

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 obedience 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, obedience, 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

represent. He may think it is a joke. To me, it is no joke. It is an unprecedented and dangerous threat by a President against the American people.

What is the limit to his power, and where is the line to be drawn if a President is able to go to war against a city he also represents? I cannot imagine. But even if we put this aside for a moment, let's consider the justifications President Trump is using for his threat of a beefed-up immigration raid and deployment of the National Guard in the city of Chicago.

He claims these extraordinary steps are aimed at reducing crime and getting violent criminals off the streets.

Mr. President, you want to reduce crime in Chicago and across this country? Count me in. Let me give you a few ideas of things you can do as President of the United States which can make a serious difference.

No 1., when we take a look at the guns used in crime in the city of Chicago, guess what we find. A large percentage of them come from the neighboring State of Indiana, with lax laws when it comes to background checks on purchases of firearms.

If we get a little tougher and we have actual background checks, we are going to keep guns out of the hands of criminals.

That is something you can do, Mr. President. You can show some leadership.

When it comes to fentanyl and narcotics, guess what we find. Seventy percent of the crime guns in Mexico are coming in there from the United States. Our gun dealers are selling guns to the cartels in Mexico, which are using them to gun down police and military in Mexico. What an outrage.

Why don't we do something about that, Mr. President? It might actually reduce crime.

Count me in on reducing crime, but deporting people who are innocent who have no criminal background whatsoever is not the answer.

We can all agree we should be working together to reduce violent crime, but in this case, we know it is just a front when it comes to the Trump administration.

I have learned in the years that I have been involved in politics that when it comes to issues, there is always a good reason and a real reason. So what is the real reason that Donald Trump wants to send National Guardsmen into the city of Chicago?

He is targeting Chicago for political theater. He finds objections to crime in communities that are governed by Democrats but not Republicans. He is attacking Democratic officials so he can distract from the failures of his own policies and scandals plaguing his own administration. He wants his pleas to forget the so-called Big Beautiful Bill—remember that one, Trump's budget bill? It is going to take healthcare protection away from 17 million Americans, and it is going to make it difficult for rural hospitals in my State of Illinois to survive.

Why would any President want to take health insurance protection away from 17 million individuals? Why would they want to jeopardize the hospitals that are so critical for survival in rural America? Well, the reason is obvious.

The President has decided that he wants to take the revenue from cutting back on healthcare and provide for tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans. Instead of listening to the communities and the families whom I represent, he is listening to the fat cats and providing tax breaks for billionaires.

What do you think it means in tax breaks for average people? Let's assume you are on the low end of income earning, \$35,000 a year. How much is the Trump tax break for you? It turns out to be \$3 a week—\$3 a week.

What if you happen to be Elon Musk, a billionaire with unestablished limits of money that he has raised? We don't know how much it is worth. But how much is the tax break going to be worth, the Trump tax break, for Elon Musk? It is going to be worth \$30,000 a week; \$3 for the families struggling, \$30,000 for Elon Musk.

For what? I don't know why.

When it comes to the subject of these raids, National Guard and other units of government, there has been a lot of speculation about what the President is actually going to do in his so-called Operation Midway Blitz.

So here on the Senate floor, let me set the record straight as to what I know, where it stands.

Earlier today, the administration announced what they are calling Operation Midway Blitz in Chicago to crack down on undocumented immigrants with criminal records. However, if their DC experience is any indication, we know most of the people that they will arrest have no criminal background. They are not rapists, terrorists, murderers, or criminally insane.

So this weekend I traveled to the Naval Station Great Lakes with Senator TAMMY DUCKWORTH and Representative BRAD SCHNEIDER. There were reports that DHS intends to use the Navy base to assist in these raids. There were concerns that the Federal Government would operate a sort of deportation "command center" out of the base.

At a productive meeting with leadership on the base, we were ensured the base would not be used as a detention center for detainees.

Here is what happened as part of that Federal assistance request. The base will provide parking, office space, and the ability to store certain nonlethal munitions for the DHS through October 5. Most importantly, the servicemembers at Naval Station Great Lakes will not be aiding in these raids.

