

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS  
AND EXTENSIONS ACT, 2026—Motion to Proceed

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 168, H.R. 5371. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 168, H.R. 5371, a bill making continuing appropriations and extensions for fiscal year 2026, and for other purposes.

## GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, we are now in day 29 of the Democrat government shutdown, and I say that because it is a Democrat shutdown. Now, the Democrats are out there publicly saying: Well, these are the Republicans who are responsible for shutting down the government, notwithstanding the fact that the House of Representatives has passed a bill sitting right here; that with five more Democrats, we could pick up and pass, put on the President's desk, he would sign it into law, and we could reopen the government.

Those are the simple facts. Those are the indisputable facts.

What it suggests to me, however, when they say that it is the Republicans' fault or somehow the Republicans are responsible for shutting the government down, it really defies facts. It defies history. It defies reality because as everybody who has been around here knows, we have now voted 13 times—13 times—on that bill sitting at the desk that would open up the government, put everybody back to work, and all the pain that is being caused on the American people would go away. Thirteen times we had that vote.

Interestingly enough, that matches the number of times the Democrats passed a clean CR when they had the majority the last 4 years under President Biden. On 13 different occasions—13 different occasions—they voted for a clean continuing resolution to fund the government.

At the time, they talked about how terrible it is, you know, that the government should be taken hostage when you have a dispute over other issues. You have tons of statements. I could spend all day just repeating the statements the Democrats made over and over and over again about the importance of funding the government and not taking it hostage to discuss other issues. The RECORD is replete with statements like that coming out of the Democrats.

So 13 times they have voted against funding the government right here. Thirteen times while they were in the majority, they voted for a clean continuing resolution. Now, explain that logic to the American people who are the ones that are experiencing the pain and the consequence of their shutdown.

I think the American people understand what is going on here. And we consistently see that, so much so that you even have the organizations—the unions around the country have come out now. You have the American Federation of Government Employees, you have the Teamsters, part of the Air Traffic Controllers Union all have endorsed a clean funding resolution. That, to me, suggests that it is resonating with the American people about who is responsible for this government shutdown.

But don't take my word for who it is, take the Democrats' own words. If you look at what has been said by some of the Democrat leadership here just in the last few days since the government actually shut down, that, of course, is the Democrat leader Senator SCHUMER, who said: "Every day gets better for us," commenting about the government shutdown.

My simple observation is, better for whom? For you because you think you are winning politically? What about the air traffic controllers? What about the TSA agents? What about the American troops? What about our Border Patrol agents? What about the people who work in this building? What about the 40 million Americans who are not going to get SNAP benefits starting Saturday if the government doesn't open up?

But "every day gets better," according to Senator SCHUMER.

Then, of course, this last week there was the House Democrat whip who said:

Of course there will be families that are going to suffer . . . but it is one of the few leverage times we have.

Of course there are families that are going to suffer. Yes, true, but it doesn't matter because we have leverage.

Then, of course, we have a third one here, one of our colleagues here in the Senate, the Senator from Delaware, who said this in an interview:

Frankly, this is our only moment of leverage and although a very unpleasant tool to use. . . .

Yes, it is unpleasant, unless you are a Democrat who thinks that this gives you a moment of leverage.

So lest there be any question about who is responsible for shutting the government down, make no mistake about it, these guys are the ones who are out there bragging about it "getting better for us every single day," or "we have more leverage now."

This has gone on long enough. We made it abundantly clear that this is not about what the Democrats say it is about. It is about the President in the White House. This is TDS. This is Trump derangement syndrome on steroids. And they are asking the American people to pay the price for that.

Thirteen times when Biden was President, they had no issues with funding the Federal Government with a clean CR. Now, we bring a clean, non-partisan CR—no partisan riders, no Re-

publican policies attached, just funds the government, comes over from the House a month ago now, we put it here just asking a handful of Democrats to join us because, as we know, it takes 60 in the Senate. I think most people understand that.

I mean, they are trying to ignore the fact now that Republicans have control of Washington. They have the House, the Senate, the White House. Anybody who follows this knows that in the U.S. Senate, the rules, the procedures in the Senate by which we operate and are governed, require a 60-vote threshold. So it takes more than 51. Meaning, since we have 53 Republicans, it is going to take a handful of Democrats. We have been able to generate 55 votes consistently now 13 different times for funding the government, opening up the government, but we need five more.

The question is, Are there five people over there with a backbone, five courageous Democrats, five Democrats who don't buy this, who don't believe that they ought to be using the American people as leverage—as leverage—to try to win a political battle? Are there five Democrats over there who believe we ought to do what is in the interest of the American people, the best interest of the air traffic controllers and the TSA agents and the men and women in uniform and the SNAP recipients that, starting on Saturday, are going to go without food assistance? This is not a game. You are playing with real people's lives.

