

The American people want Donald Trump to focus on lowering their costs, not rewriting history about his impeachments; not building an extravagant ballroom at the White House, raising \$200 million from his cronies for it—who knows what they get in return; not covering up the Epstein scandal. But, as always, Donald Trump's priorities are way off from what the American people need and want.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

WAIVING QUORUM CALL

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

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

NOMINATIONS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to shine a spotlight on what the Democrats are doing in terms of unprecedented obstruction—obstruction to the Senate nominating process.

The nomination process has been ground to a halt as a result of the Democrats. Today, like every other day this Congress, Senate Republicans will burn hours of floor time on votes that for every other President of the United States would have taken only seconds until now.

President Trump is the only President in modern history not to have a single nominee confirmed by voice vote or unanimous consent—not a single one. Even the most routine nominations are being filibustered. Positions that usually just fly through the Senate by voice vote or unanimous consent are now being treated and taken as political hostages.

This isn't normal. This is petty partisan politics at its worst. And it is petty.

Let me tell you the facts that the Senate Democrats don't want the American people to hear. George Herbert Walker Bush, President of the United States, 98 percent of his nominees were confirmed by a voice vote or unanimous consent. Bill Clinton, President of the United States, 98 percent of his nominees were confirmed by voice vote or unanimous consent. George W. Bush, President of the United States, 90 percent of his nominations were confirmed by voice vote or unanimous consent. President Barack Obama, 90 percent of his nominees were confirmed by voice vote or unanimous consent. Then President Trump took office in his first term and Democrats' obstruction began. The numbers dropped from 90 percent under President Obama to 65 percent under President Trump in that first term. Remember, today it is zero.

It was 65 percent in his first term. Even Joe Biden, a President the Republicans strongly opposed, had 57 percent of his nominations confirmed by voice vote or unanimous consent.

Republicans did not sabotage each and every Biden Ambassador and every Biden Under Secretary simply out of spite. No. Over half were confirmed by unanimous consent. Today, Democrats are obstructing simply for the sake of obstruction. Senate Democrats continue to stonewall the Senate nomination process and to slow-walk every single one of President Trump's nominees.

So I have a copy of today's list. Here we are. I have the Executive Calendar for Friday, August 1, 2025, with totally routine nominees for positions who sailed through the Senate for every other President. Yet Senate Democrats have demanded cloture votes for every single one.

I would ask a single Democrat in this Chamber, without mentioning President Trump's name, tell me why, on the schedule today, the legal advisor for Advocacy for the Small Business Administration is somehow controversial.

Last night, right here, when we were doing cloture votes, a Democrat came in. One of the Republican Senators, after that Democrat voted no, said: Who did we vote on?

The Democrat Senator said: I don't know.

Well, what is wrong with him?

I don't know.

What is the position?

I don't know.

Well, you just voted no on him. Why was that?

Oh.

He was nominated by President Trump. That was the only reason that that nominee got a negative vote from the Democrat.

That is what is happening. That is what we are seeing here, and that is what the Democrats continue to do. Why should this nominee be held up in filibuster? The Democrats can't tell you why. They have no idea why, other than that the nomination was made by President Trump. This isn't about the qualifications of the nominees. This isn't about questioning their resumes or their past histories. This is just resisting President Trump.

Automatic Democrat obstruction doesn't make our communities safer. It doesn't make our country stronger. It doesn't make families and small businesses more prosperous. It just wastes time and weakens America.

Well, despite the Democrats' wall of obstruction, Senate Republicans are continuing to press forward. We have, so far, confirmed 120 nominees since President Trump's second term began. We are doing it one at a time, 1 day at a time, 1 vote at a time, 1 nominee at a time. The good news is we have confirmed twice as many positions and nominees in President Trump's second term compared to his first term.

Let's be clear: Republicans are not backing down. We are going to continue to confirm President Trump's nominees the easy way if we can, the hard way if we must. The American people elected President Trump and the Senate Republicans to get America back on track. After 4 years of high prices and open borders under the Democrats, they expect this President to have his team in place, and that is what the Senate Republicans will continue to do.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the Senator from Wyoming was just on the floor and spoke about the schedule of business here in the U.S. Senate, particularly the question of nominations. Senator BARRASSO is my friend. We disagree on a lot of political things, but we respect one another, and I certainly respect him.

