

decades on the frontlines defending America's security.

After leaving a promising career in finance, Mehtab Syed dedicated nearly 20 years to the FBI, rising from counterterrorism assignments and overseas postings in Islamabad and Amman to senior leadership in cyber and counterintelligence. She was a special agent in charge of the Salt Lake City field office and now should be leading the investigation of the horrific assassination of Charlie Kirk, but she was forced out this summer because, in the words of someone at the Bureau, she was "not a good fit." She was a woman of color. They don't fare well in the Trump administration.

We don't even know exactly what impact her steady and experienced leadership could have had on this investigation. But we lost a talented and dedicated person whose talents were applied for the safety of our country. We do know that the person who pushed her out—Director Patel—who will be testifying tomorrow, quickly took to social media and falsely announced that the suspect was in custody—remember that?—only to be forced to walk back those claims shortly thereafter.

At least 18 special agents in charge at the FBI—the top leaders in the field—have been forced into retirement or reassigned to diminished roles.

This hollowing out of the FBI creates a danger to the security of this country. These are not midlevel bureaucrats; these men and women oversee hundreds of agents and manage some of the most sensitive and complex investigations in the country. Many of these special agents in charge have spent their careers in counterintelligence and cyber operations, defending this country against hostile foreign powers, espionage, and cyber attacks.

Many devoted decades to civil rights enforcement, public corruption, and violent crime investigations, ensuring that State and local law enforcement across the country were working closely with seasoned Federal law enforcement leaders they can trust. Still others rose from frontline criminal work to lead major field offices. Their backgrounds range from forensic science to counterintelligence—skills not easily replaced and desperately needed.

Director Patel's foolhardy decision to force out these leaders within the FBI has hollowed out this important Agency. It has cost the Bureau decades of institutional knowledge and diminished its capacity to respond to the greatest threats facing our Nation.

Tomorrow at the hearing, I will go into detail about some of the Bureaus and Agencies within the FBI that have been diminished and hollowed out. Instead, many of the professionals of that Agency have been transported to the President's mass deportation crusade.

These dedicated professionals and so many more were fired, forced out, or reassigned to diminished roles because they had the courage to do their jobs,

whether that meant investigating the January 6 riot, preventing domestic terrorism, pursuing corruption, or upholding the rule of law.

The FBI Agents Association has warned that the Patel-Trump purge of the FBI will "severely weaken the Bureau's ability to protect the country from national security and criminal threats and ultimately risk setting up the Bureau for failure."

At a moment when foreign adversaries are shredding our cyber defenses, when terrorist organizations remain determined to strike, when violent crime continues to threaten our communities, we are losing the very people best equipped to respond.

The American people deserve an FBI that is focused on keeping them safe and protecting our Constitution. Instead, what they are getting is an FBI that prioritizes political retribution and the Director's social media clout.

Tomorrow, I will press Director Patel on his decisions to weaken the FBI, which was designed to protect our American families, by forcing out its most experienced public servants at the expense of our national security and public safety.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator from Oregon.

TRIBUTE TO KATHY OTTELE

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor to recognize and honor an exceptional Oregonian. For 27 years, Kathy Ottele has served as a volunteer for the American Cancer Society and has been instrumental to the work and accomplishments of this unique organization.

The mission to eradicate cancer is deeply personal to Kathy. She is a seven-time skin care survivor, and she lost her dad, her mom, and her two younger sisters to this horrible disease. Kathy understands the importance of sharing her story.

From local community events to the halls of government in both Oregon and the Nation's Capital, she has made it her personal mission to connect with as many people as possible about the critical work at the American Cancer Society.

I have personally seen through my time with Kathy how her advocacy has helped families in a very positive way. Oregonians will long feel the positive impact of her tireless dedication to finding a cure for cancer. At home, we call it the Oregon Way.

She has also made it a personal priority to raise awareness and funding for the cause each year. I could stand here all day and announce a long list of things she has achieved during her 27 years of service. I will name just a few.

