tomorrow it could be funding for infectious disease research, public education, or weather forecasting—all on the chopping block.

They have made it pretty clear that folks just want to cut rather than leading our government in a way that makes our constituents' lives better.

We saw it at the beginning of this year, when the administration froze funds that Congress passed into law to support local infrastructure upgrades, cancer research, childcare programs, opioid addiction centers, and so many more.

Just a few weeks ago, the administration froze a ton of funding that Congress passed for summer school and afterschool programs. And again with the "Big Bad Bill" that our Republican colleagues just passed, President Trump signed into law a bill that gutted funding for critical resources like Medicaid and SNAP, ripping healthcare and food assistance from millions of Americans, all to cover the cost for their massive tax cut for billionaires.

And, now today, Republicans are trying to bypass once again bipartisan laws—laws that many of them voted for themselves—so they can rubberstamp another round of President Trump's harmful cuts.

Let's take a look at the harm that these cuts will do. Take the proposed elimination of funding for public broadcasting. This would eliminate the single most important source of funding for local radio and TV stations that focus on providing high-quality, community-centered content.

When local public media stations from Grand Rapids to Marquette see a huge chunk of their budget eliminated by this bill, they will, at a minimum, be forced to let people go. These are Michiganders who are just trying to keep their friends and neighbors informed on what is happening in their local communities. Families will no longer have 24/7 access to Michigan's Learning Channel, which provides educational math and literacy content for children all across my State.

But the biggest harm that these funding cuts will have on our commu-

nities is the impact to emergency response and public safety.

Many of Michigan's public TV and radio stations are responsible for broadcasting emergency alerts during national disasters like tornadoes, wildfires, or severe flooding. When catastrophic ice storms swept through northern Michigan earlier this year, it was local radio stations that literally saved lives by broadcasting emergency warnings to folks after commercial towers went down.

These alerts are critical, particularly in rural communities where these local public stations are often the only ones available to reach people during an emergency.

WNMU out of Marquette is the only source of emergency alert services for over 250,000 residents in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. This singular station covers an area larger than Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Delaware combined. If Republicans pass this disastrous bill, those communities will be left in the dark when the next emergency strikes.

Local public media also plays an important role in supporting national security and law enforcement efforts. In the Thumb region, Delta College Public Media hosts transmitters for the FBI and the Coast Guard to ensure that they can effectively communicate during emergency situations. Eliminating funding for that partnership, as this bill would do, is quite literally putting American lives and the homeland at risk.

And don't get me wrong. I am all for reducing waste and making sure that we are spending taxpayer dollars efficiently, but gutting funding for local stations that communities rely on to keep their families safe is to cut corners that is absolutely detrimental to public safety.

So when President Trump—and his cronies like Russ Vought—say that this bill targets government fraud, waste, and abuse—something that I have spent my entire life fighting against—we know that it is just not true.

Don't forget, they just passed a bill that is going to add \$3 trillion to the deficit. They don't care about balancing the budget or limiting waste. They want to cut services that American families depend on so they can afford a bigger tax cut for the wealthiest Americans.

In addition to local broadcasting, this bill also will upend bipartisan investments in foreign assistance that Congress made earlier this year to maintain our global leadership and protect U.S. national security interests.

While foreign assistance represents less than 1 percent of the Federal Government, it provides critical benefits to our Nation. These strategic investments help save American lives, reinforce our global leadership, and support economic growth here in our country. Foreign assistance helps protect global stability and prevent conflict that is

more costly for us in the long run. But this bill undermines those strategic goals by compromising programs that have long received bipartisan support.

Funding for programs like Feed the Future and efforts to counter Russian and Chinese influence have been cut in this bill. These programs just don't support communities abroad, they actually stimulate local businesses and economies right here at home. Feed the Future, which is a part of the U.S. Agency for International Development, supports local farmers by purchasing their products and distributing them to people in need around the globe. If Republicans pass this bill, those farmers will lose.

Feed the Future also partners with universities and colleges across the United States to operate innovation labs that draw on their expertise to tackle the world's biggest challenges to food security.