There is an important chapter that he just left out of recounting the history of the nominations process in the Senate. I call it the JD VANCE chapter.

Listen to this: When Donald Trump was in his first term, he nominated over 90 U.S. attorneys. Every one of them passed with a voice vote, with the possible exception of one in Massachusetts. Every one of these passed with a voice vote. In other words, we didn't require any rollcalls. We filled these vacancies for U.S. attorneys.

Then came Joe Biden. Under the Biden Presidency, a decision was made by one Senator, JD VANCE of the State of Ohio. He came along and said: I no longer will allow you—it is my right as a Senator to stop it. I will no longer allow you to have a nominee for U.S. attorney go through without a rollcall.

That sounds like a very minor request, but with potentially over 90 of these rollcalls, we found ourselves backed up in a situation where we couldn't approve any U.S. attorneys. We didn't have the time on the calendar to do it because of the JD VANCE requirement.

I came to this floor—this very spot—eight times, pleading with then-Senator JD VANCE: Please, don't do this. We have comity and understanding on U.S. attorneys. We did under Trump in his first term, and we certainly did in the early stages of Biden, but now you are requiring rollcall votes on each of the U.S. attorneys, and it is going to create an obstacle to progress on the floor of the Senate. Eight times I came to the floor, asking unanimous consent for Senator VANCE to withdraw this demand. He refused each time.

Then he went off to run for Vice President, and while he was gone, running for Vice President, I came to the

floor again and asked the Republicans who were remaining in the Senate Chamber to allow me unanimous consent that nominees for U.S. attorneys will not go through this rollcall process. Unfortunately, a number of now-sitting U.S. Senators on the Republican side came to the floor and objected. They wanted to keep the VANCE rule in place. I warned them that the obstacles they were creating under President Biden that were unprecedented and had not been seen under President Trump in his first term would come back to haunt all of us, and now they have.

This requires us to sit down at some point and have an understanding moving forward not just on nominees and whether there are rollcalls on the floor but on fundamental and basic questions as to whether or not a minority position, for example, on an important Agency or council is going to be respected.

What the Trump administration has done, for example, in many places on commissions and in Agencies is to eliminate the Democrats—to fire them from their jobs—and leave vacancies unfilled. Then the Republicans come to us and say: Well, we have Republican nominees for the spots, the Republican spots.

And we say: What about the Democratic nominees?

They say: We are not going to allow you to call any of those.

There has got to be some understanding and comity, and we think that grown-ups should be able to resolve this issue, but the representation of what our problem is this morning did not include those two elements and many others. I hope we can resolve this in a favorable way for the benefit of the American people, but there is a history behind it. Fundamentally, we are in the minority now on the Democratic side, and we don't believe that the rules that the Republicans insist on should be to their benefit only; they should benefit both political parties. Unfortunately, we are in a position where that is not happening.

ONE BIG BEAUTIFUL BILL ACT

Mr. President, on a separate issue, with the recess looming, my Republican colleagues are itching to get out of Washington and return to their home States. Why are they so eager? I will tell you. They have some explaining to do. That is why they want to get home. As soon as they get out of Washington, they plan to fan out across the country and try to explain the so-called Big Beautiful Bill of President Trump.

Until then, Senate Republicans are taking to the Senate floor to say good things about this bad bill. This includes the junior Senator from Louisiana, who several times came to the Senate floor claiming that Medicaid spending was not cut in the Big Beautiful Bill.

Sorry. That is false. Let me remind folks this Trump budget bill reduces

spending on healthcare programs by \$1 trillion. Louisiana is expected to lose \$27 billion in Federal Medicaid funding over the next decades alone. It removes 10 million Americans from insurance coverage and threatens hospitals and nursing homes, and he waved away the millions of Americans who will lose their healthcare coverage, writing it off as simply going after double dip-pers, which has been explained at length by the Senator from Louisiana as people who are ineligible in the first place for receiving medical coverage.

