

why today, I will join every single Democrat in opposing the nomination of Russell Vought. All 47 Democrats are opposed to Vought's nomination, and we will take the floor early this afternoon and spend the whole night discussing how bad this nomination is, how badly it affects working families.

His confirmation would be a disaster for working families and a godsend to billionaires who don't pay their fair share in taxes. All they want, these billionaires: Cut any program. We don't care what they are; we don't care what the consequences are; we don't care how it hurts people as long as we, the ultrawealthy, can get a deeper tax break—even though they are doing very well right now.

So we will come to the floor and sound the alarm on Russell Vought through the night. We will expose his ultraright record as the chief architect of Project 2025. We will expose how he is turning Project 2025 into the White House agenda.

When Donald Trump was running for President and 2025 was made public, it was regarded so horrifically by the American people that Donald Trump had to say: I don't know anything about it. But right now, with Vought, who is one of the chief architects of Project 2025, as head of OMB, all of it, much of it—damaging and dangerous for the American people—will be implemented.

That is why Americans do not want Russell Vought, the author of 2025, to head such an all-powerful, all-encompassing Agency as OMB. We will hold firm in standing against Russell Vought because of all the ways he stands against the working people of America.

HEAD START

Mr. President, now on Head Start and the effect of the funding freeze—even a week after Donald Trump backed off his ill-designed funding freeze, the collateral damage still lingers for millions across the country. He was forced by public pressure, by Senate Democrats and by others, to back off on the funding freeze. But that doesn't mean the harm all went away. It is still being done.

And a painful example is the damage done to Head Start programs everywhere. Every single Head Start program was halted last week, despite White House claims they were exempt. And that is a fact. Just go ask your Head Start program in your State.

Does Donald Trump realize what Head Start does? It is childcare for kids, dental care for kids, adult education. Does he realize that most families in America are either single-parent families or families who have two parents but both are working? And if there is no Head Start, the families can get in a panic almost: Who is going to watch the kids? Do I have to take off from work? Will my boss dock me in pay? Will my boss fire me? How do I get good care for the kids if Head Start isn't working?

It is a nightmare for people throughout the middle class in America. That is why childcare is so important.

Why then?

With that kind of trauma people would face, that daily worry about how you find childcare if Head Start is gone, it is supremely cruel and it is going to make life more difficult, more expensive for working families.

Do you want to know where the idea to eliminate Head Start comes from? Russell Vought and Project 2025.

When we are talking about how bad 2025 is and they say we just want to get rid of waste—oh, no, they want to eliminate the whole thing. They explicitly want to eliminate the program all together. “Who cares,” they say, “what it does to help kids and parents?”

That is another reason why Democrats will never, never support someone like Russell Vought to lead the OMB. We will all oppose him on the floor and speak about it, as I said, through the night.

Even in a week after the funding freeze supposedly ended, I am still getting calls from Head Start programs throughout New York. They are missing funds, suffering technical issues, or unable to operate at all. There is no one to answer the phone.

You are a Head Start program. You get money every 2 weeks. You have to pay the rent. You have to pay the workers and you call up and say: I haven't gotten my check. You say the freeze is over. There is no one at the other end of the line. No one to answer.

It is chaos—cruel chaos.

In Upstate New York, the Head Start program that serves Cattaraugus and Wyoming Counties—very conservative areas; Republican areas—they haven't received funding in over a week and have been forced to temporarily close. Two hundred kids have lost out on childcare from this one incident. Every single staffer has been laid off.

This is the handiwork, my fellow Americans, of Russell Vought and Project 2025. Put him in OMB, and you are going to see a lot more of this—a lot more damage to average working families. And this is not just happening in New York. It is happening across the country, in States like Washington, Michigan, Connecticut, Wisconsin. All of this chaos with Head Start is precisely what Russell Vought and Project 2025 want.

I am writing to HHS and demanding they take immediate action to fix the problems with Head Start. First, we need HHS to fix the payment system and get out the money that is now overdue, and we need them to do it now. Second, the Trump administration must stop the disruptions and fix every glitch preventing Head Start from accessing funding. And, third, we need HHS to stop leaving our childcare providers in the dark. They need to explain what went wrong and how they will fix it and how quickly they will fix it and when people will be getting the dollars they were promised to pay the

rent, to pay the workers, to care for the kids.

NOMINATION OF KASHYAP PATEL

Finally, Mr. President, the FBI.

Yesterday, the FBI handed over to the Justice Department a list of thousands—thousands—of employees involved in the January 6 investigation. These actions have political retribution written all over them, and it will get worse if Kash Patel is named FBI Director.