In the Washington world, in the political world, they may think that they are winning this debate because it gives them leverage, but in the real world where real people live, people are hurting. People aren't getting paid. Federal workers aren't getting paid. As of Friday, last paycheck. Air traffic controllers' paychecks started going away yesterday.

I am still hopeful. I remain hopeful that there are enough sane Democrats who are not so afflicted with Trump derangement syndrome because that is what this is about, fundamentally, nothing more, nothing less, nothing else. This is about Trump derangement syndrome. And it has broken out here in a way unlike anything I have seen in my time here. Disagree with the President, that is fine. Come down here, make statements, cast votes. Don't take the American people hostage and make them pay the price because you think that every day this is getting better for us.

## HEALTHCARE

Mr. President, the Democrat leader was on the floor yesterday morning claiming, once again, Republicans don't want to talk about fixing healthcare. Let me just say, for the 1,282nd time, that Republicans are more than happy to have a discussion about healthcare. We should have a discussion about healthcare because Democrats' signature healthcare law has done exactly nothing to address the problem of rising healthcare costs.

We were promised, of course, that it would. We were, in fact, promised the Democrats' signature law would fix our entire healthcare system.

This is a quote:

[A]n historic bill that will finally reform our broken healthcare system and help millions of our families and small businesses get the coverage they need at a price they can afford.

That is from the senior Democrat Senator from Washington speaking of ObamaCare back in 2009.

Or to quote President Obama himself:

This law will cut costs and make coverage more affordable for families and small businesses.

"Cut costs and make coverage more affordable for families and small businesses"—except, of course, it didn't.

And what has been very striking about the last few weeks is that Democrats are, at least, now admitting that. Oh, yes, they are not saying it straight out. But every time they talk about Americans facing a healthcare crisis, they are admitting that their signature healthcare law failed, that it did not address the problem of high healthcare costs, and that it did not make healthcare more affordable for hard-working Americans.

Now, I could go down the list of ObamaCare's broken promises:

If you like your health insurance, you can keep it—not true.

If you like your doctor, you can keep him or her—not true.

Premium costs will go down—not true. It is exactly the opposite. If you look at 2013 to today, what premium costs have done in the individual marketplaces and on the exchanges is a line like this.

Suffice it to say, as Democrats are now implicitly admitting, ObamaCare massively failed in its aims.

Democrats, of course, now want to put a bandaid on a gaping wound by extending the Biden COVID bonuses. But, of course, extending those credits will do nothing to fix the underlying problem, which is that healthcare costs will continue to spiral under ObamaCare. Throwing \$350 billion—taxpayer dollars—at the problem in the form of enhanced tax credits will do nothing to stop ObamaCare premiums from going up by double digits, because that is what they have been doing. And it will do nothing to improve healthcare for the majority of Americans, who are not—not on ObamaCare health plans, like our seniors, our most vulnerable citizens, and those who get their coverage through their employers.

While Democrats are, shall we say, shaky on the facts when it comes to their dramatic healthcare speeches—while ObamaCare premiums are increasing, the median plan premium is not, in fact, going to double next year—it is absolutely true that Democrats have created real healthcare problems. And as I have said more times than I can count, Republicans are ready and willing to have a discussion about those problems and about

how we lower costs for hard-working Americans. We are, in fact, eager to have that discussion.

The President is willing to have Democrats over to discuss it next week, if they vote to reopen the government, because in the words of the Democrat leader, back in 2013, "we are not going to negotiate with a gun to our heads." That is what he said.

This is a serious matter. I know Democrats think you can solve any problem simply by throwing billions of taxpayer dollars at it—the record is pretty clear on that—but you can't. Genuine remedies for the problem of soaring healthcare costs are not going to be arrived at with a brief, late-night session, behind closed doors, in the Democrat leader's office. We need extended, serious bipartisan work, with input from all Senators, and we need Democrats to reopen the government so that work can start.

Republicans are brimming over with healthcare ideas, from cost-sharing reductions to actually lowering health plan costs, to association health plans, to ways to stopping ObamaCare's spiral of enriching insurers at the expense of everyday Americans. In fact, we already took steps to make healthcare more affordable and accessible when we passed the One Big Beautiful Bill this summer, which expanded health savings accounts and telehealth for Americans, to say nothing of investing heavily in rural healthcare and ensuring that our healthcare entitlement programs were focused on those most in need.

So I say, we are looking forward to having a real discussion with Democrats. But to quote another Democrat Senator, the junior Democrat from Connecticut:

There is a time and a place to debate healthcare, just like there is a time and place to debate energy policy and immigration and education—but not when the funding of the Federal Government, and all of the lives that are impacted by it, hang in the balance.

