

people of WVU Medicine and have visited these facilities many times. Let me tell you, they are on the cutting-edge of medical achievements that will save lives and change our world. Gordon's leadership has been a critical part of this success, and it is fitting that his recently finished portrait will live at the WVU Medicine campus.

Although Gordon was born in Utah, he is the first to tell you that he is a "born-again" West Virginian. He has made our State his home, and the effort and energy that he puts toward benefiting the lives of his fellow West Virginians is evident.

Two of Gordon's four pillars that I mentioned earlier—purpose and prosperity—relate directly to economic development in our State. Along with the Marshall president, Brad Smith, Gordon was central to developing the First Ascent Program in West Virginia. This program connects recent WVU and Marshall graduates with workforce opportunities within our State that launch their professional careers and keep our best and brightest at home, contributing to our communities.

The dynamic duo, as I would call them, also worked together to establish Ascend West Virginia, which has been a successful effort to attract remote workers to West Virginia's mountains, highlighting the wonderful outdoor recreation opportunities that our State offers to young professionals and their family.

Additionally, Gordon has made it a priority to visit and spend time every year in all 55 counties of our State, showing the excellent work of the WVU Extension services, designed to build prosperity, enhance educational opportunities, improve health, and create purpose in communities across the entirety of our State.

While Gordon's presence as WVU President will be missed, we know that he will continue to make a difference in West Virginia. As I said when I started this speech, the legacy he built will continue to be felt for generations to come.

I know that I join Gordon and our State when I say we look forward to the leadership and experience that the new WVU president, Michael Benson, brings to Morgantown. In a recent article published at the WVU Magazine, I found the advice that Gordon gave to his successor to be wise, true, and eloquent:

If you love the state and its people, they will love you back.

And that has certainly been the case for Dr. E. Gordon Gee and the time he has spent in Morgantown.

On a personal note, Charlie and I have been the recipients of emails, texts, and letters from Gordon that have lifted us up in tough times and, really, in good times, as well. I have leaned on Gordon's counsel as I have made difficult decisions. And he has always taken the time to give me very thoughtful advice. Both Charlie and I can safely say our lives have been en-

hanced by Gordon and by the friendship that we have fostered with him and Laurie.

Here in the U.S. Senate—and as I look at the President of the Senate, I know this is true of you, being from Ohio—there are many Members here in the U.S. Senate that have Gordon on speed dial. But I am eternally grateful we West Virginians are the ones who get to claim him.

Gordon, I wish you the best in your next chapter. And I have heard him talk about his retirement. He always reminds everybody, "I have not died. I have not died." But I hope you enjoy the well-deserved time that you can now spend with your Laurie, who has made an incredible mark on our State and the university alongside you, as well as your daughter Rebekah and those two beautiful young twin granddaughters whom you love so dearly.

Thank you, Gordon, for all you have done for WVU, West Virginia, all of your leadership, your vision, your heart, your sense of humor, and all that you have done for our State and our people, those of us, like you, who call it home.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

RESCISSIONS

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, in the past month, my great folks in Oklahoma have started learning a new term around here that is an old term, actually, but it is a term we use all the time, "vote-arama."

I have to tell you, it makes me sleepy just to say the word because vote-arama is a part of the 1974 Budget Act that allows for unlimited debate on an issue of certain types of budget process, rescissions, that we did yesterday, and then trying to be able to go back even farther to be able to deal with a reconciliation.

I want to spend just a couple of minutes talking about it because so many folks that I talk to have no perspective on this. It is good to be able to get some context.

The 1974 Budget Act set out 12 different appropriations bills that are done. That is how our budget is actually done. That is how we actually spend. When the House and the Senate and the President sign that, those 12 bills are now law so they have to be done; that has to be spent. But if the President were to say: I don't want to spend this amount; I don't think that it is necessary, it is the law so it has to be done. But the President can actually send back over to Congress a rescissions and say: I would like permission to turn this part off, and, literally, make a new law to be able to say we are not going to spend this.

That is what has happened here in the last 24 hours. The President sent over, about 40 days ago, a rescissions for \$9 billion and said: I don't think this needs to be spent.