Institutions like Michigan State University conduct cutting-edge agricultural research to help farmers grow better products that support Americans. These partnerships also provide training opportunities for the next generation of researchers to help maintain America's competitiveness. If this bill passes, MSU will lose.

But Michigan State University is not alone. Institutions across the country in States like Kansas, Alabama, Mississippi, Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, North Carolina, and many more will also have their vital research projects canceled.

Foreign assistance is designed to prevent the need for more costly interventions down the line. This bill will undo the success of past generations of Americans and damage our geopolitical standing, all to save just a fraction of our Nation's annual budget while doing serious damage to American leadership across the globe.

But the bigger picture here is that Republicans are allowing Donald Trump to bypass Congress and the bipartisan laws that we pass right here.

Every year Congress tirelessly negotiates bipartisan funding bills, and each side makes compromises. But if one party can simply rip up those bipartisan funding agreements by enacting one-sided decisions like what my Republican colleagues are going to be doing here, the appropriations process will simply break down.

How can we be assured that these bipartisan agreements are being made in good faith if Republicans are just going to turn their backs on them just a few months later? How can we be sure that the funding laws we pass will help all of our communities succeed if our Republican colleagues will simply let President Trump pick who wins and who loses when it comes to Federal support?

President Trump's Budget Director Russ Vought has already made it clear that he won't stop with this rescission effort. He just opened the door to undercutting the bipartisan funding laws

that Congress passed, and there is no telling where he and President Trump will stop if they succeed here.

Congress is meant to be an independent branch of the government from the Presidency, with our own unique powers. Making decisions about how the Federal Government should allocate its resources is one of those powers that belongs solely to Congress under the U.S. Constitution.

What we do today will either reaffirm that Congress makes the laws, or it will show how quickly our Republican colleagues will roll over and rubberstamp whatever Donald Trump wants, no matter—no matter—what harm it will do to the people that they represent.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this harmful bill.

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

**Mr. MERKLEY.** My colleagues from Wisconsin and Michigan have spoken to the destructive nature of this rescission because of the programs that will be canceled midstream.

I have seen, so often, the power of our international aid programs in assisting in nutrition and fighting tuberculosis and malaria and AIDS across the world. But what many may not understand is that the small fraction—less than one-third of 1 percent—that we spend on those programs has an incredible yield not just in doing good works around the world, but have been doing good for America because of relationships that are forged through those programs. The respect that is forged through those programs comes back to benefit us in all kinds of cooperation on a huge range of diplomatic goals—be they economic; be they trade; be they issues of national security.

That is, in fact, what is referred to as “soft power,” and soft power is at risk with this strategy of canceling these programs.

I think about rural Oregon, where so often the warnings on floods or fires is broadcast over the public radio system, and all kinds of different channels have different programs that people become quite attached to. So there are simply good humor programs that are fun to listen to, and others are good music programs. But a lot of it is good news programs—things deeply appreciated throughout the State but often harder to access in rural Oregon. So I am concerned about this concerted attack on rural America.

First, my colleagues across the aisle say: We are going to make it very, very hard for people in rural America to get healthcare if they are on Medicaid. And then, without Medicaid financing and paying for services, you lose an entire hospital or you lose an entire clinic. The whole rural community is profoundly damaged because everyone's healthcare is affected. An attack on rural America continues through this bill.

But what I really want to talk about now is to give a sense of how this bill

is an attack on the separations of power that we all here in the Senate have taken a constitutional oath to defend.

When I first came to Congress as an intern for Senator Hatfield, we were celebrating our 200th anniversary. That is so long ago, 49 years ago. And Senator Hatfield had a saying about appropriators, and that was that appropriators—that is, those Members of the Senate who served on the spending committee—they were first appropriators, and then they were Republicans or Democrats. That is how strongly they felt about their shared responsibility to manage the power of the purse.

The power of the purse—article I, section 9, of the Constitution says:

No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law.