There are a lot of Americans suffering right now because of the Democrats' monthlong shutdown, and the suffering increases every day. It is time—it is past time—for Democrats to reopen the government. Once they do, Republicans look forward to having some serious discussions about how to address rising healthcare costs and the failures of the Democrats' signature healthcare law.

#### SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Mr. President, before I close, I would like to mention a bill that Democrats are reportedly going to attempt to move by unanimous consent today.

I would just say that, after a month of steadily increasing pain thanks to the Democrats' shutdown, the Democrats have, apparently, woken up to the fact that, in 3 days—in 3 days—they are going to be responsible for SNAP recipients starting to go without food stamps.

So what are the Democrats doing? Are they making plans to end their shutdown and reopen the government?

Nope. They are going to propose a bill to fund food stamps during their shutdown.

That is right. The Democrats don't want the bad press of hungry Americans, but they are also, apparently, unwilling to even contemplate ending their monthlong shutdown. So they are trying to insulate themselves with this bill.

Do you know what is not in this bill? Paychecks for our troops, paychecks for law enforcement officers and Federal firefighters, paychecks for air traffic controllers, paychecks for other government workers, funding for rental and housing assistance, funding for small business loan programs, funding for farm loan programs, funding for Tribal programs, funding for Head Start, funding for rural development programs, funding for National Guard training, funding for telehealth services.

Shall I go on? Because I am happy to.

Every one of those programs I mentioned has either run out of money, is running out of money, or is otherwise in jeopardy because of the Democrats' government shutdown. The Democrats' bill would do nothing to support even one of those programs. Thanks to Democrats, Federal workers are lining up at food banks. The Democrats' bill is certainly not going to help them as they struggle to pay the rent or the electric bill or to make the car payment.

Enough is enough. This bill is a cynical attempt to buy political cover for Democrats to allow them to carry on their government shutdown even longer. We are not going to let them pick winners and losers. It is time to fund everybody, and the bill sitting at the desk right there does that. We just need five brave Democrats.

If Democrats really want to fund SNAP and WIC, we have a bill for them—a clean, nonpartisan CR to fund SNAP, WIC, and the entire Federal Government—or we can pass the Agricultural appropriations bill the Democrats have been resisting behind closed doors. That would fund SNAP, WIC, and our farm and conservation programs, not to mention ensuring salaries for the people who inspect our food and support our farmers. I am happy to bring that up right now.

The Democrats have spent a month—a month now—playing with people's livelihoods because the far-left wing of their party won't let them accept a clean, nonpartisan CR.

Enough is enough. We are not giving Democrats political cover. If they want to prevent damage from their shutdown, then they can end their shutdown. The bill is right there at the desk, and I will call a vote the minute the Democrats tell me they have enough votes to fund the government. The ball is really in their court.

Is this what you want the American people to think—that you are willing

to give them enormous amounts of pain and adverse consequence so that you can gain leverage—political leverage?

It is time to end it.  
I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, we are just 3 days—3 days—away from open enrollment and 3 days away from the biggest healthcare crisis America has seen in a generation.

Right now, at this moment, all day today, millions of Americans are getting sticker shock as the so-called window-shopping period has begun. American families, as they window shop, are seeing that due to Republican obstruction, they will end up having to pay tens of thousands of dollars more each year for healthcare, seeing their premiums triple, quadruple, or more just to afford a basic need like health insurance. And what is Donald Trump doing? He is ignoring one colossal healthcare crisis while manufacturing another: a hunger crisis.

In a matter of days, SNAP benefits will run out for 42 million Americans. And let's be very clear. This does not need to happen. This is on Donald Trump's shoulders. He can immediately provide SNAP benefits, as every President has done in the past. Every single President was not so cruel and heartless to hold those hungry children, hungry elderly, hungry veterans as hostages, but Donald Trump, who is a cold, heartless individual, only advancing himself, is doing it for the first time in American history. Never, never before in American history—not once under a Democratic President or a Republican President—has SNAP funding lapsed during a shutdown—not even in 2019, during Trump's last shutdown. In fact, Trump himself funded SNAP throughout that shutdown.

So this argument that he can't do it, that he doesn't have the money, that it is not legal is just bull—self-serving, nasty, vicious bull—to try to take the most needy people in our society, who don't have food right now—who could be a middle-class person who lost a job, could be an elderly person who has healthcare costs—and he is saying: The hell with you. I need you to be my hostage for political purposes because I don't want to provide healthcare for the American people.

Just weeks ago, Trump's own U.S. Department of Agriculture confirmed in writing that contingency funds—about \$6 billion in emergency reserves—were “available to fund participant benefits.” That is not Democrats saying it; that is the Republican-appointed U.S. Department of Agriculture saying that \$6 billion in emergency reserves were “available to fund participant benefits.”