Naval Station Great Lakes is known to every Navy family. Every recruit to the Navy goes through training at the Great Lakes. Each Thursday, there is a celebration of the completion of their 9 weeks of training, and families come from all over the United States to cele-

brate their son or daughter who is becoming part of the greatest Navy in the world. That is what they do and do so well and have for decades.

Most importantly, the servicemembers of Naval Station Great Lakes will not see recruitment and training of these young sailors suffer any blow because of the Trump-crazed idea of invading the city of Chicago.

I have been honored to represent Great Lakes as the Senator from the State of Illinois and to provide it with the support and resources needed to train the recruits who walk through those doors.

My concern is to make sure that no exercise of political theater by the current President was an obstacle to the mission at this base. That appears to be the case, but I am going to continue to closely monitor the situation.

However, as part of our visit to the base, we asked to meet with the Department of Homeland Security, which is going to rent an office building for 30 days. We wanted to get firsthand from them what was going to happen in that operation; the expenditure of Federal funds for its purposes, which we were going to ask them to explain.

Do you know what the response was of the Trump Department of Homeland Security when we went to the actual naval base, to the office building which they have rented and are supposedly using as part of this invasion of Chicago? They closed the building. They locked it so we couldn't go inside and announced they were taking administrative leave and would be unavailable to even discuss with us what they are going to do.

Why are they running and hiding if they are proud of the President's policy? If they actually believe that they are there to fight crime? I think they know better. They know the politics of this situation. They locked the doors, and they refused to make anyone available to two Senators and a Congressman representing that area. They fled so we cannot conduct oversight of their secretive effort, which certainly begs the question: What are they trying to hide?

We now have a better understanding of exactly what they want to do. It is all politics.

In addition to our visit to Naval Station Great Lakes, I have been seeking answers to the potential military deployment because the people of Chicago and I do have a right to know. That is why I use all the tools at my disposal to get to the bottom of this despite roadblocks by the administration.

Last week, I sent a letter to Attorney General Bondi, Secretaries Noem and Hegseth, and FBI Director Patel requesting immediate information regarding the increased law enforcement and potential military presence in Chicago. I sent a letter to my colleague and friend on the Senate Judiciary Committee, Chairman GRASSLEY, requesting an immediate hearing on

President Trump's threats to deploy the military to Chicago and other American cities.

If this President and this administration want to join in fighting crime on a cooperative, bipartisan basis, count me in, but political theater, visions of Chicago being blown up by a Department of War—I want no part of it.

As this situation unfolds, my office remains in constant contact and coordination with State and local officials, community leaders, and my colleagues in Congress. I will continue to provide updates to Illinois as we learn more.

These are scary times. The President is using fear to deflect and drive a wedge among us. Unfortunately, he seems to be succeeding to some extent, but the people of Chicago won't take kindly to a bully and a wannabe dictator.

On Saturday evening, thousands of marchers peacefully passed by Trump Tower and filled the streets of Chicago to make their voices heard. They were clear in their call: Mr. President, do not send the military here for political purposes.

I was happy to join in the parade in the Pilsen neighborhood of Chicago to celebrate Mexican Independence Day.

These are good people, good families, hard-working, churchgoing, doing their best in a tough economy to survive. They are not a threat to anyone's safety, and they are certainly not the cause of crime in Chicago.

At that celebration, there was an attendee by the name of Liliana. She felt it was important to come out on behalf of many who were scared to leave their homes. Standing out on the sidewalk, she said:

We're here. We're not going away. No matter what generation, no matter what threat, no matter what President is in office—we're not going away.

Thank you, Liliana.

She is right. In the face of threats and intimidation, our immigrant community in Chicago as a whole will stand firm and stand tall.

Let us join together as a nation to fight crime and to fight the gun epidemic that is part of violent crime, but arresting and deporting innocent families is not the way to fight crime.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, for the second time in a week, I come to the floor to implore my Democratic colleagues to stop partisan obstruction of public safety officials. We have 10 highly qualified nominees on the Senate floor right now waiting for confirmation. Several have blue slips from Democratic Senators. All were reported to the floor by voice vote. There is no reason that we shouldn't get them to work for the American people today.

As I explained just a few days ago, communities around our country are in

desperate need of U.S. attorneys to protect the public and uphold the rule of law. Eighty-one percent of Americans think that crime in large cities is a major problem. If we can agree to put partisanship aside, this body can take a tangible step to address this today by confirming 10 qualified law enforcement officers to their posts.