And here is the thing. The Congress is vested with that power, but when you decide how to spend money, you are really talking about your values. So those who serve on the Appropriations Committee were doing their best to enact the values of our country, be they investment in healthcare, in housing, in education; investments that created good-paying jobs, investments that helped small communities thrive, investments that helped build infrastructure across the country. That was the responsibility that was so cherished.

And there was a term for those who chaired the 12 subcommittees on Appropriations, and that term—the colloquial term—was that they were the Senate's “cardinals.” It was taken from the Catholic Church, where cardinals helped steer the church on the right path. And the cardinals of the Senate had the responsibility of steering our Nation, through our spending decisions, on the right path for the people of America.

This is, in fact, a key part of government by and for the people: that shared responsibility to spend that money wisely. But even in the early years that I was here in the Senate, we were starting to see signs of the breakdown of that relationship.

In the last conversation I had with Senator Hatfield before he passed away, he said: What happened to the Appropriations Committee?

Now, Senator Hatfield was a Republican, and he had been chair of the Appropriations Committee. And he said: I worked so closely with Dan Inouye of Hawaii, and I worked so closely with PATTY MURRAY of Washington. What has happened to that collaboration?

That was several years ago. But as we have watched, over time, some significant things are happening that we should understand as Senators. In the not so distant past, you have tried to have a fair allocation of revenue laws that raised money, and then, as you filled the Treasury, the question became: How shall we spend it?

So the responsibility shifted from the Finance Committee to the Appropriations Committee. But, over time, it has become more and more popular to spend money for programs through tax credits and deductions. So much of the spending that was in the Appropriations Committee has shifted to the Finance Committee. And then it became more and more popular to shift discretionary spending, over which the Appropriations Committee has control, into mandatory spending. If it is mandatory, it is not a decision decided by the appropriators.

And then, on top of all that, we started to build up more and more national debt, and so all the money that went to interest on that debt is money unavailable to be spent on basic programs of healthcare, housing, education, investments that create good-paying jobs across America, infrastructure, security. That money isn't so available because it is tied up paying for interest.

So these trends are changing the role of those Senate cardinals—the chairs and the ranking members of the subcommittees who help guide us in the 12 different sections of spending. And, I will say, that problem of the debt growing, that is very significant.

Back in 1974, Democrats and Republicans came together and said: Let's have an architecture to ensure that we are very responsible and don't run up massive debt. We will have a filibuster-free pathway for one purpose, and that is to reduce deficits—only to reduce deficits.

And then my colleagues, 22 years later, across the aisle—my Republican colleagues—said: Well, you know, we want a filibuster-free pathway to do tax cuts which will increase the deficit. And they brought in a new Parliamentarian in order to get a ruling that they could do the exact opposite of what 100 Senators had agreed to. So more and more payments diverted into interest.

We had that Big Beautiful Bill, as Trump calls it—or as many of us call it, the “Big Ugly Betrayal Bill.” You know the one I am talking about, the one where families lose and billionaires win that was passed 2 weeks ago. Well, this rescission bill is a continuation of that vision of families lose—particularly rural families, particularly all Americans, who lose out on the advantages of soft power that we exercise around the world—and billionaires win. But it is a direct attack, as well, on the immediate process of Democrats and Republicans working together on the Appropriations Committee in this really sacred responsibility of exercising the power of the purse.

Let's examine that word “rescission.” It is a fancy term. What does it really mean? A rescission is a repeal of a previous spending law.

A law was passed. It spent a certain amount of money on a certain program or on a certain Agency. And a repeal of it—that is all that fancy term means.

And so the spending process is one where those members of the spending

committee come together—Democrats and Republicans together—and they work out a bipartisan bill. And in that bill, last year, for fiscal year 2025, 11 out of 12 bills that came out of the spending committee, out of the Appropriations Committee, were unanimous or nearly unanimous. Where do you look for that type of bipartisan cooperation in Congress anymore? Well, last year, in the Appropriations Committee, 11 out of 12 bills passing unanimously or nearly unanimously out of committee. But what is happening right now is consideration of undoing that bipartisan work with a partisan repeal.