But then, suddenly, after USDA said it, Trump ordered the Department of Agriculture to rip up the contingency

plan, literally delete it from their website—the big lie that they can't do it—and told them not to use emergency funds—no explanation, no justification; just plain cruelty from the man who only serves himself.

Donald Trump is picking politics over the lives of hungry kids. He is weaponizing hunger, turning millions of children, seniors, and veterans into political pawns to score points in his shutdown fight. Donald Trump is a vindictive politician and a heartless man, and that is why he doesn't care about cutting off food aid to hungry kids.

Of course, what he is doing is totally unprecedented. Let's not forget who it affects. Two-thirds of SNAP recipients are children, seniors, or people with disabilities. That is who Trump is cutting off—kids who rely on school meals, seniors on fixed incomes, and veterans trying to get by. That is why every single President in history continued SNAP benefits during a shutdown. Instead, what does Trump do? He is focused on \$40 million to bail out Argentina rather than how to keep SNAP benefits flowing for Americans here at home.

And don't give me the lie that this can't be done legally. Every single President—Republican, Democrat, and Trump himself in 2019—has used these funds during shutdowns to keep SNAP running.

Trump's own administration asserted that these emergency funds could be used to keep SNAP benefits flowing in a shutdown, and the Government Accountability Office, which is non-partisan, confirmed it. The USDA can also use the same transfer authority they used to keep WIC afloat in October to move money over to SNAP for November. To claim otherwise is a bald-faced lie.

Republicans are on a crusade to kill SNAP. They tried to do it in their Big Beautiful Bill. They don't like funding hungry children. They say to the most needy in society: We don't give a damn about you. In fact, we will use you as political pawns. Trump and Republicans spent their entire summer slashing SNAP by a historic \$200 billion. Why? To pay for tax cuts for billionaires. Now they are doubling down, using the shutdown to further devastate families and leave kids hungry.

But Democrats will not stand by while Trump manufacturers a hunger crisis. We are ready to work in whatever way to solve this issue. There is a bill right now from Senator HAWLEY—a Republican, a conservative Republican—that could ensure SNAP is funded. It has Republican and Democratic support. It is a bill I would happily support and vote for. As soon as THUNE lets HAWLEY put it on the Senate floor, it will pass, plain and simple.

But that is not the only option, of course. This week, Senate Democrats, led by my friend BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, will introduce legislation to fully fund SNAP and WIC—and WIC, going better than HAWLEY's bill—to

protect hungry kids, pregnant women, veterans, and working parents.

The bill is simple; it is moral; it is urgent. Ask JOHN THUNE why he won't put it on the floor. He decries the fact that SNAP benefits are cut off. He knows the money is available. He knows there is broad Republican support for it. And he doesn't put it on the floor. He is afraid of Trump. That is it. He knows better.

We Democrats are ready to act. We will push to pass the LUJÁN bill. We will vote for the HAWLEY bill if THUNE does the right thing and puts it on the floor before the weekend, before families lose their benefits, before holidays turn into a hunger crisis. We are ready to act.

We are ready to work with anyone, Republicans or Democrats, who is willing to stop this cruelty, but Senate Republicans—especially Leader THUNE—have to find the courage to stand up to Trump. Right now, they are frozen, paralyzed by fear, by cynicism, while millions of Americans wonder how they will feed their families.

So I say to my Republican colleagues: Don't block the HAWLEY bill.

Put it on the floor, Senator THUNE.

Don't block the LUJÁN bill, which is even better. Don't let politics outweigh compassion. Let's stop this hunger shutdown. Let's stop this shutdown. Let's stop the shutdown Republicans caused, using hungry people as pawns. Let's feed our people, and let's end this hunger crisis before it begins.

CHINA AND TARIFFS

Mr. President, now on Trump's Asian trip and tariffs, as we enter the 29th day of the government shutdown, where is Donald Trump? Gallivanting in Asia. Dancing in Malaysia.

He is preparing now to meet with President Xi of China to strike a trade deal that will sell out the American people, give away vital national security tools in exchange for little more than a photo op.

President Trump is about to congratulate himself—patting himself hard on the back—for cleaning up a mess that he created. Again, President Trump is about to congratulate himself for cleaning up a mess that he created. It is amazing what this guy does.

It is the same story with his so-called deal with South Korea. We are actually worse off because tariffs on Korean imports went from 2 percent now to 15 percent. But Donald Trump created a mess and now wants credit for pretending like he fixed it.

On China, Donald Trump's trade negotiations with China have been a failure. His actions have decimated soybean farmers. He has hurt small businesses. Has he revived any of American manufacturing? No. China is still flooding global markets with subsidized goods, still stealing American technologies to undercut U.S. firms and workers. Meanwhile, we have lost tens of thousands of American manufacturing jobs.