The Senator held up a press release from CMS, the Federal Medicaid Agency, with a splashy, deceiving headline, claiming that 2.8 million Americans are signed up for Medicaid in two different States. Well, if fraud on that scale does exist, then I want to join the effort to put an end to it. Unfortunately, the statement is not accurate. That is not what is happening. The CMS press release provided zero evidence of that claim about massive scale fraud. It is like the President's statement after the State of the Union Address that people 120 years old were drawing Social Security. Not true.

He claimed that stopping duplicated enrollment has the "potential to save taxpayers approximately \$14 billion annually." That is a large number. How did they arrive at that conclusion with no report, no findings, and no data underpinning its sensational headline? That was the point. The supposed smoking gun that the junior Senator from Louisiana touted but failed to mention was that, if someone is enrolled in both States, it can be explained in some of the basics, like they moved or that their name was found on two Federal health programs. Fraud? Maybe. They could have lost their job and no longer could pay health premiums, so they enrolled in Medicaid. That is not fraud. Even CMS had the caveat of the word "potential" when talking about whether people were actually receiving benefits from two different programs. CMS used "potential" again when talking about the cost to taxpayers.

It fits the Republican narrative to tell half the story. It is an effort to cover their tracks when it comes to retroactivity to justify the massive devastation that was caused by the Big Beautiful Bill.

What the junior Senator from Louisiana wants you to believe is that the only way to root out waste, fraud, and abuse in Medicaid is by passing the single largest healthcare cut in American history. I think he is just wrong. My colleague ignored a warning from the Louisiana Hospital Association and the Louisiana Rural Hospital Coalition, which wrote that cuts in the Big Beautiful Bill will be "historic in their devastation" and "force consolidation of services, staffing reductions, and closures." That is the reality in Louisiana of the Big Beautiful Bill.

His fears were echoed in the trip I took last weekend to southern Illinois,

to Springfield. Doctors and nurses there warned that Medicaid cuts will force rural-based providers to scale back services and push patients into overcrowded emergency rooms, straining the entire system.

I heard the same story at Roseland Community Hospital in Chicago, which relies on Medicaid for 63 percent of their patients. A hospital that has served its community for 100 years is facing what the CEO said was a "game over" situation.

To the junior Senator from Louisiana who believes this budget bill is merely stopping cheaters from enrolling in Medicaid, he can sing that tune to 33 rural hospitals in his home State which are now at risk of closing. That is what this awful bill does.

You might be wondering: What are we going to do with the \$1 trillion in healthcare cut money? It is going to go to tax cuts for billionaires. Goodness gracious. Give Elon Musk a \$250,000 tax cut, and I am sorry to say he won't even notice it. That is the reality. But these hospitals, particularly rural hospitals, will notice it, and many of them will be forced to close. The same thing will be true for nursing homes, which provide valuable, lifesaving services to senior citizens. They face cutbacks because of the Big Beautiful Bill, and families are going to have to sacrifice as a result.

While in Ohio, Vice President VANCE said: "If that Big, Beautiful Bill hadn't passed, you all would have gotten a tax increase to the tune of thousands of dollars," and "we happen to believe that you all work very hard for your money. You ought to keep it."

A great sentiment, but it is not true. The truth is that working families will see more of their hard-earned money gone for higher personal healthcare costs. Hang on tight. The cost of health insurance premiums and the cost of healthcare itself is going to continue to increase, at the expense of American families. We estimate they will lose \$2,400 a year.

What is the tax break that comes out of the Big Beautiful Bill? If you are making \$35,000 or less in annual income, \$13 a month—\$13 a month versus \$2,400 a year. Do the math. Working families will be the losers in that respect.

Coupled with the costs of losing healthcare coverage, grocery benefits, and higher prices on clothing, prescriptions, and groceries due to tariffs, that translates into huge losses for working families.

The Vice President says you "ought to keep" your hard-earned money, but the Republican bill only gives crumbs to working Americans. So while millionaires, billionaires, and big corporations rake in the dough, working families are left with scraps. And Donald Trump, JD VANCE, and congressional Republicans are hoping you don't notice.

I also want to take a moment to discuss the energy provisions in this bill.