Now, just kind of stick with me here about a normal deal. You make an agreement with a friend: I will do this if you do that.

Well, everyone kind of understands that is a partnership. You have an agreement. But what if one person bails on that agreement later? It is a betrayal. But bailing on the agreement is exactly what this bill is.

Democrats and Republicans together made those spending decisions, and now they are being undone in a purely partisan fashion. They are breaking the deal. They are going back on the agreement. They are breaking their word. That is pretty shameful, and it is why my colleagues have been saying: Don't do it—because it is wrong, and it has a huge impact going forward. Once somebody you have made an agreement with breaks their end of the bargain, are you going to make a second bargain with that same individual, knowing that they bailed on the first deal? The answer is probably not.

So how will we come together and continue what we did a year ago—11 out of 12 bills passing out of the Senate committee in a hugely bipartisan fashion—if one side comes back and breaks the deal? I would invite my Republican colleagues: Come to the floor and explain to me how breaking the deal that you were participating in a year ago is an honorable thing to do, and explain to me how we are going to do future deals if you are breaking the existing deal.

Now, never in the history of the Senate has there been a partisan repeal—never. This is the first time. Why? Because we understood together that a deal is a deal.

That doesn't mean the President doesn't have influence. Hey, that was just about last year's bill. The President lays out a budget for the next year and has a huge influence. The President can veto the next set of spending bills or any one of them.

But once it is locked into law—passed by the House, passed by the Senate, signed by a President—to come back and undo that in this partisan fashion, you are breaking the honor code that has made bipartisan collaboration so successful. That is why you shouldn't do it. That is why you should vote no.

Now, this question of how this affects our Constitution is significant because,

as I cited, the Constitution assigns the responsibility of the power of the purse to Congress in article I, section 9. But there have been occasions before when Presidents said: We would like to actually have that power of the purse. And the President who really pursued that aggressively was President Nixon, in the 1970s. President Nixon signed a law about how money would be spent but then decided not to spend it and withheld the money from being spent on housing, on education, on highways, on agriculture, and on pollution prevention programs.

Well, of course, this was appealed on a constitutional basis because the Constitution doesn't give the President the power to impound funds. Congress, by law—and by law signed by a President—had said: Here is what must be spent on these programs. And the President came along, and President Nixon said: I don't want to do it. I am not going to do it. Take me to court.

So they went to court. And it didn't actually make it to the Supreme Court until after President Nixon was out of office, after having resigned because of the Watergate scandal. But, in a way, this was really almost a bigger scandal. This was an attack on the Constitution.

So what did the Court say in *Train v. New York*? And the piece of spending that made it to the Supreme Court was related to spending on water treatment systems, of all things. And the Court said: You cannot do this. You cannot impound funds. It is unconstitutional because the Constitution assigns that responsibility to Congress.

Now, if the law had been written by Congress to say the President has flexibility between here and here, maybe a modest amount of flexibility may have survived the constitutional test. But the idea that the President could just simply ignore the law? No. The Court said no.

Then there was a second test. The second test had to do, in 1996, with Congress, where Republicans controlled the House and they controlled the Senate. They decided: You know how we will tackle the deficit now—now that we have destroyed the 1974 law that said the fast track can only be used for reducing the deficit and how we switched that and said it could be used for increasing the deficit—now we have destroyed that, and we have a new plan, and we will just simply say to the President: You can line-item veto.

Again, the court weighed in, and the court said: Hell no, no you can't, because the Constitution does not say you can delegate to the President powers the Constitution assigns to you.

It assigns it to us. That is our responsibility.

So, again, the core concept here is that bipartisan work in forging a spending bill should not be done by one partner bailing on the deal that was agreed to the previous year.

Now, there is a formal way to go about doing this in a bipartisan fashion, and that is, each spending bill, in

addition to saying what we will spend next year, can contain agreements on undoing the spending from the previous year because it is the same set of people saying: We assigned funds last year, but now we see they are not needed.