This is Trump's MO in foreign policy: He creates a giant mess, and then he

wants everyone to praise him when he tries to clean it up and ignore the damage he has inflicted. He creates the mess, tries to clean it up, and pats himself on the back when we are no better off—worse off—than when we started.

In anticipation of today's meeting with Trump and President Xi, Senate Democrats are demanding that President Trump not negotiate away America and our allies' national security.

He is using the most advanced semiconductor chips, which China doesn't have, as a bargaining chip. China is desperate to get these chips. If Trump gives it away, China will dominate the world of AI in a few short years, and Americans will pay an awful price.

Where are our China hawks on the Republican side decrying this? Where are they? Because these chips are vital, and it is American technology that has produced them, American companies that make them. China is desperate to get them because it will make them the leader in AI in a few years—AI, the most dominant technology in the world. And Trump is willing to give away those crown jewels so he can say he has "a deal" and undo the mess that he created with tariffs.

Donald Trump's chip deal is not "America First" but China first, putting China first over the next decade in what is the most crucial technology facing the world. Americans will regret that move for generations. Historians will note it as one of the turning points where America became not the primary power in the world but secondary to China—all because Trump wants an immediate press hit to say, "Hey, I have a deal," even though that deal doesn't move us forward at all, and it cleans up the mess he created.

Now, President Trump's trip to the Asian Continent could have been an opportunity to make progress with America's vital partners. He could have used this trip to end his reckless trade war, to stop alienating our allies, to show strength and unite our allies against the Chinese Communist Party, and, most importantly, to help Americans struggling with high costs here at home. But so far, his trip has been a total dud.

By the end of his trip to Asia, it could be the case that we somehow have higher tariffs on our neighbor Canada than we do on our biggest rival China. How on earth does that make sense?

In fact, the biggest news out of this trip is that Donald Trump seems to finally realize that he can't run for a third term. That just goes to show you how fruitless this trip has been.

American families are facing enough problems right now, with the nightmare of open enrollment, the pain of higher groceries, the prices of everything, from cars, to home appliances, to electricity, skyrocketing. The last thing they want is to turn on the TV and see Trump being gifted with a golden crown and then signing a deal with

China that royally screws over Americans.

Trump's trade war has been an utter disaster from the start. It has been a nightmare for our allies, for our economy, and for our families who are paying more because of the Trump tariff tax.

I am proud the Senate came together yesterday in a bipartisan vote, 52 to 48, to end Trump's tariffs on Brazil yesterday—the tariffs he put on Brazil simply because he is angry that the Brazilian Government is prosecuting a friend of his, a guy who is MAGA just like him. Isn't that amazing? That is why he put Trump tariffs on Brazil. That is why Americans are paying more for their cup of coffee in the morning—because Trump wants to embrace and help a MAGA, rightwing guy who is being prosecuted by the legitimate Brazilian Government. It is amazing.

This week we will have more resolutions to push back on Trump's trade war and help stop the bleeding. Our Republican colleagues will have a choice—a choice: stand with Trump's idiotic, disastrous, and often juvenily inspired tariffs or stand with American families and vote to lower costs for people back home.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). The majority whip.

#### GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, today I would like to start with a quote. Here it is:

It is time to pass a clean continuing resolution and end this shutdown today.

It goes on to say:

No half measures, and no gamesmanship.

Those are the words from the American Federation of Government Employees—not FOX News, not the National Review, not the Wall Street Journal—no. These are the words of the American Federation of Government Employees.

Let me tell you about the organization. They are the largest union in America for Federal workers. They were proud promoters, a couple of weeks ago, of the far left's radical rally. They are a very liberal group that has sued the Trump administration now more than a dozen times in the past year. This is a group that endorsed Kamala Harris for President, and 100 percent of their 2024 campaign war chest went to Democrats.

Even my friend and colleague who is on the floor right now, DICK DURBIN of Illinois, the Democratic whip, admits:

They're our friends. We take them seriously.

This labor union is one of the Democrats' biggest cheerleaders, and today they are calling out Democrats for playing politics and holding hostage the paychecks of over 800,000 Federal workers. If that doesn't push the Democrats to wake up and reopen the government, it is hard to tell what will.

We are now in day 29 of the Schumer shutdown, and Democrats have set a

record for the longest full government shutdown in American history. Union after union are begging the Democrats to open the government. It is not only this American Federation of Government Employees—oh, no, it is the head of the Capitol Police union. The head of the Capitol Police union warns:

The longer the shutdown drags on, the harder it becomes for my officers.

The President of the Teamsters Union says:

American workers are not bargaining chips. Senators should stop screwing around and pass the House-passed clean, short term funding bill.