The Senate should not rubberstamp a patently partisan nominee like Kash Patel to lead the FBI. I join the Senate Democrats on the Judiciary Committee. I am demanding a second hearing of Mr. Patel. He clearly withheld information from Senators about plans for political retribution of the FBI. These agents are now on the firing line, which wasn't known when he first had the hearing that that would happen, so he clearly withheld that information from Senators. Either Mr. Patel serves the interests of the American people or he serves the interests of Donald Trump, which, of course, all too often diverge.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

NOMINATION OF ERIC TURNER

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, the Senate is soon going to vote on the confirmation of Scott Turner to be the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

He grew up in Texas and dreamed of a career playing in the National Football League. He achieved not just that dream but a great deal more. He used his platform as a player to help others achieve their own dreams. These leadership qualities are fundamental to who Scott is. They are going to serve him well as the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

Scott also has extensive experience in State government and the Federal Government. After playing in the NFL, he served his community in the Texas legislature. In 2019, he oversaw investments in opportunity zones under President Trump. In that role, he secured more than \$50 billion in private investments for over 8,700 economically distressed communities. These investments helped to revitalize many forgotten communities.

Senator TIM SCOTT of South Carolina, who is now the chairman of the Banking Committee, created these opportunity zones in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017. Scott Turner was instrumental in their success. He is the right man to help restore opportunity now. He is going to put his experience and his leadership skills to work for the American people, and I strongly support his nomination.

BORDER SECURITY

On a separate matter, Mr. President, President Trump and Republicans were elected to secure the border. That is exactly what we are doing.

In his first few weeks in office, President Trump declared an emergency at

the southern border. He restored “Remain in Mexico.” He shut down the Biden amnesty act. President Trump signed an Executive order to defund sanctuary cities. He began deportation flights for criminal illegal immigrants. He signed the Laken Riley Act into law. He listed international drug cartels as foreign terrorist organizations. He pledged to send 30,000 of the worst illegal immigrant criminals to Guantanamo Bay.

Here are just a few of the criminals who are now off of American streets:

In Seattle, Immigration and Customs Enforcement arrested a Mexican national who was convicted—convicted—of raping a child. He is being deported.

In Philadelphia, ICE arrested a Mexican national who was convicted of possessing child pornography. He was also a drug dealer. He is being deported.

In Los Angeles, ICE arrested an MS-13 gang member who is wanted for murder in El Salvador. He is being deported.

In Houston, ICE arrested another gang member who is wanted for aggravated assault. He is being deported.

In Baltimore, ICE arrested a Cuban national for drug trafficking and weapons charges. He is being deported.

In Buffalo, NY, ICE arrested a Jordanian national with suspected terrorist ties to ISIS. He is being deported.

In San Diego, ICE arrested an Afghan national with terrorist ties. This individual had an existing removal order. He is now being deported.

In all, there were 7,330 arrests of illegal immigrant criminals by the end of President Trump’s first week in office, and 97 percent of illegal immigrants who have been deported in the last 17 days were actually issued removal orders under President Joe Biden, but they were never removed. That is right—97 percent of those deported had been given removal orders under Biden. These are people who should have been removed, who were ordered by a judge to be removed; but yet Biden and the Democrats defied the law of the land and allowed each one of these illegal immigrant criminals to stay.

President Trump’s bold actions are also discouraging future border crossings. On Monday, we saw the number of illegal crossings drop significantly once again into our Nation. This is a drastic reduction from the previous administration. The average number of illegal crossings in the final week of the Biden administration was between 1,200 and 1,400 each and every day. All in all, President Trump is off to a strong start, and there is more to come.

Congress still has important work to do. I spoke with Tom Homan at the White House last week, where we were for the signing of the Laken Riley Act. Tom, of course, is President Trump’s border czar. His task is to secure the border and deport illegal immigrants. He previously ran Immigration and Customs Enforcement. He knows what

it means to secure the border. Mr. Homan said simply to me: I need resources when it comes to securing the border. And I believe him. They do.

The best way to get these resources is for Congress to pass a targeted bill, a bill that backs up the President’s bold Executive actions. The Senate is already moving quickly to get President Trump’s personnel in place. We confirmed Kristi Noem to be Secretary of Homeland Security. We also confirmed Pete Hegseth to be Secretary of Defense. Congress must now ensure that they have the resources they need to continue the job.

