

Transit Authority, and yet, still, to this day, residents of the Far South Side of Chicago don't have that transit option, at least not as they should.

Transportation can make or break not only employment but attending school, even making it to a doctor's appointment. For decades, residents of the Far South Side viewed this extension as just politicians talking.

That changed this past January, when the Federal Transit Administration officially obligated \$1.9 billion in Federal funding for this crucial extension. After waiting over 50 years, it was finally going to be a reality. This project will expand transit access to 100,000 people. It will be an economic boost for the city and create tens of thousands of jobs for working families.

However, guess what: today, a news flash from the Trump administration. We received news that the OMB Director, Russell Vought, and the U.S. Department of Transportation have decided to illegally freeze \$2 billion in grants for Chicago, including the obligated grant for the expansion, and risk decades worth of effort.

This is in addition to the \$7.5 billion in Department of Energy grants Director Vought canceled yesterday, including 33 projects totaling almost \$700 million in Illinois.

So why would this administration decide to target thousands of working families when it comes to their electric bills and when it comes to transportation? Because President Donald Trump wants to punish States like Illinois and the people who live there because they didn't vote for him in the last election.

This is petty. It is unfair. It is wrong.

These vindictive actions will cost Illinoisans jobs. Many of them will lose their employment. And it is going to raise the cost of electricity across the country.

Freezing funds for these projects is a blatant abuse of power by a President and an administration that would rather settle petty personal scores than actually help people.

OMB should immediately release any freeze on these funds, and I will do anything I can, with Senator DUCKWORTH, to hold this administration accountable for its decisions, which continue to hurt working families.

NOMINATION OF STANLEY WOODWARD, JR.

Mr. President, on a separate subject, the upcoming vote on more than 100 nominees is exactly what I feared would happen when Senate Republicans violated Senate rules to fast-track nominees. This has opened the door to rushing through more extreme nominees who have one qualification for office: They are blindly loyal to President Trump.

That extends to a man named Stanley Woodward, the nominee to be the No. 3 official at the Department of Justice.

Let me make this clear: Mr. Woodward is not even close to qualified. He has never—never—worked at the Jus-

tice Department before this administration. What he has done is show his loyalty to Donald Trump by representing Trump associates for their roles in thwarting investigations into the President.

As Associate Attorney General, Mr. Woodward would oversee some of DOJ's most critical programs, including the Office of Justice Programs and the Civil Rights Division. As senior adviser to Attorney General Bondi, Mr. Woodward has already been involved in gutting these offices.

The Trump administration has terminated hundreds of millions of dollars in grants administered by the Office of Justice Programs that support State and local law enforcement. The Trump administration also has gutted the Civil Rights Division, which has been known for years as the "crown jewel" of the Justice Department.

About 70 percent of the Division's attorneys have been forced out—70 percent—and many, many staff have been diverted away from crucial efforts to protect the civil rights of all Americans, so long as they sign up for the mass deportations of the President.

Mr. Woodward also overruled Antitrust Division officials to personally negotiate a settlement with lobbyists in DOJ's challenge to Hewlett Packard's \$14 billion acquisition of Juniper Networks. The acquisition resulted in two firms controlling more than 70 percent of the wireless network market, a market duopoly.

To Trump administration political appointees in the Antitrust Division who objected to this settlement, what happened to them? They were forced out of office. One of them said of the settlement:

[C]orrupt lobbyists with no relevant expertise are perverting actual law enforcement through money, power, relationships, and influence. . . . Stanley Woodward perverted justice and acted inconsistent with the rule of law [in this deal].

I asked Attorney General Bondi about Mr. Woodward's involvement in the scandal. Crickets. No response. Nothing to say.

It is wrong to fast-track unqualified, unfit nominees whose only goal is to advance a political agenda at the expense of the American people. Previous Associate Attorney General nominees have received a rollcall vote on the floor of the Senate and committee, of course.

Take President Biden's nominee for this position, Vanita Gupta. In 2021, Republicans tried to filibuster her nomination in committee and then tried to shut down committee business before we voted.

On the floor, Republicans forced extra procedural votes to slow down our confirmation. Despite my frustration at the time with Republican colleagues for obstructing a highly qualified and experienced nominee to serve as Associate Attorney General, I never sought to short-circuit the constitutional responsibility of Members in the Senate of advice and consent.

Now when the shoe is on the other foot, Republicans are intent on taking away yet another core duty of the Senate in deference to President Trump. I hope they remember this moment when they resume their minority positions in the future.