Maybe the President pointed out that they are not needed.

We will undo it, but we will undo it in a bipartisan fashion in the Appropriations Committee in that same sense of a partnership working together.

So rescissions, yes. We do them all the time. But they are done on a bipartisan basis in the spending committee, not in a partisan special bill, one-sided, basically bailing on the deal struck last year—because this strategy is a recipe for disaster, destroying the bond of trust on a deal made with each side having its priorities in a bill and then one side bailing on it—because of that, it has never happened before, and it should never happen now.

Mr. President, let's step back from the immediate loyalty test the President of the United States has put forward. The President said: It is a loyalty test. I want you to do this because I want you to bend the knee to me.

That is not the responsibility of a Senator of the United States of America, to bend the knee to the executive branch. The Constitution gives us the responsibility to design how the executive branch functions. It gives us, the Senate, the responsibility to fund the programs and the services.

The way you lose government of, by, and for the people is to have an acquiescent legislature that stops doing its job and just says "We will respond; we will just do what the President asks" and a deferential court. Right now, we have both.

But we took an oath to the Constitution, each one of us, to honor that oath. Do not engage for the first time ever in creating this recipe for disaster of our bipartisan responsibilities.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, the good news is that I am the last speaker of the day. I wish I could tell you my speech will be short. I don't think it will be long, but I will try to make it interesting.

I want to tell you a story. It is not a story about anything that has happened in this building. It is a story about a very humble Catholic parish in Northside Richmond, VA, called St. Elizabeth of Hungary. It is a humble parish. It is a small parish. It is slightly over 100 years old. It is the church where my wife and I were married more than 40 years ago, where all three of our children were baptized, where we attended Mass just this last Sunday to hear the Gospel reading of the story of the Good Samaritan.

The church was founded more than 100 years ago in an unusual way. There were Italian and German immigrants in Richmond who felt looked down upon because of where they had come

from and because of the accents that they spoke with and that their English wasn't so good.

In the aftermath of World War I, people looked at German-Americans and Italian-Americans with some suspicion. German language was being criminalized in some of our States in the aftermath.

These immigrant refugee Catholics decided that they wanted a place where they could feel welcomed, loved, and safe as they worshipped in accord with the American value of freedom of worship. So they set up this little parish in the Highland Park neighborhood of Northside Richmond, VA, where they could go and be together and feel safe. They chose an interesting name, St. Elizabeth of Hungary.

St. Elizabeth of Hungary lived 1,000 years ago. She was a teenager, and she was a queen in a time of great poverty. Against the wishes of her husband and other officials, she would take bread and put the bread inside of her garments and go out and distribute it to the poor.

Once, she was caught, and she was made to open her garment, and when she did open her garment, the bread had turned into roses. That is the miracle that was attributed to her. She lived only a short time and died, but she was made a saint by the Catholic Church.

These immigrants who started my parish chose that name because they felt like that was what was needed in the world—people who would try to serve others in need.

One hundred years later—we celebrated the centennial of my church a couple of years ago, and I was sitting there—I have now been a member of the parish for 40 years—and I was looking around, and I realized that times change and they don't.

Catholic Relief Services, which is one of the largest agencies in the United States that help settle refugees, who are legal immigrants—refugees are legal immigrants—about 15 years ago settled a Congolese family into my church who had been in a refugee camp after fleeing violence in the Congo. Catholic, French, and Swahili speaking, one Congolese family came to my church. Then, over time, Catholic Relief Services decided "Well this family likes St. Elizabeth, and they feel welcomed here," and other families started to come to my church.

So by now, as we were celebrating our centennial and I was looking around the parish where I go—this small, very humble parish—it is a sizably Congolese refugee population, legal immigrants to the United States who have been settled through the Catholic Relief Services, and they have come to a place where they feel loved and cared for and safe and welcomed. The color of their skin, the accent they use, and the fact that they are unfamiliar with American culture might make them feel not so welcomed in other venues, but in my church, they feel welcomed.