Through her efforts, she has consistently been one of the American Cancer Society's top fundraisers. Last year, she raised over \$17,000 for this cause. In recognition of her steadfast volunteer and advocacy efforts to help make cancer a national priority, she was named the State Lead Ambassador by the American Cancer Society's Cancer Action Network in 2020.

She has also been a member of the American Cancer Society's organization in Oregon and Southwestern Washington. She has been on the board of directors for the last 7 years.

Part of the reason why she is so deserving of all these important honors and responsibilities has been because of her advocacy and fight for early cancer detection blood testing—hugely important—such as in the bipartisan bill that I sponsor with our colleagues Senators CRAPO and BENNET. It is one of the best ways we know of to make sure people can stop cancer early and save lives.

For the last 5 years, Kathy aimed her advocacy efforts at promoting groundbreaking early cancer detection advances—known as Multi-Cancer Early Detection tests—to help more cancer victims learn their diagnosis far earlier and survive the disease at far higher rates. Kathy actually participated in a clinical trial of the new technology conducted at Oregon Health Sciences University, and she came away from that experience committed to winning broader access to this life-saving, groundbreaking advance.

Kathy has played a critical role in educating community and policymakers in Oregon about the importance of access to multi-cancer early detection screening coverage, and I am proud to be a lead sponsor with Senators CRAPO and BENNET, S. 339, the Nancy Gardner Sewell Medicare Multi-Cancer Early Detection—MCED—Screening Coverage Act that will help ensure access to screenings that can detect cancer at earlier, more treatable stages. As a testament to Kathy's advocacy, every single Member of the Oregon delegation serves as a cosponsor of our legislation.

As Kathy celebrates her 27th year as a Society volunteer, she shows absolutely no signs of slowing down. Her rigorous dedication in service continues to make a lasting impact on the mission to ending cancer as we know it, and she does that for everyone.

I know that I speak for Oregonians in every nook and cranny in our State as we express our gratitude for her commitment, her talent, her mentorship, her leadership, and particularly in the constant effort to better cancer research and treatment.

So on behalf of our whole State, this afternoon here on the floor of the U.S. Senate, I would like to thank Kathy Ottele for her tireless work and service. She has literally dedicated her life to this cause, and the people of Oregon are better for it. I look forward to our

continued partnership on these important efforts as I work as a senior member of the Senate Finance Committee, and she continues her incredible volunteering at home.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BRITT). The Democratic leader.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I would like to begin by reiterating where Democrats stand on government funding.

Our position remains this: We want to keep the government open by engaging in bipartisan negotiation where we can address some of the grave harms Donald Trump has caused to our healthcare system and help Americans with the cost of living.

We haven't seen that to date. Republicans, so far, have refused to have any conversations about issues we have clearly outlined—healthcare, most of all.

Speaker JOHNSON said recently he hopes Democrats won't politicize the process, but Speaker JOHNSON has already done that by refusing multiple requests to sit down and talk and doing his own CR without consultation, without any inclusion of what the Democratic leader in the House or I are asking for—total, total partisan proposal. And so is President Trump.

When Donald Trump said on FOX News that Republicans “don't even bother” dealing with Democrats, then he is responsible for making a shutdown more likely. This afternoon, he doubled down again, posting online that Republicans should go at it alone in their partisan CR, instead of engaging with Democrats to keep the government open.

Now to pass a CR in the Senate, as everyone knows, requires votes from both sides. If one side refuses to negotiate, they are the ones causing the shutdown. Because, again, Democrats are happy to negotiate. We want to have a conversation with Donald Trump and Republicans about things we have been talking about for months, like healthcare, Medicaid, and the cost of living. And the American people know this.

They know that if Donald Trump refuses to talk—even to talk—with Democrats, it will be him shutting things down. They know he needs to negotiate. They know he needs to compromise. He is not a dictator, much as he thinks he would like to be. He needs to work with Democrats if he doesn't want to get blamed for shutting the government down.

And if Republicans follow Donald Trump's orders not to even bother dealing with Democrats, they, too, will be putting our country on a path to a shutdown.

And let me finish with this: I heard my friend the Republican leader come to the floor and cherry-pick some of my old quotes about keeping the government open with a CR. He zeroed in on the phrase “clean extension.”

