half of their nominees confirmed by unanimous consent or voice vote.

Well, fast-forward to today. President Trump has been in office for 8 months, and he has not had one single civilian nominee confirmed by unanimous consent or voice vote—not one. Democrats have dragged out the process of every single nominee, even on nominees they ended up voting for by large margins. It is Trump derangement syndrome on steroids. That is right—Trump derangement syndrome on steroids.

If this were a matter of historically bad nominees, as the Democrat leader tried to claim, the Democrats wouldn't be voting for a number of these nominees in committee or supporting them on final passage. No, this isn't about the quality of the candidates or any other substantive issue; this is simply the world's longest, most drawn-out temper tantrum over losing an election. Democrats can't stand the fact that President Trump was elected, and so they have destroyed decades upon decades of Senate precedent and turned a historically bipartisan process into an exercise in petty partisanship—an exercise in petty partisanship that is doing a profound disservice to the American people because, of course, Democrats' actions have consequences.

First and foremost, those consequences are delays in filling essential positions throughout the administration—in our government, the people's government. Empty desks do not help the government function, and unnecessary delays rob a duly elected President of the team he needs to carry out his responsibilities.

Dragging out confirmations also ties up the Senate floor. As the senior Senator from Minnesota said last year in what I would say were much less dire confirmation circumstances, ''As the Senate spends more of its time working on nominations, this leaves less time for legislating on issues that are important to the American people.'' Well, thanks to Democrats' historic obstruction, that is even more true today. We are, in fact, as the senior Democrat from Minnesota said, at risk of becoming a ''full-time employment agency.''

This situation has become unsustainable. To clear the current backlog of nominees on the calendar and in committee, we would need to take another 600 votes before the end of the year. Now, let me just repeat that to put it into context. To clear the current backlog of nominees on the calendar and in committee, we would need to take another 600 votes. To put that number in perspective, that is more votes than this recordbreaking Senate has taken all year up until now. Again, that is just for nominations that have already been sent to Congress, not those that are going to be forwarded and that we are going to have to process additionally, on top of the 600 votes, between now and the end of the year. There literally are hundreds more nominations to come from the administration.

So if Democrats' obstruction continues, as Democrats have made abundantly clear that it will, there is no practical way that we can come close to filling all the vacancies in the 4 years of this administration no matter how many hours the Senate works.

So we have a crisis, and it is time to take steps to restore Senate precedent and codify in Senate rules what once was understood to be standard practice, and that is the Senate's acting expeditiously on Presidential nominations to allow a President to get his team into place. So this afternoon, I will be taking the necessary procedural steps to amend the rules. It is an idea, as I said earlier, with a Democrat pedigree. The senior Democrat Senator from Minnesota, along with her colleague in the Democratic caucus, the junior Senator from Maine, made a similar proposal in 2023, which would have codified in Senate rules the longtime Senate precedent of en bloc nominations, of moving nominations in groups.

Our measure is not as extensive as that of my Democrat colleagues. It only applies to nominees at the sub-Cabinet level and not to article III judicial nominees, as theirs did. But the proposals share the same objective, and that is providing for confirming groups of nominees altogether so the President can have his team in place and so the Senate can focus on the important legislative work in its charge or, to quote the senior Democrat from Minnesota on her very similar proposal, ''This commonsense reform will help improve efficiency and make sure we're able to fill positions that are vital to our national security, economic success, and more.''

Eight months of petty partisanship is long enough. This Senate has cast more votes up to this point than any Senate going back to the 1980s. We have been in more hours than any Senate going back a couple of decades.

This historic obstruction ends now. Democrats have destroyed Senate precedent, and we are going to fix it—fix it and ensure that in the future, duly elected Presidents of both parties are able to get their teams in place without unnecessary delay so that they can fulfill their responsibilities to the American people.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on Friday, we learned the U.S. economy added only 22,000 jobs for the month of August, a paltry number, an abysmal number, worse than even the already low expectations. Donald Trump has steered our economy straight into an iceberg, and the ''SS Trump'' is sinking before our eyes.

