

change, but to most Americans, a \$1,200 increase cost would be devastating. For most families, \$1,200 could be the difference between putting food on the table or not, between affording medications or doctors' appointments or having to skip them.

Americans, do you worry about car prices? The Trump tariffs will raise your car prices. Do you use a car to get to work? The Trump tariffs will make gas prices go up.

And we should not listen at all to Donald Trump when he says it is about stopping fentanyl. That is nonsense. There are other ways to stop fentanyl without making inflation worse and raising costs on the American family. But Donald Trump clearly doesn't care. He said the American people need to suck it up and to accept that there would be "some pain" after his tariffs go into effect. That is outrageous. That is what an out-of-touch billionaire says.

Meanwhile, both sides of the ideological spectrum know the damage of these tariffs. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce—hardly a liberal group—said President Trump's tariffs "will only raise prices for American families and upend supply chains."

Even The Wall Street Journal Editorial Board—again, no friend of liberals—said that President Trump's tariffs will result in "the dumbest trade war in history." That is what this would be, as The Wall Street Journal Editorial Board said, "the dumbest trade war in history."

This is not what the American people want. Senate Democrats are not going to stand quiet as Donald Trump makes inflation worse. We will push legislation soon to protect people's bottom lines and stop the President from unilaterally plunging us into a trade war with our own allies.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, 2 weeks. It has been 2 weeks with the new President. The inauguration seems so far in the distant past. It is hard to believe. What this administration has tried to do during the first 2 weeks is almost impossible to describe in a very short period of time—so many Executive orders, so many changes, so many speeches by the President, so many threats, so many changes in the way this government is run—and many of them raising serious questions that even go to the heart of the Constitution.

Since President Trump took office 2 weeks ago, he has sown chaos across the Federal Government, but despite his campaign promises, something has been conspicuously absent from his agenda: lowering the cost of living for Americans. The unprecedented, economically questionable tariffs he announced on Friday on three of Amer-

ica's largest trading partners—25 percent on Canada and Mexico and 10 percent more on China—show just that.

I said to my staff, when they handed me a copy of this speech which was written this morning, that there have been some developments during the course of the day when it comes to Mexico—at least a postponement of the imposition of tariffs on Mexico for a month. Canada is still a work in progress, as far as we know. Despite campaigning on a promise of lowering prices, these tariffs will not do that. They will do just the opposite. American families will find things more expensive.

Don't take my word for it. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce said that tariffs will "only raise prices for American families and upend supply chains." That is the Chamber of Commerce.

The National Association of Manufacturers said:

Ultimately, manufacturers will bear the brunt of these tariffs, undermining our ability to sell our products at a competitive price and putting American jobs at risk.

The President himself even admitted that these economic measures will cause pain for many American families.

Trade between my home State of Illinois and Canada and Mexico are essential to the strength of our economy. More than 1 out of 10 workers in Illinois works for the export market. Illinois is the fourth largest exporter State in the Nation. And what are our first and second largest export markets? Canada and Mexico.

As a result of these tariffs the President is proposing, working families will feel the pain. These tariffs will drive up costs for manufacturers; it will disrupt our supply chain; and they have already inspired retaliatory tariffs which American consumers will feel at the store. Clearly, our outrage at this senseless policy may be working. Today, the President announced he will delay the tariffs with Mexico for a month. I am glad to hear that.

Let's be clear about one thing: Unless you are a tech billionaire or you are helping someone to get rich through the crypto market, the President does not care about making your life better. He only cares about enriching himself at the expense of everyday Americans. So, when you wonder why the stock market is dipping and the price of eggs and potatoes goes up at the grocery store and when your oil change is marked up, know that it was because of the policy of the new President who has been in office for 2 weeks.

NOMINATION OF PAMELA BONDI

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on another equally important matter, this week, the Senate will vote on the nomination of Pam Bondi to serve as Attorney General.

Given the Trump administration's ongoing purge of Justice Department officials, I urge my colleagues to look

very carefully and closely at Ms. Bondi's nomination. President Trump has repeatedly made it clear that he values loyalty above all else when it comes to Attorneys General.