I will talk a little bit about the context of that in a moment, but it was on

foreign aid, and it was on National Public Radio and PBS. It was \$1 billion for PBS and National Public Radio, and it was \$8 billion for foreign aid. He sent it over and said: I don't think this needs to be spent.

What has been interesting is to be able to see the national conversation on this on social media as if this cuts off all foreign aid everywhere. I have to tell you, I have some of my good friends at home who would be fine with all foreign aid being cut off, but that is not what happened. What happened was actually going through and examining what foreign aid do we want to keep and what foreign aid do we think is wasteful, that we shouldn't keep in it.

So what actually happened? Let me set some context on this first.

There are things like PEPFAR, which I have been very supportive of. For the last couple of decades, the United States has made one of the biggest impacts in the world on slowing down the spread of AIDS worldwide. The work that has been done in Africa, through PEPFAR, on AIDS, on tuberculosis, and on malaria has literally saved millions of lives and has dramatically slowed down that virus movement. The innovation that not only affects Americans who suffer with those but also affects the entire world and the movement of that disease has led us to actually engage in areas like Ebola and other areas to be able to go and fight them and make sure that diseases that are happening there that are highly communicable don't spread to us or to other parts of the world. All of us who have experienced COVID know full well that it is better to be able to attack it early than it is to be able to fight it later. PEPFAR has been that entity that has done that. This bill that we just walked through in the rescission didn't affect that aid at all. We said: No. We are going to continue to be able to do that.

Programs like Food for Peace and the McGovern-Dole Program that actually feed the hungry around the world—some of my farmers and ranchers in Oklahoma even and some of the mills that are there actually take some of the food that is grown there—it is literally packaged in the Midwest, and it is shipped all over the world to feed hungry folks—that is still in place. That has not changed.

I know a lot of folks on social media say: Oh, my gosh. This is cutting off all food aid everywhere else.

No, that is actually not what happened. We have worked through our foreign aid programs to counter the Chinese Communist Party's influence around the world, but that wouldn't affect it. In fact, that was specifically isolated out to say: No, we are going to continue to do that because we have got to push back against the communism that has spread across the world.

What about combating anti-Semitism, human trafficking, and religious persecution? No, no. We protected all

of those and made sure those were not affected.

Polio eradication efforts around the world, especially for children, is protected. We didn't make any change to that. All of that foreign aid is still going out.

Again, I have folks at home who say that is somebody else's problem, but the vast majority of Americans and Oklahomans say: Hey, we need to make sure that we are engaging in humanitarian needs in the places where we can as we are also fighting our debt and deficit.

But what are some of the areas we actually did cut? Because we actually did eliminate \$8 billion. Let me give you a couple of examples of that.

We actually did a 25-percent reduction in the resettlement fund that is run through the State Department. Now, why would we cut 25 percent of the resettlement fund? Well, 18 months ago, the United States was facing 2.5 million people a year illegally crossing our border, and there was work across all of government that the Biden administration was doing to try to manage these people in very mass numbers. Well, guess what. We have fewer than 200 now a day even attempting to cross our southern border. So there is not a need for this massive resettlement fund anymore because the borders are under control, so this fund was cut 25 percent.

Now, we are still involved in some resettlement efforts in other places for refugees around the world, and we are still involved in disaster aid, but we don't need near as large a fund for this because there is not near the problem that there used to be because our border is more secure.

The Office of Management and Budget literally went through the State Department, line by line, and identified all of these different line items and said: What did we spend our money on in this account last year? This went to humanitarian aid.

But then they also identified different areas that the State Department took for some of these funds and said they spent it on these areas. For instance, the State Department spent \$2.5 million to teach children how to make environmentally friendly reproductive health decisions. Well, we cut that, and I think most Americans would say: What in the world are we doing with that?

They spent \$3 million creating an Iraqi version of "Sesame Street" to be able to use in Iraq.

They spent \$4.5 million on the Melanesian Youth Climate Corps.

They spent a ton of money on a pride parade, with the U.S. taxpayer sponsoring a pride parade in Southern Africa.

There was money that was spent to promote vegan food in Zambia.

There was money spent for social media mentorships in Serbia and Belarus.

There was \$18 million spent to improve gender diversity in the Mexican

street lighting industry. Do you know what? We cut that. What we saved was aid for polio, for AIDS, for food. What we cut was money for gender diversity improvements for the Mexican street lighting industry.