A targeted reconciliation bill will give immigration officials the tools they need to secure the border. That means funding to finish the wall. It means more ICE and Border Patrol agents, more detention beds. That includes Guantanamo Bay. It means more technology—not just at the ports but also between the ports of entry—to stop the flood of illegal immigrants. It is essential that we have the manpower, the technology, and the wall to prevent illegal immigrants from coming into our country. All three are needed to fully secure the border.

President Trump has already acted decisively. A targeted reconciliation bill will be the rocket fuel for safety and for security. This is the golden opportunity to make America safer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be able to complete my remarks before the vote.

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

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would like to continue along the theme that our majority whip has talked about, particularly the hand-wringing that we are seeing and fearmongering we are hearing from some of our Democratic colleagues over President Trump’s promise to secure the border and the actions that he has taken already early in his administration to do exactly that, including enforcing our existing laws by repatriating, or deporting, people who have no legal right to be here in the first place.

So, instead of the fearmongering of mass deportations, you might just call this enforcing the law—something that is long overdue and that the Biden administration did not do—because the fearmongering is not based on reality. Our Democratic colleagues would have the American people believe that an elderly grandma down the street—a peaceful neighbor who would never hurt a fly and who poses no threat to anyone—will have ICE banging on her door tomorrow morning. Well, that is the picture that the left wants the American people to imagine when they hear the words “mass deportation.”

Last December, in a Judiciary Committee hearing, then-Chairman DURBIN, the Senator from Illinois, went so far as to say the President’s repatri-

ation program would “weaken our Armed Forces” and “devastate our economy.” That is a lot of hyperbole there. If that is what enforcing our law means, it certainly sounds disturbing.

But the American people can see right through what our Democratic colleagues are trying to do here. They are trying to sow fear into the hearts of the American people that this President, whom a majority of the voters elected, is going to tear their communities and their families apart. But the image could not be farther from the truth. We know that the Biden administration’s own policies and failure to enforce the law have been doing just that—tearing families and communities apart.

Start with the fentanyl epidemic in our country, which is among the leading causes of death—the leading cause of death—for young people between the ages of 18 and 45 and which took the lives of more than 70,000 people last year alone in this country. Then there are the 400,000 or more unaccompanied children who have been trafficked across our open borders, and tens of thousands of these children have simply been lost because of the Biden administration’s carelessness.

The New York Times ran a couple of investigative stories, saying they tried to contact the sponsors for 85,000 of these unaccompanied children who had been placed with sponsors during the Biden administration. There was no answer and no follow-up because the Biden administration took the responsibility that it was no longer their job; it was the job of the child welfare agencies in the various States.

These tragedies are the result of the policies of the Biden administration, not the Trump administration, and it is one reason President Trump was elected decisively on November 5, but there is more to the story.

Untold misery and heartache have been caused by criminals who have entered our country illegally. By our best estimate, roughly 1.7 million “got-aways” came across the open borders during the Biden administration. These were people who, if they were here for, let’s say, benign reasons, could have just turned themselves in to the Border Patrol and claimed asylum, knowing they would be released or would have been paroled by the Biden administration and given a work permit; but at least 1.7 million “got-aways” were evading law enforcement, frankly, because they were up to no good.

We have now learned what the toll of this invasion of criminality has caused. Last summer in Houston, TX, a 12-year-old girl named Jocelyn Nungaray disappeared on her way to the grocery store. She was found dead in a creek, having been strangled and killed by two men from Venezuela who had entered the country illegally. Both of these men had been apprehended by Customs and Border Protection months earlier, but they had been given a court date and then were released.

Last month, an illegal migrant from Mexico was caught with a blowtorch near the side of the Kenneth fire—one of the deadly fires that was ravaging Los Angeles. This is a man who was already on probation and had violated that probation.

If it is proven that he had started the fire, this would be a slap in the face to everyone whose world has been rocked by the devastation we have seen from these terrible fires out in California. If it turns out that he was one of the ones who started the fire, that would be another indictment of the policies of the Biden administration for the last 4 years.

Then 2 weeks ago, Boston ICE officials arrested multiple MS-13 gang members and criminals on a worldwide law enforcement “wanted” list for serious crimes. They arrested murder and rape suspects, including a member of the Haitian gang who had 18 convictions. These were the types of people that the Biden administration allowed loose in our country.

We know that ICE—Immigration and Customs Enforcement—has now arrested criminals who have committed sexual assault, domestic violence, and drug- and weapon-related crimes, but these are just a few examples of the hundreds of criminal arrests made just in the few short weeks since President Trump took office.

To the Democrats who would decry these arrests, would you want these criminals to be your neighbor? I am going to guess the answer is no.