It made me realize as we celebrated that centennial that my church looks really different in some ways than when it was founded 100 years ago, but in other ways, it is exactly the same. It is a haven for people who are legal immigrants to the United States but need a place where they can gather with others and feel welcomed.

Why do I tell that story? How is it connected to the rescission bill that we are going to be voting on tomorrow?

President Trump has sent a bill to Congress, and one of the pillars of that bill is to rescind the funding for refugee resettlement programs in the United States run by churches. Seven of the ten organizations that resettle refugees in the United States are faith-based organizations. The largest two are the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, operating through the Catholic Relief Services, and the evangelical organization World Vision.

But it is not just them. There is Church World Service, Lutheran Social Services, the Episcopal Church of the United States, and World Relief. The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society was founded more than 100 years ago to try to bring Jews at that point from Europe to the United States and make sure that, as legal immigrants—yes, they would be allowed to be here legally, but they needed someone to teach them about American culture and integrating into American life.

The practice of American religious organizations assisting in legal immigration goes back more than a century, and President Trump's rescission package that is before us wipes out funding to a dramatic degree for virtually all of them.

Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society has had to lay off hundreds of staff.

World Relief said this:

President Trump [has] said he will defend persecuted Christians. [But] the U.S. refugee resettlement program is one of the primary ways that the U.S. government protects Christians and others fleeing persecution.

The Episcopal Church of the United States has had to end its longstanding refugee resettlement program because of President Trump's budget cuts.

Lutheran Social Services has had to—they have struggled to make payroll. They have had to lay off so many people. They reduced the services they are able to provide, especially to Afghan allies who are in the United States because they worked with the U.S. military in Afghanistan to protect our troops.

Catholic Charities has laid off all kinds of staff.

The families at my church come up to me after mass on Sunday, and they are so frightened about what might happen because many of them have family still in refugee camps who might want to come here as legal refugees, as legal immigrants.

I don't know of a President who has attacked religious organizations—Catholic, evangelical, Jewish—that have been doing this work in many instances for more than a century, in

such an orchestrated, intentional, and calculated way as President Trump.

Matthew: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me in. I was sick and you cared for me. I was hungry and you fed me." This is a bedrock belief of our Nation's religious organizations: that they will follow the law—legal refugee program—but they will help the person who is accessing legal refugee programs to be able to integrate into a society so they can live with some sense of dignity and have some chance of success.

Why cut these programs? Why look in the face of these religious organizations that, out of a motivation of conscience, for decades, even a century, have decided that they will try to smooth that path to integrate people into American life who are here lawfully? Why cut their funding? Why force them to be laid off? Why debilitate their ability to provide services? It is an attack on the religious organizations so that they cannot do the work that their faith and their Creator compels them to do.

I am not surprised that President Trump would propose this. The language and the rhetoric and the behavior that he has exhibited toward even legal refugees, legal immigrants to this country lead me to not be surprised that this important funding is on the chopping block in the bill that he has sent to the Senate. But I have to admit that I am surprised that it seems to be just moving on a path to being accepted. It was accepted in the House without much drama, including by a whole lot of people who go to churches, just like me, and hear sermons preached about the Good Samaritan, just like I do every Sunday.

We will have an opportunity tomorrow to grapple with it here. I intend to at least offer an amendment to try to strip this piece of the bill out so that the bill will not be an attack on religious organizations doing what they feel compelled by their faith to do.

It is my prayer that the entire rescission bill fail for the reasons my colleagues have said—a deal is a deal, and we shouldn't backtrack on it. But if we can't defeat the entire rescission bill, it is my hope that we will allow organizations like Catholic Relief Services and the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society and the Episcopal Church and World Vision and World Relief and Lutheran Social Services—it is my hope that we will at least allow them to practice the faith they sincerely believe and do it in a way consistent with what their practices have been for decades and in some cases more than a century.

And so that is what I am going to be praying for tonight, that there is a bit of an epiphany in this body, and we realize that the work that these church-based organizations are doing isn't bad. This work isn't something that should be slashed and cut with these valuable faith workers laid off.