The head of the National Air Traffic Controllers, their union, warns:

The message is simple: End the shutdown today.

There is no excuse—

The union leader says—

that these hardworking men and women are showing up to do this job and to not ever know when . . . they're going to get paid.

These are working Americans, and their paychecks are missing. And at the same time their paychecks are missing, their bills are mounting, and the stress that they are suffering is multiplying. The message is clear: Reopen the government today.

Democrats refuse to listen. Instead, they freely admit it is all about politics. They are playing a big and dangerous game of politics, and it is a politics of pain. The minority leader, SCHUMER, gloated—he gloated—this month to the press in a sitdown interview with Punchbowl News. He says:

Every day gets better for us.

I am not sure who the "us" is, but it is not the American people.

Then you have the whip in the House on the Democrat side of the aisle. What did she say? She admitted to FOX News—she said:

Of course there will be families that are going to suffer . . . but it is one of the few leverage times we have.

That is not somebody that is serious about taking care of people and making sure we get the government open.

And even my friend and colleague CHRIS COONS of Delaware, just last Thursday, told a national television audience on C-SPAN:

Frankly, this is our only moment of leverage.

And he called this shutdown an "unpleasant tool." He has voted 13 times to keep using this "unpleasant tool" to keep the government closed.

Now, those are the words of high-ranking Democrats in both the House and the Senate, and at the same time, vulnerable mothers and children are being described as leverage so that Democrats can give free healthcare to illegal immigrants. That is what they are doing: using the American people as leverage, as pawns in their big game of politics. And what are their demands? Healthcare for illegal immigrants. It is reckless; it is radical; and it is wrong.

This suffering, the unpleasantness, is going to get worse as the weeks go on

unless the Democrats vote to reopen the government. Air traffic controllers missed their first full paychecks yesterday; 1.8 million Federal workers missed their full paycheck on Friday. This includes Border Patrol agents, TSA agents. By the end of the week, 42 million Americans will lose food assistance. The Democrats call that unpleasantness.

Lines at food banks are already swelling. The New York Times reports food banks are anticipating an even greater surge in demand. What do the Democrats call that? Unpleasantness, so they can have leverage.

Families from New Hampshire to Georgia are going to go hungry because Democrats choose to close the government and refuse to open it. What do the Democrats call that? Unpleasantness.

Democrats know the President can't legally use emergency funds, to the tune of \$9 billion per month, for food assistance. Democrats have an option: Vote for a clean continuing resolution and reopen the government.

Of course, the Schumer shutdown is not only a financial issue; it is also causing a crisis in national security. This past weekend, one in six air traffic controllers nationwide—in terms of the locations, the centers—were understaffed. Since Sunday, nearly 20,000 flights have been delayed.

What do the Democrats call that? Unpleasantness.

Some Democrats privately say they are not going to budge unless planes are falling out of the sky. That is their definition of unpleasantness.

Democrats continue to embrace the politics of pain. Democrats have chosen leverage over the lives of people in this country. They have chosen leverage because they want to fight Trump. They should be feeding our families. They are choosing politics over paychecks.

The American people deserve better. We are not getting it from the Democrats in this body. Senate Republicans have voted 13 times for a clean, short-term continuing resolution to reopen the government and pay every Federal worker, and 13 times Senate Democrats have voted no. Under Joe Biden, they voted 13 times for the exact same kind of clean continuing resolution. They voted yes all of those times.

Here is the math everybody in this Chamber understands. It takes 60 votes to reopen the government. Fifty-five Senators have voted to reopen the government time and time again. That means we need five more Democrats to end the shutdown.

Republicans are absolutely ready to pay our Nation's workers, to feed our Nation's families, and to reopen the government. Democrats continue to vote against this. They seem to be committed to what the House Democrat whip admits is suffering and what Senator COONS continues to call unpleasantness.

Democrats need to stop playing this dangerous game of the politics of pain.

They need to reopen the government, and they need to do it today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to clarify several points raised by my friend and colleague from Wyoming Dr. JOHN BARRASSO, my Senate colleague—and he is my friend. I disagree with him, and I think several things that he said were incorrect and need to be clarified on the record.

First, the notion that we are providing health insurance for illegal immigrants is wrong. Let me tell you why it is wrong. You go back almost 20 years, I believe, to the Reagan Presidency when we had a phenomena in the United States that needed to be addressed. People were showing up at the emergency rooms of hospitals and being turned away. Some of them were bleeding out in the driveways of hospitals across America.

We changed the law under President Reagan, and we changed the law to say that you must admit people coming through the door who need emergency medical assistance—women who were in labor to deliver a child, people who were literally bleeding to death.