Don't take my word for it. Look at what happened in his first term. He fired his first Attorney General and forced out a second for insufficient loyalty; and he said as much. President Trump has said time and again he expects the Justice Department to seek "retribution" on his behalf. In Ms. Bondi, I am afraid, the President has finally found someone who passes his loyalty test.

Now, look, if you look at the resume of Pam Bondi, you will find that she served as attorney general for the State of Florida for two terms. She has experience as an attorney general of our third largest State. You are not only going to hear that over and over, but it appears that she is prepared to break with bipartisan tradition when it comes to a nonpartisan Department of Justice—one that upholds the rule of law and is free of undue political influence from the White House.

I am not convinced that she is dedicated to these ideals. She was the leader in an effort to overturn the 2020 election. To this day, she still clings to the basic loyalty oath that was required of those who were a part of that effort. She refuses to acknowledge that Joe Biden won the Presidential election in 2020—she can't get over it—and she echoed the President-elect's calls for prosecuting his political opponents, including a pledge she made publicly that the "prosecutors will be prosecuted, and the investigators will be investigated."

Sadly, Ms. Bondi's threat is already coming to fruition. Since President Trump's inauguration, his administration has purged dozens of senior career civil servants at the Department of Justice and the FBI, including longtime nonpartisan leaders of the government's counterterrorism and counterespionage efforts. These career civil servants are responsible for coordinating the Justice Department's fight against international terrorism and foreign spies. These removals substantially diminish America's ability to respond to national security threats. Quite simply, they are a danger to the public. The Trump administration's purge of these officials is a naked political move.

In firing a dozen career prosecutors, the Acting Attorney General issued a memo that said in that memo:

Given your significant role in prosecuting the President, I do not believe the leadership of the Department can trust you.

How blunt can you be?

Line attorneys and agents are similarly being bullied now simply because their assigned tasks were linked to the criminal investigation of the President or the January 6 riots—one of the largest prosecutions in the history of the United States when an insurrectionist mob came to the floor of this Senate,

rifled through my desk—I saw this on tape—assumed the chair that is being held now by the President of the Senate, posed for pictures, made all sorts of signs, left notes behind, and tore up the Capitol Building. At the end of the day, 140 law enforcement officers were hurt, and 4 lost their lives. That was the reality of what happened on January 6.

Do we expect the Justice Department to do nothing about the hundreds of people who stormed this Capitol? We saw it on videotape. Nobody is making this up. What they did was to prosecute them for the crimes that they committed. Many of them were sentenced, and many of them pled guilty when they saw the videotapes that portrayed exactly what they did on that day. The Justice Department prosecuted them, and many of them ended up in jail—some of them with serious sentences for their serious misconduct.

Now comes the new President, Donald Trump, and on his first day in office, he absolves them from criminal guilt and tells them they are free to go.

A question has to be asked of the American people: If someone came bursting into your home or your church or your school and tore it up, beat up those who were trying to maintain order and did it all on videotape, should they be held responsible for it?

I certainly think so. That is certainly true when it comes to this building, which represents the symbol of America and our democracy. If you want to desecrate this building, you should pay the price.

The American people deserve an Attorney General who will acknowledge that reality, who will protect the fundamental rights of this country, demonstrate independence and integrity, and remain faithful to the Constitution, the country, and the rule of law.

Ms. Bondi, during the course of her testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, was also asked about Kash Patel, the President's nominee to head up the Federal Bureau of Investigation. She made it clear that she supports him. I don't. I don't because he doesn't have the experience to hold the job. He certainly has nothing in his background to suggest that he can supervise 38,000 FBI agents and employees and 400 field offices around the world trying to keep America safe every single day. Yet she stood behind him.

I fear Ms. Bondi will only protect and remain faithful to one person throughout this whole experience, and that is the President who is giving her this opportunity.

I urge my colleagues to look carefully at her record and the record of Kash Patel. They are a team in this effort, and they should be held accountable for what they have said and written and the positions that they have taken in support of the President, even when his positions are not consistent, in my mind, with the equal and free administration of justice.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BRITT). The Senator from Iowa.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, over the last 3 or 4 years, I have come to the floor to discuss with my colleagues information that I get from whistleblowers in the FBI and the Department of Justice, most of it dealing with the subject of the critical weaponization of people at the highest levels of the FBI and their violating of protocol, getting involved in political situations that the FBI has no business being in.