My hope is that the Senate will realize this is good work that is really at

the core of who we are as Americans—so tiny little parishes like St. Elizabeth of Hungary or synagogues or other churches all over this country who pride themselves on offering a welcoming environment for people who are here lawfully and want to make their way in America will be able to continue to do just that.

I yield the floor.

## ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 10:45 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, July 16, 2025, at 10 a.m.

## NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

### THE JUDICIARY

JOSHUA D. DUNLAP, OF MAINE, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE FIRST CIRCUIT, VICE WILLIAM J. KAYATTA, JR., RETIRED.

WILLIAM W. MERCER, OF MONTANA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF MONTANA, VICE DANA L. CHRISTENSEN, RETIRING.

ERIC CHUNYEE TUNG, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT, VICE SANDRA SEGAL IKUTA, RETIRING.

### IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS VICE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE AIR FORCE AND APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 601 AND 9034:

#### To be general

GEN. THOMAS A. BUSSIÈRE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

#### To be general

LT. GEN. STEPHEN L. DAVIS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

#### To be brigadier general

COL. BRANT A. PUTNAM  
COL. SARA A. STIGLER  
COL. ROBERT B. TAYLOR

THE FOLLOWING NAMED AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

#### To be brigadier general

COL. WENDY S. ARMILJO  
COL. MANUEL A. COLONDEJESUS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

#### To be brigadier general

COL. JOSHUA D. ARMSTRONG  
COL. RYAN D. AYERS  
COL. GAVIN M. BATCHELDER  
COL. LEE R. BOUMA  
COL. JESSE R. CARLSON  
COL. TRAVIS J. CRAWMER  
COL. RYAN F. DANNEMANN  
COL. JOSEPH P. GEANEY  
COL. CHARLES T. GADAY  
COL. DAVID L. HALASI-KUN  
COL. CHAD E. HOWESKO  
COL. AMEE C. HOWARD  
COL. JARED F. KENNISH, JR.  
COL. CAROL J. KOHTZ  
COL. MATTHEW S. KOMATSU  
COL. BROCK E. LANGE  
COL. JONATHAN D. MUMME  
COL. JEREMY C. PHILLIPS  
COL. DEREK B. ROUTH  
COL. DENISE K. SWEENEY  
COL. NATASHA S. TAYLOR  
COL. ERIC A. UNDERHILL

COL. BART T. VAN ROO  
COL. LEAH V. VOELKER  
COL. SHELDON B. WILSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

#### To be brigadier general

COL. TRAVIS T. BOLTJES  
COL. STEVEN L. CAMPBELL  
COL. JOED I. CARBONELL  
COL. CHRISTIAN P. CORNETTE  
COL. MATTHEW L. GILES  
COL. JASON R. HALVORSEN  
COL. TANYA MARIE C. LEE  
COL. TIMOTHY T. MARTIN  
COL. ANTHONY J. PASQUALE

### IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

#### To be general

LT. GEN. DAVID M. HODNE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

#### To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. MARCUS S. EVANS  
MAJ. GEN. MARK S. BENNETT  
MAJ. GEN. KEVIN C. LEAHY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

#### To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JOSEPH F. JARRARD

### IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

#### To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. ANDREW J. GEBARA  
BRIG. GEN. MAX E. PEARSON

### IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

#### To be brigadier general

COL. WILKEM D. MOLLFULLEDA  
COL. ANTIONETTE C. MULHOLLAND  
COL. CHRISTOPHER J. NIEWIND

### IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF OF NAVAL PERSONNEL AND APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 601 AND 8081:

#### To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. JEFFREY J. CZEREWKO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

#### To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. JOHN E. DOUGHERTY IV

### IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

#### To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. CHRISTIAN F. WORTMAN

### IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

#### To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) MICHAEL S. SCIRETTA

### IN THE SPACE FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS VICE CHIEF OF SPACE OPERATIONS AND APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES SPACE FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601 AND 9083:

#### To be general

LT. GEN. SHAWN N. BRATTON