Do I hear the Senator from Wyoming say that we should be turning those people away? I hope not. I don't think that is what he really believes. He understands, as I do, that there are compelling human situations where you provide assistance. And I thank our hospitals for doing that.

But to say that we are trying to make sure that we manufacture some coverage for illegal aliens is to overlook the obvious. We don't want these hospitals turning away people who are literally in an extreme situation. I will defend that to the death.

I will just tell you, when President Reagan and others supported that, it was considered to be bipartisan, common sense, and still is today.

When it comes to the SNAP program, it is true that one out of eight Americans counts on SNAP to provide \$6 a day for food. A third of those Americans are children. Another third are disabled. And the other third are senior citizens. It is a valuable program in my State, where almost 2 million people receive this kind of assistance.

Why are we stopping the decision to fund SNAP?

It is a decision by the White House and the President and the Republicans in Congress. They have decided that, even though they posted on the website for this program, just a few weeks ago, that they had the money to cover it in case of a shutdown, they removed that language and now say they won't provide food for hungry Americans.

That is not necessary. In fact, there is a way around it. It has been used before by this President and others, in a shutdown crisis situation, and should be used again. Let's not bargain this political decision we are making in Washington on the tables and health of

Americans who receive the SNAP program.

Now, let me say a word about the core issue that is at stake here. We have a problem we face that we need to correct, and we need to correct it now because the decision was made in the "Big Beautiful Trump Budget Bill" not to provide tax credits to millions of Americans who qualify under the Affordable Care Act. Many of them are seeing increased health insurance premiums that they never anticipated.

Let me give you an example. In my State of Illinois, Cook County is the largest county and includes the city of Chicago. The average monthly premium on the Affordable Care Act now is \$226—\$226 a month. The projected increase, because of the Republicans' Big Beautiful Bill, goes from \$226 a month to \$441 a month—in other words, about \$2,500 the individual would pay for health insurance, over and above what they paid this year. That is an increase of 95 percent.

How is this affecting other States? Let's take one for example, South Dakota, with a population of about a million people, and 53,000 of them are covered by the Affordable Care Act. They are facing this kind of increase to their premiums. I am sure the Senators from South Dakota, both of them, want to protect their families from health insurance premiums they can't afford. They don't want people to drop coverage.

In order to protect them, they have to change the law—the "Big Beautiful Law," as they call it—and provide assistance for people to pay these health insurance premiums. That is at issue.

Across the United States, some 24 million people are facing this reality. It is a hardship for them and can be taken care of, and should be, on a bipartisan basis. The problem is that it isn't just tinkering at edges that is at stake here with many Republicans. They want to do away with the Affordable Care Act.

Under the first Trump term, I can still remember when Senator McCain came through those doors at 2 in the morning and voted no to save the Affordable Care Act. Trump, in his first Presidency, wanted to get rid of it, and many Republicans still do.

What is their alternative? They have none. They have no alternative. They just are angry over this notion of Obamacare and want to see some other approach to it but can't put it on paper because it won't do the basics that Obamacare has done, which provides health insurance across the board to more Americans than ever in our history.

So here is the bottom line. We can take care of the issues that face us—the government shutdown, as well as making sure that the Affordable Care Act premiums don't go through the roof—on a bipartisan basis—that people of good will will agree to do that.

We have spent now a month or longer at this impasse, and it is time to break

it. Let's reach an agreement that provides for health insurance premiums that are affordable. Let's reopen this government, and let's do it sooner rather than later. As I have said repeatedly, there are plenty of tables in this building. Let's sit at that table as soon as the President returns, with the President. Let's have the House of Representatives—in their 6-week vacation—come back to Washington and do the business of the people in that Chamber, as well, and let's put our leaders at the table as well.

This can be done and should be done quickly, as soon as the President returns from his overseas trip and the House of Representatives can reconvene, which could be tomorrow. Let's get down to business to do that.

#### IMMIGRATION

Mr. President, it is hard to explain what is going on in the city of Chicago and the State of Illinois that I represent. We have a President who insisted on sending National Guard troops in from Texas—from Texas. The Governor of Illinois said they are not needed; we have our own National Guard if we need one.

And, instead, he is sending these troops and waiting for court approval to spread out across the city of Chicago. At the same time, ICE—the Department of Homeland Security—is creating a reign of terror on the city of Chicago. I do not exaggerate.

Why are they in force in Chicago? Because the President has said, over and over again, that the immigrants are the problem in America. You have heard the speeches, waving his arms at these rallies, saying: We have got to stop the rapists, the murderers, the terrorists, the criminally insane, and the criminal predators who come across our border from committing all these crimes. So we are going to crack down on them, in cities who just happened to vote against me in the last election.