So, yes, we did cut some funds back, but it was very intentional to go back and identify the areas that most folks at home would scratch their heads and say: Tell me again why we spent our tax dollars on that. Tell me again why I worked overtime to pay for my family to be able to make more money and pay more taxes so that my money would go to be able to teach children how to make environmentally friendly reproductive health decisions overseas.

That is what we went after, and I am grateful that we actually didn't just talk about doing something; we did it.

Not only did we do that on the State Department's side, but we engaged in something that a lot of people have talked about for a long time: NPR and PBS. Now, I have got nothing against "Sesame Street." I have got nothing against the "Antiques Roadshow." I have got nothing against NPR programs. If people want to be able to listen to that, well, that is fine. They are in America, and they can have the opportunity to be able to listen to it. This has been interesting just to be able to hear their conversation about it because the conversation has been that we shut the whole program down, that NPR is closing down tomorrow. Well, that is just not true. Let me tell you what we actually did with this rescission.

We gave about a year and a half of time to NPR and to PBS to find some additional funding because, with NPR, 90 percent of their funding right now—90 percent of their funding—comes from private sources. The Federal taxpayer just pays 10 percent of it. That 10 percent for PBS and for NPR equals \$1 billion. It is a big number, but it is just 10 percent of the funding. They provide sponsorships.

I asked the question: How does every other television station and every other radio station seem to operate and find enough sponsors to be able to cover them but that somehow, magically, NPR will not be able to cover the last 10 percent of their costs? That is absurd. Of course, they will be able to do that.

I have smiled and jokingly said to folks: If MSNBC can find enough sponsors to cover it, NPR can as well.

Listen, they will be able to find enough sponsors, and they have got time to be able to actually do that. We didn't cut them off tomorrow. We gave them about 18 months of time and said: You need to start finding some other sponsorships to be able to get ready for that because some people really like PBS. That is great. They will still be out there.

I grew up in a time period like some folks in this room grew up in. I was the remote control when I was growing up, OK? We would sit on the couch, and

Mom would say to me: Go up to the TV and turn the dial, because I was the remote control in our family because we had four stations. We had ABC, NBC, CBS, and PBS. Those are the four stations that we had. We established that as a nation we need to be able to get emergency information out because that was the best way to communicate because we had four stations in America. That was it.

Well, that is not true anymore. There are thousands of stations that are available over the air for free, and there are streaming platforms galore if you want to be able to spend a hundred bucks a month for each of them. We have got lots of things on our cell phones and have access to it. There are lots of different options now that are very different. I think some people don't realize that, in 1983, Ronald Reagan proposed taking the funds away from PBS and from NPR, saying it was not needed—in 1983—because we had enough options, much less now, when thinking about all of the options we have.

It has been fascinating for people to be able to say: If we don't have PBS, people will not know how to respond in an emergency. They desperately need that for an emergency.

I have to tell you, I live in a rural State, the great State of Oklahoma. We have, occasionally, a few storms that roll through Oklahoma. I actually don't know a person who says: Oh, my gosh. It looks stormy. I think I will turn on NPR.

I actually don't know that person. They pull out their cell phones, and they look and see what is going on, on the radar or they track through unlimited numbers of great options for meteorologists in our State, and that is true all over the country.

Again, I don't belittle what they are doing—people can choose to be able to listen—but to say the only way a television station or a radio station is going to function in America is if taxpayers pay for it means you ignore the thousands of other options that are out there.

So, no, we are not cutting them off except for the funding and saying: Hey, decades ago, this might have been an appropriate use of funds, but when we have \$2 trillion in overspending, maybe we should start looking for billions of dollars to be able to reduce our spending. We are not just talking about it; we actually did it and said: OK. Let's start finding strategic ways to be able to do this. So, in the last 24 hours, the House and the Senate agreed, and we are reducing our total spending by \$9 billion in very strategic ways. Now, that is the rescission package. That is one vote-arama for our long night last night.

ONE BIG BEAUTIFUL BILL ACT

Mr. President, if we go back a couple of weeks ago, we were on a reconciliation bill—another vote-arama with unlimited amendments, that we had literally more than 24 hours of amendments on. As we walked through that