

understand the full scope of how our growing national debt threatens our national security. That is why just last week, I helped introduce bipartisan legislation that would require administration officials to look at these national security concerns and explain—to the American people how our ballooning debt impacts our ability to keep them safe in an emerging crisis.

But despite these things, Congress has, unfortunately, time and time again, chosen to add to the problem instead of being part of the solution. So consider this: In every Presidential administration since President George W. Bush, at least \$5 trillion has been added to the national debt.

Since 2002, which was the first year we experienced a deficit following 4 years of a budget surplus, the United States has incurred 20 of the largest deficits in our entire Nation's history.

This is an important fact. The two largest deficits came out of the Trump administration—the Trump administration, the two largest deficits this country has ever faced.

This means that the imbalance between our revenues and spending has been at an alltime high. And just last month, my Republican colleagues took this problem and supercharged it when they passed their reckless so-called One Big Beautiful Bill. It should have been called the "One Big Deficit Bill."

The bill that President Trump signed into law on the Fourth of July will kick millions of people off their healthcare and make it harder for families to put food on their table by cutting food assistance. All the while, they added \$3.5 trillion to the national debt.

Basically, my Republican colleagues betrayed working families and mortgaged our Nation's economic future all to give the wealthiest Americans a tax break.

Instead of putting us on a sustainable fiscal path, this bill has kicked the can down the road once again. Our fiscal house is on fire. Yet, year after year, Washington chooses to add a little more gasoline.

Despite the grave situation we face, I do have some good news. We still have time to turn this around. There are ways to get our fiscal house back in order and stave off potential crises. But it is going to take cooperation from all of us.

Instead of the political gamesmanship and polarization that has taken root in our democracy, this situation will require everyone—everyone—rowing in the same direction. Congress will have to come together in a bipartisan manner to find commonsense measures that strategically address our Nation's debt while investing in economic growth and hard-working, middle-class families.

At the root of this effort is correcting the ever-present imbalance between revenue and spending. This opportunity to restore fiscal discipline is

why I plan to come to the floor on a regular basis to discuss this dire situation posed by the national debt—from looking at how we got here to highlighting the everyday impacts our debt has on everyday Americans to underscoring the impending crisis that is in store if we don't change course. And we must do it quickly.

It is not farfetched to say that we are at an inflection point in our Nation's history and that the futures of our children and our grandchildren are, indeed, at stake. We have all played a part in the deterioration of our fiscal health, and it is time—it is, in fact, past time—that we all play an important part in restoring it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). The Senator from Tennessee. ONE BIG BEAUTIFUL BILL ACT

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, if there are four words to describe the first 7 months of the Senate Republican majority, they would be "promises made; promises kept."

The American people gave us a mandate to secure the border, strengthen the economy, rein in wasteful spending, and make America great again, and that is exactly what we have done while working with President Donald Trump and his administration.

You can start with the Laken Riley Act, which was the first bill signed into law, and this strengthens the Homeland Security Department's efforts to detain criminal illegal aliens and get them out of our communities.

We passed the HALT Fentanyl Act, which empowers the administration to take the fight to the cartels and to end our drug crisis.

We passed Senator HAGERTY's GENIUS Act, which promotes economic freedom and helps ensure that America leads in the development of cryptocurrencies.

We passed a \$9 billion rescissions package, permanently eliminating wasteful spending on everything from biased media outlets to far-left NGOs. This is just the first of many rescissions packages that we are going to send to President Trump's desk.

Now, despite Democratic obstruction, which continues even today, we have also confirmed more than 100 civilian nominees, who are carrying out President Trump's agenda, and we are continuing to fight for confirmation votes to make certain that the President has his entire team in place to serve the needs of the American people.

Most importantly, we did pass the One Big Beautiful Bill. It is now signed into law. There is so much good that is in this legislation that benefits all of the American people.