I urge my colleagues to vote no on these nominations.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, we are now in the third day of this government shutdown, and once again, our Democratic colleagues are going to have the opportunity to vote for a clean, nonpartisan continuing resolution that would open the government and allow us to continue working on the appropriations process.

Just to kind of give a little perspective on that, here are the statistics showing all of the Biden-era clean CRs that were passed. There were 13 of them—13 of them during the Biden administration, and 96 percent of the Democrats voted for it. Now they can't vote for a clean resolution. How do you explain that?

Unfortunately, Democratic leadership is demanding more than \$1 trillion in new spending just to keep the government open. So instead of voting for this clean CR, they want more than \$1 trillion in new spending in a CR that—the CR has no Republican priorities in it; it is just a clean CR.

So how is it we are supposed to put trillions of dollars of Democrat priorities in a CR that goes until November 21? That is what Leader SCHUMER has said, and that is exactly why this is the SCHUMER shutdown.

They have taken our government hostage with a list of demands that is really quite astonishing. They want funding for healthcare for illegal immigrants, and they want more subsidies for pandemic-era health insurance, all while actually repealing a \$50 billion healthcare fund for rural hospitals that was put in the One Big Beautiful Bill. How does that make sense? In the meantime, vital programs that support hard-working American families have either been shuttered or are very nearly out of money.

Let's end this Schumer shutdown and pass a clean, short-term CR—the same kind of clean CR, mind you, that, as I said, 96 percent of Democrats voted to support 13 times during the Biden administration. That is what this shows.

Let's pass this clean CR, get back to work, and move our appropriations bills through regular order. That is how we are supposed to do it—through regular order. Already, we have made progress in this Congress by doing just that. The Appropriations Committee has passed 8 of the 12 approps bills on a bipartisan basis. As a matter of fact, we just approved, not too long ago, three of them—one of them was my Ag appropriations bill—by big bipartisan majorities here on the floor in the Senate. Compare that to last Congress,

when Leader SCHUMER refused to allow us to bring any of the appropriations bills to the floor.

In fact, nearly a month ago now, the House requested a formal conference on the three bills that I just referenced that we passed across the floor with large bipartisan majorities, and we are ready to go to conference with them and finish our work on those appropriations bills through regular order, as I just said.

Our majority leader has said very clearly that he is ready to bring Defense appropriations and the Labor-Health bill, which would actually get us up north of 75, maybe even 80 percent of the appropriations process finished. He is ready to bring those two bills to the floor as soon as we are open and operating.

We need to reopen the government to return to our bipartisan appropriations work and get back to conducting the business of the American people.

Another good example is the work we are doing for our ag producers, and I know the Presiding Officer knows about that very well. Every American depends every single day on the high-quality, low-cost food supply that our farmers and ranchers provide.

At the same time, our farmers and ranchers depend on access to markets to ensure they get good prices for the high-quality crops they produce. This is particularly true, for example, for soybean farmers in my State of North Dakota, where we export 90 percent of what we grow—a lot of that going to markets like China.

With harvest season underway, the Trump administration continues to fight for better markets for our farmers and ranchers, but in the meantime, our producers need a bridge to stronger markets and the updated farm safety net which we included as part of the One Big Beautiful Bill.

Due to China's efforts to reduce commodity prices and push up the cost of production, our farmers are having a hard time right now, as you well know.

As the administration works to secure better trade deals for our Nation, it is critical that we don't allow China to use our farmers as a pressure point in those negotiations. That is why I have been working—along with others—with this administration on emergency assistance to bridge that gap while we seek better trade agreements and more export sales for our farmers.

Along with Senate Ag Committee chairman Senator BOOZMAN, we have done a lot of work, and we are ready to go when the President and the Secretary decide it is time to move forward with a plan that will help bridge that gap and keep our producers afloat. Doing so will give the administration's trade team needed leverage in these negotiations with China.

U.S. producers deserve to be treated fairly in the global marketplace, not to be used as a tool by China in their negotiations on fair trade, which we demand.

The administration's efforts are all about securing better trade terms that not only reduce foreign tariffs but eliminate the nontariff trade barriers that other countries use to lock out American farmers and ranchers.

By acting now and providing assistance to our producers during these negotiations, we will send a very strong signal to China that their tactics will not work.

That is how we secure better market access for our producers for the long term. That is exactly what President Trump did in his first term in the negotiations with China. We worked with him on the Market Facilitation Program to keep our farmers in the game. The result was that President Trump secured a \$50 billion agreement from China to purchase our ag commodities.

That is what we are working to do again. So let's get this government back open so we can continue that hard work. You know, that is just one example of the work that needs to get done for the American people.