With criminal illegal migrants running rampant throughout the country, it is no surprise that Americans voted overwhelmingly for a President who pledged to reverse the course from the reckless open border policies of the Biden administration.

We know last week President Trump signed the Laken Riley Act. I was honored to be present at the White House with our friend and colleague Senator KATIE BRITT to watch him sign this legislation into law.

Laken Riley, for whom this law was named, was a 22-year-old woman who went missing after going on a run. She was killed by a Venezuelan national who was also a gang member. He should have never been running loose in our country in the first place. It was President Biden’s open border policies that led to this horrific murder of Laken Riley.

The Laken Riley Act will now, having been signed into law, require the Department of Homeland Security to detain noncitizens charged with or convicted of theft-related crimes or any crime that results in death or serious bodily injury. I introduced an amendment during the deliberations on the bill that would add assaulting a law enforcement officer to that list.

As we know here in the Senate, there is a 60-vote threshold to be able to close off debate and to actually move on to pass legislation. It ensures that we have bipartisan consensus. I am

glad to say that the Laken Riley Act passed the Senate with bipartisan support. I appreciate the recognition that the status quo during the previous administration could no longer exist.

The Laken Riley Act is not an example of some extremism, but it is an issue that affects the day-to-day safety and livelihoods of regular Americans.

I think it is perfectly fair to say that the deportations or repatriations that the Trump administration has already begun are very much in the spirit of the Laken Riley Act.

Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem made clear over the weekend that the Trump administration’s first priority will be to detain and deport what she called the “worst of the worst”; that is, bad actors with warrants out for arrest for murder, rape, assault, and drug trafficking.

After the criminal aliens are deported, she said the next priority will be individuals under final orders of deportation; in other words, those who have exhausted all possible legal recourse to be able to stay in the United States, having lost their claim for asylum.

There are more than 1½ million—1½ million—immigrants who have exhausted their legal remedies in a court of law and are under final orders of deportation, but the Biden administration simply did nothing about it. So removing these individuals who have no legal right to remain in the United States and who have been given due process and have lost their case—deporting them is a commonsense next step and one that is long overdue.

So when the mainstream media and our Democratic colleagues engage in fearmongering about these so-called mass deportations, I hope people remember we are talking primarily about criminals, and we are talking about people who have no legal right to remain in the United States, having exhausted all of their legal remedies in order to do so. I hope we can all agree that these are not people who deserve to remain in America.

America naturalizes about 1 million people a year. I personally believe and I think Americans generally agree that legal immigration has been the secret sauce for America. It is what helped make us the great country we are today, prosperous and strong. But it is illegal immigration that has been a scourge and has created much heartache and misery and, frankly, makes us a laughing stock when we talk about the rule of law.

Removing and deporting en masse the criminals and gangs who have entered our country illegally over the last 4 years and faced no consequences means that Americans will have less to fear, and they will be safer in their communities and in their homes. They will no longer have to fear that one of their children will accidentally take a fentanyl-laced pill—make it less likely. We still have work to do there, obviously. They no longer will have to fear

that their daughter will go on a run around her college campus or walk to the grocery store and never return home because she has been abducted and murdered by somebody who had no legal right to be here in the first place.

By ending President Biden’s open border policies and deporting criminals and gang members and people under final orders of deportation, President Trump is making our Nation safe again. That is not something we should fear; it is something we should welcome.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON TURNER NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Turner nomination?

Mrs. MURRAY. 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 senior assistant executive clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Maryland (Ms. ALSOBROOKS) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 55, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 35 Ex.]

YEAS—55

Banks	Graham	Mullin
Barrasso	Grassley	Murkowski
Blackburn	Hagerty	Paul
Boozman	Hawley	Ricketts
Britt	Hoeben	Risch
Budd	Husted	Rounds
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Collins	Justice	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sheehy
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Tillis
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Curtis	McConnell	Welch
Daines	McCormick	Wicker
Ernst	Moody	Young
Fetterman	Moran	
Fischer	Moreno	

NAYS—44

Baldwin	Hirono	Rosen
Bennet	Kaine	Sanders
Blumenthal	Kelly	Schatz
Blunt Rochester	Kim	Schiff
Booker	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Coons	Lujan	Slotkin
Cortez Masto	Markey	Smith
Duckworth	Merkley	Van Hollen
Durbin	Murphy	Warner
Gallago	Murray	Warnock
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Warren
Hassan	Padilla	Whitehouse
Heinrich	Peters	Wyden
Hickenlooper	Reed	

NOT VOTING—1

Alsobrooks

The nomination is confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RICKETTS). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The Senator from South Dakota.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST

Mr. THUNE. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call