Well, the Republican leader glossed over the key point. I said in the past that Republican colleagues have to “work with the Democrats in a bipartisan way” to extend government funding.

I said they actually have to work with us, and it has to be bipartisan. That is not happening right now. It was happening then in 2023. That is the difference, and the majority leader conveniently forgets that extremely important point.

And it is not happening right now because Donald Trump is shutting down—shutting down—any hopes of negotiation. Leader THUNE wants to wonder what has changed? A lot. A lot. Including Donald Trump's actions, which have dramatically harmed this country and undermined the appropriations process.

He has canceled congressionally appropriated funding. He is redirecting and stealing funds. Russell Vought says that he wants to see the appropriations process less bipartisan, and we know he is running the show. And now he says that Republicans shouldn't even bother to deal with Democrats. Meanwhile, the cost of people's healthcare has gone way up. Rural hospitals are already closing because of this Big Beautiful Bill. Job reports continue to show warning signs. Trump's tariffs are a mess, and the economy is headed in the wrong direction.

That is all because of the choices Donald Trump has made as President. We need to have a negotiation, which is what we are asking for right now—bipartisan, the only way you can get this done—and that is what we talked about back then as well.

NOMINATION OF STEPHEN MIRAN

Madam President, today the Senate will vote on Donald Trump's nominee for the Federal Reserve Board: Stephen Miran. Miran's nomination is bad news for every American who is suffering from Donald Trump's disastrous economic agenda.

He serves as chairman of the CEA, the Council of Economic Advisors, and is the chief architect of so many policies of this administration's failed economics that are raising prices for families.

Miran was heavily involved in the rollout of Trump's tariffs, and he even claimed that “there continues to be no evidence whatsoever of any tariff-induced inflation.” Ask the average American family.

What kind of bubble is Miran living in? Companies have explicitly cited tariffs for the reasons prices are going up. That sure sounds like pretty significant evidence to me.

No evidence of inflation. Tell that to grocery shoppers, to people buying coffee, to shoppers at Walmart and Amazon. Sticker shock has been the story of the summer for many Americans, all because of those awful tariffs.

Miran will be nothing more than Donald Trump's mouthpiece at the Fed. He has no independence. No sym-

pathy for American families and businesses suffering from his policies and a fundamental misunderstanding of how the American economy works.

I strongly oppose Miran's nomination.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

REMEMBERING CHARLIE KIRK

Mr. MORENO. Madam President, as you know, like I do, we had a terrible tragedy that occurred last week. I don't think that it is quite understood by people who Charlie's life didn't affect and what that meant to all of us.

Not only is it that a 31-year-old died—which, of course, would be tragic to anybody—but to see him publicly assassinated, gunned down, where his death is captured on video after video after video—you look at that and you think: Where is the humanity?

I think one of the things that is most important to understand is that there was a private person named Charlie Kirk. He wasn't just the leader of an incredible movement that we now are familiar with, Turning Point USA. He was a son. He was a father. He was a husband. I got to know Charlie about 13 years ago. I was in my office in Cleveland, OH, and my receptionist said to me: There is a young man to see you. He wants to talk about an idea he has.

In my business, typically, I am seeing people who are interested in purchasing automobiles from one of my dealerships.

I said: Who is this guy? My office went right to the showroom so I said: Come into my office.

Charlie Kirk shared with me a vision that he had. He had built out the entire concept of what we know as Turning Point USA in his head. He visualized hundreds of chapters in every major college and university throughout America where students could actually debate ideas. It wasn't about everybody had to have one point of view or a different point of view, but they could actually discuss an idea in a collaborative way, not with hatred, not with animosity but rather the idea that people would listen to each other.

This is a time over a decade ago where we didn't understand the extent of the indoctrination that was going on in our colleges and universities. But I was so impressed by that young man's vision, by his conviction, by his energy, by his charm that I happily wrote him what he thought was a big check. By today's dollars, it was definitely not. I referred a few friends to him. He was very excited. We stayed in touch during the years.

Lo and behold, he builds this incredible organization, and I ended up running for Senate. He activated that