So, again, we are going to have a vote here in a little bit, and once again, I ask that our Democrat colleagues join with us and vote to get this government open. It is a clean, short-term resolution so that we can do the work of the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, we are 3 days into a government shutdown, and we are in the middle of a healthcare crisis entirely of Republicans' making. A new poll shows that nearly 80 percent of Americans—that is 4 in 5—want Republicans to work with us to stop their premiums from doubling.

So what is the holdup? After all, as we speak, health plans are in the middle of locking in massive rate increases, and those notices will be in the mail any day now.

These are two serious issues facing our country. Yet Trump and Republican leaders are refusing to take any of them seriously. On healthcare, they have decided to shut down the government rather than work with us, and they have decided they would rather make up lies about illegal immigrants than to talk about the actual issue at stake: the reality that Republicans are letting premiums more than double.

News flash: Republican areas are actually going to face some of the biggest price jumps if they refuse to save healthcare.

Small businesses are going to take a hit, not to mention farmers. One-quarter of our farmers are covered on the ACA exchanges, so this healthcare crisis is a big concern for them.

Millions of families across the country are about to see their monthly healthcare costs jump by hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars, and the Republicans' plan here seems to be, I hope no one notices.

That is out of touch. Maybe a couple thousand dollars here and there seems

like no big deal when you take your marching orders from billionaires like Donald Trump, but if Republicans talked to everyday families and fewer rich billionaires, they would understand that the healthcare crisis Republicans are ignoring is going to devastate folks back home.

Millions of people are going to be priced out of their insurance. They will skip their basic healthcare. They will miss out on lifesaving treatments. It is no exaggeration to say people will die. There is no avoiding that reality, although Republicans seem determined to try.

On the shutdown, Trump and Republican leadership are not taking this seriously. President Trump has made clear that he doesn't see this shutdown as a problem to solve; he sees a shutdown as an opportunity to hurt people. He sees a shutdown as an opening to make good on even more of the awful promises of Project 2025. Trump sees a shutdown as an excuse to harm whoever he wants and do whatever he wants, even and maybe especially if it hurts folks back home.

The Trump administration actually isn't even trying to hide that fact. They are targeting their cuts at blue States, they are talking about canceling Democratic priorities, and they are threatening our constituents if we do not bend the knee.

No one can believe President Trump is serious about ending this shutdown when he is more focused on tweeting out fake sombrero pictures and showing Russ Vought as the Grim Reaper than he is on working on a deal.

No one can believe President Trump seriously cares whether he is hurting everyday Americans when the only thing he is focused on is taking the opportunity to punish the American people with cruel cuts and cruel firings, which don't just hurt Democrats, they hurt his own voters as well.

I should mention that no one can believe Republican leadership is serious about ending the shutdown, either, when Senate Republicans are holding the same vote over and over while refusing to start serious negotiations.

By the way, House Republicans are not even here in town. Instead of talking about addressing healthcare, they are just saying "wait" or "later." Democrats have been waiting. We have been trying to save the healthcare tax credits for months. We cannot wait any longer. "Later" is too late.

The irony of Republicans telling us to wait on healthcare is as rich as the people they shoved tax breaks on earlier this year, because, let's not forget, earlier this year, Republicans chose to spend a lot of time here and a lot of effort extending the tax cuts for wealthy CEOs.

Those tax cuts were set to expire at the end of this year, just like the ACA tax credits we are talking about now. What did Republicans do? Did they tell the billionaires to wait? No. Republicans moved Heaven and Earth to save

the tax cuts for those billionaires, but now they won't move a muscle to save families from skyrocketing healthcare costs.

Republican leaders can't be bothered. When billionaires have a tax cut expiring at the end of the year, it is all hands on deck for Republican leadership, even if it means throwing working families overboard with a trillion dollars in healthcare cuts families will need to cover out of their own pocket or go without coverage.

But when healthcare is on the brink, when healthcare premiums are being locked in right now—right now—and when they are going to double for our families, Republicans are nowhere to be found. I mean that literally. House Republicans have not been here all week. They are missing in action. They should be rushing back to work on a solution. But Republican leaders seem to be moving in the opposite direction, forcing a vote on the same failed partisan bill for the fourth time.

Mr. President, we are at the table. We want to be here. We want to find a solution. We want to reopen the government. We want to prevent families' costs from skyrocketing. I hope Republicans decide they are ready to join us.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1337

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, earlier this week, I stood here and issued a very clear warning: Vital cyber security protections that have safeguarded our economy, our infrastructure, and our government for over a decade have now expired. For the past 10 years, these safeguards defended against increasingly aggressive and sophisticated cyber security attacks. Without them, there is no question our Nation is at greater risk of a major cyber security breach than ever before.