When I talk to Tennesseans, one of the most important things for them is the permanent extension of President Trump's 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. By extending these provisions, Republicans prevented the largest tax increase in history. It would have been a \$4 trillion tax hike. Now, that is more

than just a number. When you look at what goes into that \$4 trillion tax hike, it would have meant fewer jobs, fewer opportunities, and fewer small businesses getting the doors open and hanging out the shingle.

Just the other day, I was talking to a small business owner in Tennessee, and we were discussing the Big Beautiful Bill and the 2017 law, and he went on to talk about the 2017 tax cuts when they first went in. This enabled him to hire two new employees, two individuals that were desperate for work.

Bear in mind, we had come through the Obama years with high inflation, with a shrinking economy, and the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was really that spur our economy needed to get moving.

Now, this gentleman talked about these two employees and the impact they had made on his business. He was so concerned that if those tax cuts expired, he would struggle to keep these individuals on the payroll. His take was that if we did not pass the Big Beautiful Bill—make the tax cuts permanent, restore bonus depreciation, interest expensing, R&D expensing—that for so many small businesses like his there in Tennessee, the results would be catastrophic.

But what we do know is that with the One Big Beautiful Bill, millions of small businesses can now see their way forward to grow their workforce, especially with some of the new provisions that are there: No tax on tips. No tax on overtime.

As one restaurant owner in Knox County recently said to me, the reduced taxes on tips will help his servers get about \$1,000 more in their pocket every single year. He also knows that helps in making it competitive when you are trying to recruit people to come work in the restaurant business.

A server over in Chattanooga said that these tax cuts will be "beneficial for every server." "We did earn that money," they said. So they think it is great that they are going to be able to keep that money in their pocket.

These tax cuts are just some of the provisions in that bill that will ensure that more Americans are going to keep their hard-earned money.

What we do know is that because of this law—and it is now the law of the land; it was signed on July 4—we know that Tennessee households are going to save about \$2,600 per household, per year, on their tax filing.

Millions of seniors can now count on a bonus enhanced deduction of \$6,000. That is \$6,000, every senior, every year. That would offset what they have paid in income taxes on their Social Security benefits.

American families will benefit from a permanent \$2,200 enhanced child tax credit. Working moms and dads are going to benefit from the employer-provided childcare tax credit, as more employers move forward to offer childcare for their employees.

Family farms can pass their legacy of hard work on to the next generation

due to much needed death tax relief. We now see that raised—\$15 million for an individual, \$30 million for a couple filing jointly.

Tennessee small businesses make up 99.5 percent of businesses in our State. That is 99.5 percent. They are small businesses. They will keep their tax breaks and be able to hire more workers.

While these tax cuts will benefit all Americans, it is hard-working people—middle-income workers, lower income workers—who are going to see the largest reduction in Federal taxes as a percentage of their previous tax bill. After 4 years of Bidenflation, this is much needed relief for hard-working Americans.

Of course, tax cuts are just one part of the Big Beautiful Bill. We secured the largest ever investment in border security to complete the border wall and hire thousands of Border Patrol agents. We strengthened Medicaid for those who truly need it by enacting commonsense work requirements for able-bodied, childless adults. We restored fiscal sanity by eliminating hundreds of billions of dollars in far-left Green New Deal spending. These are huge wins for the American people.

The good news is that President Trump and congressional Republicans are only getting started on delivering on our mandate to make America great again.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MEDICAID

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I appreciate the opportunity to speak today.

Some may know and some may not that today is Medicaid's birthday, and I thought it was probably a good time to—or anniversary or whatever you want to call it. But I came down here to reconnect to a discussion that I was having with my colleagues and with the White House on some of the concerns I have with the provisions in the bill that we packaged that was called the Big Beautiful Bill. That is actually not a marketing term. It is literally what the name of the bill is.