And I warned my Republican colleagues: The longer you remain aboard, the greater the danger you face of sinking with the ship—because if one thing is certain, it is that the American people don't want to be paying more for things as simple as coffee and beef, fruits, vegetables. They don't want to see their electric bills go up. They don't want to see their rent go up. And they don't want to see it harder to find a job. But that is exactly—exactly—what is happening right now. Senate Republicans remain on board this ship, the ''SS Trump,'' at their own peril. It is sinking.

And Republicans know perfectly well what Donald Trump is doing is without precedent. Oh, their favorite comeback is: Well, that is what the American people voted for. They shrug their shoulders; they can't do anything about it.

Well, that is nonsense. This summer, big American companies—Walmart, Target, Best Buy, Ace Hardware, and so many others—have said they are raising prices or that costs will go up because of the tariffs. Americans didn't vote for that. Oh, no. Americans are about to see their health insurance go up by the highest amount in 15 years. Do you think they voted for that? No. They didn't vote for more Americans to get sick, although that is what the Trump healthcare plan will do. They didn't vote for more Americans to die, and that will happen as a result of this Big Beautiful Bill.

Americans sure didn't vote for any of that. Americans want us to pass legislation that lowers healthcare costs, expands people's coverage. They do not want us to vote to boot millions off their health insurance. They do not want the closing of hospitals, particularly in rural areas where the hospitals don't have much cushion. They don't want the laying off of doctors and nurses and healthcare workers so they get less good coverage and it takes much longer to get it. Americans didn't vote for that, but that is what happened.

And here is what the data shows: Americans are fed up with Trump. NBC News Decision Desk Poll, September 7: 57 percent disapprove of Donald Trump's job performance, 43 percent approve; 60 percent believe America, under his leadership, is on the wrong track; 61 percent disapprove of the way he is handling inflation. CBS News, September 3 to 5: 56 percent disapprove of Donald Trump's job performance; 62 percent oppose new U.S. tariffs on imported goods.

So it is no wonder that Democrats are winning in State special elections, even in districts that Trump previously won by as many as 10 points, from one end of the country to the other. These

local elections show Americans reject Donald Trump just several months after he got into office.

To put this all together, the story is clear: Donald Trump is sabotaging our economy; he is sending healthcare costs through the roof; Americans are sick of his failures, which brings us to the work of Congress this month. It is less than 20 calendar days until government funding runs out, and a shutdown will happen if nothing is done.

How Congress proceeds is up to our Republican colleagues. They are in charge. They run the House. They run the Senate. They have the Presidency. Well, if our Republican colleagues know what is good for the country and good for them, they will realize that they should no longer remain aboard this sinking ship that Trump is commanding. The greater danger that they will face is sinking with their ship if nothing changes.

What Republicans should do, then, is commit to working on bipartisan legislation to undo some of the terrible things Donald Trump has done during his time in office. Working on bipartisan legislation that has real input from Democrats—that is the way to avoid a shutdown.

Of course, there is another path, a far uglier path. Republicans can continue to go at it alone. They can continue to bow down to Donald Trump. They can continue to surrender Congress's constitutional powers over to the Executive and enable Donald Trump and his evil minion Russell Vought as they illegally cancel and steal congressionally approved funding.

So if Republicans choose the path of ''do what we say or go to hell,'' then they will be the ones paving the bitter road that leads toward a government shutdown. And we Democrats will not accept that. We will not enable Republicans' carnage of this country. We won't bail Republicans out as the cost of healthcare, groceries, school supplies, rent, electricity, and automobiles all go up and up. We still have some time to avoid that dismal outcome.

We Democrats don't want to see a government shutdown, but avoiding one means Republicans have to show they are serious about having real, substantive, serious negotiation. This week, we need to see signs from Republicans that they are serious about avoiding a shutdown, or time will run out. And the American people will know Republicans will be responsible if a shutdown happens.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, now on judicial nominations, this one is hard to believe. It is hard to believe that the nominees for the Federal bench have gone so low, but under Donald Trump's leadership—his lack of morality, his total egotism, his total self-servingness—they have. Listen to this one, this nominee Mr. Artau. And this is why the Democrats are demanding historical levels of scrutiny, because that scrutiny reveals all of the corruption going on behind the scenes, just like what we learned about Mr. Artau, today's nominee. It is one of the most blatant cases of quid pro quo I have ever seen.