We didn't have to reach this point. Back in April, Senator ROUNDS and I introduced a clean, bipartisan 10-year extension of these critical—absolutely critical—security authorities. The Trump administration fully supports this effort. They fully support a 10-year extension. Businesses and stakeholders across industries who count on this law want to see a clean 10-year extension.

Over the past few months, we have heard from more than 100 of them urging us to pass legislation that will give them the long-term certainty of these protections. That is a key point, long-term certainty for these protections, so that they defend their systems and protect their customers.

Every single day we delay reauthorizing this law, we leave our hospitals, our power grids, our financial systems, and more increasingly vulnerable to cyber attacks. We must pass this legislation without delay to restore these vital defenses and protect our Nation. I urge my colleagues to immediately address this serious national security risk and pass this clean, long-term extension today.

Mr. President, as if in legislative session and notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 1337 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, it is good to see that fake outrage is alive and well in the Senate. We have Democrats coming to the floor worried about the government being shut down, although they are the ones that have shut the government down.

Ironically, every Democrat in this body voted for the exact same spending levels that are in this continuing resolution. Last December, these Biden spending levels were put forward by Democrats. Now, you have every Democrat who voted for the spending levels now voting against them without any rhyme or reason or explanation. So, really, to come to the floor and complain about the government shutting down a program when the Senator has every ability to vote in a few minutes to open the government back up is quite fake outrage.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Let's be really clear, this has absolutely nothing to do with annual appropriations whatsoever. It doesn't have to do with the shutdown. This is a law that expired at the end of the fiscal year to protect our cyber security across the country. It is about restoring a law that has been in place for 10 years. It is not about the appropriations process.

This is simply about national security. So to use that as an excuse and to put our country at risk is simply unconscionable, given the broad bipartisan, bicameral support you have in the Senate and in the House and including the strong support from the Trump administration. This is simply irresponsible, and I think you will find it is basically one person standing in the way of providing critical protection for cyber security for the entire country. That is not the way this process is supposed to work.

I would hope folks would come to their senses, and we can provide this essential protection before it is too late.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, Donald Trump is sending \$20 billion not to America but to Argentina. Donald Trump is sending \$20 billion to Argentina to bail out their economy, and he wants to spend \$50 billion to clean up

the mess that he made by starting a trade war that crushed American soybean producers.

Let's be clear about what happened. It is not that the market is temporarily suspended. That market, in some cases, is gone. And during this period of time with—\$20 billion for the country of Argentina and \$50 billion for a tariff bailout—Americans are paying more for absolutely everything. Healthcare premiums for tens of millions of people are going to go up by a lot—not 10 percent, not 20 percent, not 50 percent—114 percent; 24 million Americans, 114 percent.

The bailout for Argentina is particularly absurd. Argentina is not a key security or economic partner. It is an economy that is in such dire shape that there is no guarantee that we will ever get our money back. It is a terrible investment any way you look at it under any circumstances but certainly in the context of Americans seeing their healthcare premiums increase by 114 percent right now.

You then have a separate bailout for American soybean producers totaling close to \$50 billion. And why? Because of the tariffs; because in one fell swoop, they wiped out half of the export market for American soybeans in China, and there is no way you can plug that gap. You can't come up with—I don't know what it would be—112 individual deals to kind of add up to the market-buying power of the PRC.

When you lose a buyer that also happens to be the biggest country in the world, you don't have a lot of options. At best, it is going to take you months or years to cut dozens of smaller deals, and it is not going to add up.

Just to recap, Trump is at the exact same time incinerating \$70 billion of taxpayer money. But what is the one thing that there is not enough money for? You. There is not enough money for you. There is enough money for a \$50 billion tariff bailout; there is enough money for Argentina; but there is not enough money for you.

They don't have enough money to help a family of four that is going to have to pay \$300 more per month to keep their healthcare plan. They have the money to cover for Trump's economic incompetence, but, apparently, they don't have the money to prevent a small business owner or a taxi driver or an early retiree from losing their healthcare.

This is not complicated at all. Donald Trump's economy is already hard as it is because of his choices to create shortages of electricity, of lumber, of food, of healthcare. Electricity prices are going up at twice the rate of inflation. Vegetables are up nearly 40 percent. Grocery prices are at their highest in 3 years now. People are supposed to find hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars to spare every single month or give up their healthcare coverage and hope they don't get sick.

We could end this shutdown right now if Republicans sat down and