Last week, when Mr. Patel was before my Judiciary Committee, I released some new emails that I have gotten that show further involvement of certain people in the case against Trump that Jack Smith headed up. I am here today because, when I released those emails, last week, there was a New York Times story that got it all wrong. So, today, I want to bring to my colleagues' attention a January 30, 2025, New York Times article from Adam Goldman and Alan Feuer about my and Senator JOHNSON's oversight of the FBI.

In that article they said: "FBI emails released Thursday showed that agents and officials followed standard procedure" when opening the Trump elector case.

Well, they read it wrong, and I am going to tell you why they read it wrong.

The article written by these two can be summed up like this: a very wet kiss to the politically biased leadership within the FBI.

Last week, Senator JOHNSON and I made public FBI records that showed a snapshot into the origins of the Jack Smith elector case against Trump. Those records included a February 14, 2022, email from Assistant Special Agent in Charge Thibault to his subordinate agent, Michelle Ball. The subject line of that email was "Elector Matter."

My office has been told that Thibault handpicked subordinate agents, including Michelle Ball and Jamie Garman, who are both referenced in the documents that I released, to conceal his role as an initiating agent. The documents Senator JOHNSON and I released support that.

In the February 2022 email, Special Agent Thibault says, in part: "Here is [the] draft opening language we discussed." Attached to that email is a Word document titled "Elector." That Word document, when opened, contains information that became part of the predicated document that would later be approved to open the case code-named "Arctic Frost." That was all about prosecuting then-Citizen Trump.

When opening the Word document, it says this: "Author: Timothy Thibault." It also says this: "Last modified by: Timothy Thibault."

Today, Senator JOHNSON and I will be publicly releasing a new email that we

have obtained that was sent from Thibault to Michelle Ball and Jamie Garman on March 1, 2022. In the email, Thibault says: "To add . . . will come by to discuss." The document was attached to the email, with language to be added to the Arctic Frost document opening the investigation against Trump.

The document attached to the email lists the author and modifier as—you guess it—Thibault.

The document itself is titled "Arctic Frost," and it adds President Trump as a criminal subject to the investigation. Notably, the document lists then-Chairman DURBIN's 2021 investigative report on Trump to help justify that Trump yet fails to use my 2021 report, which provided much needed context.

Now, the New York Times article said the FBI records Senator JOHNSON and I made public "showed that agents and officials followed standard procedure," but that totally ignores the facts and evidence, let alone not even considering the FBI rules for making these determinations for opening a prosecution case.

So I go to these rules. Section 7.7.1 in the FBI's Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide—and that is, essentially, the FBI's manual—is titled, "Opening Documentation."

That rule shows the work flow approval and makes clear that supervisors—I want to emphasize "supervisors"—are to approve the work product provided to them. The point here is Thibault did not conduct himself like that sort of a supervisor.

In other words, the intent of this rule, based on its plain text, is that subordinate agents provide work product to supervising agents for the latter's approval. Should there be any doubt about this intent, look no further than section 3.5.2.3 titled "No Self-Approval Rule." That rule says, in part: "an approval official (and the rule uses the word supervisor to define this person) may not self-approve his/her own work activity. An independent evaluation and approval of these activities must be obtained, including the opening and closing of any Assessment or predicated investigation."

Then the rule says this: "In the event that an FBI employee errantly conducts a self-approval, the approval is considered substantial non-compliance and must be documented." So that leaves you with Thibault self-approving something that he wasn't supposed to self-approve.

Moreover, another FBI document defines "general roles and privileges" of supervisors as this: "Supervisor—assigns leads; approves documents; assigns squad current workload."

None of this says that a supervisor like Thibault is allowed to draft and open a case and approve it for themselves.

Based on the facts and the evidence that Senator JOHNSON and I have obtained to date, and based on the FBI's own rules, Thibault essentially self-approved his own case, in violation of FBI