While Artau was begging Donald Trump and Republican Senators for a judgeship—he was begging them to make him a judge—he was, at the same time, part of a panel of judges in Florida hearing Donald Trump's defamation case against the Pulitzer Prize Board.

This guy sues everybody. That has been his MO for decades. He tries to scare people with idiotic lawsuits that have no basis in law. Well, in this case, he was suing the Pulitzer Prize Board in a case of defamation. Well, Artau was on the panel of judges to hear the case.

What would a normal person—you don't need a high degree of honesty, you don't need to be an Eagle Scout to know that this is a direct conflict of interest, and any judge with an ounce of integrity would recuse himself.

But, of course, Artau stayed on the case, didn't even tell anyone about the conflict of interest, and surprise, surprise, surprise, Artau ruled in favor of Trump.

These are the kind of sleazy people Donald Trump wants on the bench. He has no principles. He has no regard for the rule of law. He picks people with blind obeisance to him that will bow down to the King. That is not what judges are supposed to do. That is not what nominees to Departments are supposed to do.

He didn't care if the people he picks are corrupt. He doesn't care if they are biased. He doesn't care if they lack any principles, sense of integrity, fidelity to rule of law. One quality only: Are they pro-Trump? Will they do whatever he wants?

That is good enough for a gavel and a robe in this Trump world, and it is good enough for our Republican colleagues who just go along with all of this, knowing how wrong it is and shrugging their shoulders out of fear, obeisance, or some other untoward emotion.

The Senate should reject Mr. Artau today.

RULES CHANGE

Mr. President, I would also like to say a few words today about the step Leader THUNE is expected to take later this evening to begin changing Senate precedent and to go nuclear yet again on nominations.

At the end of the last work period, Democrats were working in good faith with Republicans on a nomination package to move through this Chamber. Senator THUNE was very involved. He seemed very willing to come up with an agreement. Then, at the last minute, of course, Donald Trump said, literally, to me, ''Go to hell,'' and the talks fell apart.

Was there any integrity? Was there any backbone? Was there any strength to say to Trump, we have an agreement, take a walk? No way.

So now, rather than giving those talks another chance, Republicans would rather change how the Senate operates to weaken this Chamber's traditional and powerful sense of deliberation. And if Republicans go nuclear, the historically bad nominees we have seen so far under Donald Trump will get only worse.

Let me say that again because this is the crux of the matter. We all know the horrible nominees he puts up. As I said before with Mr. Artau, no sense of integrity, no sense of rule of law, just bow down to Trump.

Well, the kind of people confirmed by this Chamber this year have been unprecedentedly bad, beyond the pale, scandal after scandal, exposé after exposé. Many of them are far worse than any group of nominees we have seen before.

Trump has made a mockery of the nominations process. He lacks any sense of principle. He doesn't care if the people he picks are unqualified, if they are liars, if they are corrupt.

Sometimes it is almost as if the more corrupt the better because then Donald Trump will totally control what they do. It is as if he wants the Senate to confirm people willing to lie for him, to even cheat for him. He wants people who are willing to stand up for him without question. Loyalty is the only quality he sees and to hell with the rest.

If you don't debate nominees, if you don't vote on individual nominees, if there is not some degree of sunlight, what will stop Donald Trump from nominating even worse individuals than we have seen to date, knowing this Chamber will rubberstamp anything he wishes?

I say to my Republican colleagues: Think carefully before taking this step. If you go nuclear, it is going to be a decision you will come to regret.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. MOODY). The Democratic whip.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, this past Saturday, the President of the United States of America posted a shocking, grotesque message on social media. Accompanied by an AI-generated image of military helicopters flying over a burning Chicago skyline with explosions in the background, the President of the United States posted that he ''loves the smell of deportations in the morning.''

And he went on to say that Chicago is ''about to find out why it is called the Department of War.''

Let me remind you that this outrageous vision of an American city that I love under attack from Trump's Department of War comes from a man who aspires to be awarded the Noble Peace Prize.

President Trump attempted to walk back his comments yesterday. But let's be clear, the President of the United States essentially declared war on an American city, a city I am honored to