I am disappointed that my Democratic colleagues have chosen to place partisan obstruction over public safety. I am here again today to give my colleagues a chance to do the right thing.

This blanket obstruction of all nominees is a misguided attempt to score political points. I know that several of my Democratic colleagues agree with me because just a few months ago, some of them stood on the Senate floor and made the same argument that I am making today.

In one speech last Congress, the Democratic whip and chairman of the Judiciary Committee said:

Don't stand up and say you're for law and order, you're for law enforcement, and then turn around and stop the appointment of U.S. attorneys.

In another speech, the same Senator said:

Our communities desperately need top federal prosecutors in place. Interested in stoppingentanyl? I am. Thousands of people are dying. Who's going to prosecute these cases? The U.S. Attorneys—93 of them across the United States. But you can't prosecute the case if you don't have the U.S. Attorney there to lead the effort, coordinate the effort with other branches of government.

My Democratic colleagues continue to claim that their obstruction is justified because two Republican Senators placed holds on some U.S. attorneys in the last administration.

This compares apples with oranges. One of the Senators relented on his hold and allowed U.S. attorneys to be confirmed by voice vote. The other Senator ultimately blocked five U.S. attorneys. A handful of U.S. attorneys being held last Congress, which I opposed, isn't comparable to the blanket hold on all 93 U.S. attorneys that we are facing today. The strategy this Congress is orchestrated by Senate Democratic leadership and is part of a broader, Senate-wide assault on the functioning of the executive branch.

At the end of the day, we can just look at the numbers. During the Biden administration, nearly 94 percent of his U.S. attorney nominees were confirmed by voice vote. So far in the second Trump administration, zero percent of his U.S. attorney nominees have been confirmed by voice vote.

For months, I have repeatedly tried to engage my Democratic colleagues to end their obstruction. I have warned that their tactics ultimately hurt the American people and will lead to lasting damage to the Senate as an institution. I have even offered a compromise where we hold five rollcall votes to compensate for the five nominees returned to the President at the end of March. To my great disappointment, my colleagues haven't relented from

their strategy, and I hope they will relent today with my unanimous consent requests.

I mentioned last week that one of the U.S. attorneys being held up is Daniel Rosen, nominated for the District of Minnesota. Mr. Rosen was reported out of committee by voice vote. He is supported by his home State Senators KLOBUCHAR and SMITH, both Democrats. He is a qualified nominee. He should be responding to the horrific mass shooting of children at the Annunciation Catholic Church but instead is languishing here on the Senate floor as a pawn of partisan obstruction.

This needs to end, and it needs to end today. So I now will ask unanimous consent to confirm 10 U.S. attorneys who have been reported out of committee. I hope that my Democratic colleagues will allow these nominees to get to work. Debate and disagreement about policy is to be expected but should never be at the expense of public safety.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to consideration of the following nominations en bloc: No. 176, David Charles Waterman, Iowa; No. 183, Ronald A. Parsons, South Dakota; No. 257, David Metcalf, Pennsylvania; No. 258, Bart McKay Davis, Idaho; No. 316, Kurt Alme of Montana; No. 317, Nicholas Chase, North Dakota; No. 318, Lesley Murphy, Nebraska; No. 319, Daniel Rosen, Minnesota; No. 320, Erik Siebert, Virginia; and No. 321, Kurt Wall, Louisiana; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc without intervening action or debate; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The minority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Reserving the right to object, first, let the public know what they are talking about as obstruction: 2 hours of debate and a vote on some of the worst nominees we have ever seen. They want to pile them all together. Some of these nominees are—the people who know them in their States are appalled that they would be nominated.

Trump has chosen his U.S. attorneys for one reason only: blind obedience to him. That is it. No rule of law. No independence.

So of course our friends are afraid of 2 hours of debate and a vote because so many of these nominees are so bad. Historical bad nominees deserve a historical response.

So we wanted to come to an agreement with our colleagues to let some of the better ones through, but we couldn't—not because of our Senate colleagues. Senator GRASSLEY was involved, and Senator THUNE was involved. We were close to an agreement, and what happened? Donald Trump, who wants these horrible nominees—so many of them—said:

Go to hell.