First, I have to stipulate that there are aspects of this bill that I would love to vote on 10 times—for example, the tax reform. The tax portions of this bill were something I worked very hard, as a member of the Finance Committee, to get passed back in 2017. What we did there was to avoid the single largest tax increase in U.S. history. For those who say it was tax breaks to billionaires and corporations, you probably ought to read the language or have somebody who has read it explain it better. The tax reform measures help people who grew up like I did, first and

foremost. Go to that trailer park that I lived at on Richards Road in Antioch, TN, which is just south of downtown Nashville, or go to the one that I lived in in Jacksonville, FL, and ask them what happens—when you ever tax businesses—to their jobs.

I could get into a lot of other discussions, but the bottom line is, I didn't have a problem with the tax provisions. I actually wish that the tax had been in the content of the first bill and that we had taken the time to get the Medicaid policy right.

But I am back here again to talk about the Medicaid policy because we have to get it right. One of the reasons I decided to resign when I was confronted with the challenge of opposing this bill—I should say “retire,” not “resign.” I am still here—was to make the point that getting this policy right was more important than my getting reelected. I think the Medicaid policy in this bill is so fundamentally flawed that if we don't correct it that my colleagues—red State or blue State Republicans, purple State Republicans, and red State Republicans—may end up being guilty of almost the identical mistake that Barack Obama made when he forced ObamaCare down our throats without seeking a single Republican vote to get policy that made sense.

I was so convinced that Obama was wrong that I quit my job and worked full time to get the North Carolina legislature ready for only being in the majority for the second time since the Civil War as I was so convinced the policy was going to be wrong a year before it got implemented and that the Democrats had overreached. I became the second Republican speaker of the house in North Carolina, since the Civil War, based on a bad healthcare decision.

The policy that the House sent us in the reconciliation bill was good policy for Medicaid. It had a work requirement, which I support; it had all kinds of policies for waste, fraud, and abuse that made sense; and it saved \$100 billion over 10 years. But then somebody in the White House tried to convince the Senate that they should up the ante for \$200 billion more in revenue to pass policy that will do, I think, irreparable damage not only in the policy but in the politics, but we have time to fix it.

The reason I came to the floor today on the birthday of Medicaid is to say I believe the President does not want to harm qualified beneficiaries of Medicaid, but this bill will in its current form. There is a way to fix it. There is a way to have President Trump's legacy deliver on his promise not to push people off of Medicaid and government support systems who qualify for them. I am not talking about the ones who probably shouldn't be on it. There is a way to fix it, but if we don't fix it, I believe that our President's legacy—President Trump, whom I have supported; I have supported each one of his election efforts, and I support him to

this day—is at risk if we don't recognize we are done and move on to the next thing.

We don't have to touch a line of the tax policy. We can have a discussion about some of the renewable energy, but I am not going to have that discussion. I want to have a discussion about something that I believe could be the Republicans' ObamaCare. Now, there are some States that probably are not affected substantially, but the majority is. I believe, if we come together and work on this policy and also work on the policy that is set to expire at the end of September—and that is some of the subsidies for the healthcare exchanges for ObamaCare—we could get this right, and this President's legacy will be righting the mistake that was made by Obama and avoiding the mistake that his advisers have told him he should pursue.

So I want the President of the United States and my colleagues in the Senate body to know I am unbridled by any political considerations for the next 17 months, and I stand ready to work with my Republican colleagues and Democrats who are willing to be bipartisan and do something right for our healthcare policy here to get this right. And if I do nothing else in my remaining 17 months, that is worth the effort.

WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Kent nomination.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

VOTE ON GAISER NOMINATION

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I know of no further debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Gaiser nomination?

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. 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 bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGO) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. SLOTKIN) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 450 Ex.]

YEAS—53

Banks	Cramer	Hoeven
Barrasso	Crapo	Husted
Blackburn	Cruz	Hyde-Smith
Boozman	Curtis	Johnson
Britt	Daines	Justice
Budd	Ernst	Kennedy
Capito	Fischer	Lankford
Cassidy	Graham	Lee
Collins	Grassley	Lummis
Cornyn	Hagerty	Marshall
Cotton	Hawley	McConnell