What they have done—what President Trump has done—is send in these ICE agents who have created this reign of terror. It is hard to describe what is going on in this great city, when it comes down to these ICE agents. They have people afraid to leave their homes to go shopping, to go to church, to go to a restaurant, to meet with their family, to bring their kids to school. The stories come in, over and over, of what these ICE agents are doing.

Do you know what happened last Saturday? In their effort to get the worst of the worst—the criminal elements of the immigrants—these ICE agents raided a Halloween parade for kids in Old Irving Park. Well, that is where you are going to find a lot of terrorists, I am sure. I jest, of course.

We know what happened: Harassment, fear—and they left.

They gathered on the sidewalk outside of the Lutheran church in Albany Park in Chicago and dropped tier gas canisters. The neighbors came out, blowing their whistles, and finally they left.

These are men who are wearing masks so they can't be identified. Some of them are wearing uniforms that have no identification whatsoever. They travel about in vans with no markings on them, and they are harassing people in all sorts of ways.

This is not America, and this is not how we fight crime in this country. Unfortunately, it is the reality of what is happening. But sometimes, in the worst of times, things emerge which are nothing short of incredible. It happened yesterday in Chicago.

There is a section of the city of Chicago called Little Village in Lawndale. Yesterday, several hundred high school students from the local high school marched down 26th Street in Little Village, in the east section of Chicago. They were doing that to protest the treatment that they faced with these ICE agents.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this article from the Chicago Sun Times be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Chicago Tribune, Oct. 28, 2025]

STUDENTS WALK OUT OF LITTLE VILLAGE SCHOOLS, HOLD MARCH IN PROTEST OF RECENT ICE ACTIVITY

(By Kate Perez)

Barbers paused haircuts to look out windows and bakers in aprons peered out doorways along West 26th Street in Little Village to the sounds of whistles and chants from young voices echoing down the street.

Since the Trump administration's Operation Midway Blitz began in September, whistles have been used as warnings that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is nearby. But on Tuesday, the whistle-blowing coincided with students carrying Mexican flags and signs during a staged walkout of local schools.

In an over 2-mile walk, hundreds of students made their way from Little Village Lawndale High School to the La Villita or Little Village Arch, denouncing recent ICE action and supporting immigrant communities.

Immigration enforcement descended on Little Village last week, resulting in multiple people being taken into custody. The sobering effect the arrival of federal officers had on the community inspired the walkout, student organizer and Social Justice High School senior Lia Sophia Lopez said.

"They hurt us like they've never hurt us before. They attacked our community, they surrounded the parks, they surrounded our school. I've never felt more unsafe in my life than that day," Lopez said. "We need to protect our people's peace. We need to protect their freedom and dignity. Because if we don't, no one else will."

Lopez and other students organized the walkout, which included her peers from the four schools on Little Village Lawndale High School's campus—Multicultural Academy of Scholarship High School, World Language High School, Greater Lawndale High School for Social Justice, and Infinity Math, Science, and Technology High School.

With less than a week of planning, Lopez said she was pleased with the large turnout and made sure her fellow students knew the risks of protesting, including the presence of federal agents, telling them "they will not stop because you are children" and "they do not care," she said.

Still, fear did not stop students accompanied by Chicago police officers as they moved along the route. Chants of "say it loud, say it clear immigrants are welcome here," and "the people united, will never be divided" drew honks from cars stopped along the marchers' path.

The march through the village drew people to the sidewalks, cheering and blowing whistles in solidarity with students as they passed. Others hung out of windows that overlooked the streets or pressed themselves against storefront windows, smiling and recording. The community engagement was not lost on Lopez, who said her "beautiful, vibrant home" has gone quiet amid the recent federal action.

"I've seen so many people come out and smiling and feeling safe, which is something we haven't felt in months. And that's what I want. That is all I want," Lopez said. "This protest was just for us to get peace, to be able to walk down the street again without being scared, to be able to live your life."

For Lopez, protesting was worth whatever potential consequences. When her peers and family expressed concerns, she pushed back.

"I said to them, I don't care if I get expelled, I don't care if I get detained. . . . I will do this for my people, for my community, because they deserve it," Lopez said. "They deserve people to speak out for them. They deserve people to show the love and appreciation that they give to us and to our students, Social Justice and Little Village Lawndale High School as a whole."

Mr. DURBIN. It says:

Since the Trump administration's Operation Midway Blitz began in September, whistles have been used as warnings that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is nearby. But on Tuesday, the whistle-blowing—

That was yesterday—

on Tuesday, the whistle-blowing coincided with students carrying Mexican flags and signs during a staged walkout of local schools.

Mr. President, this was a peaceful demonstration. I see the photograph of the parade of these high school students, several hundred of them. Two of them are carrying a large copy of the wording of the U.S. Constitution. Others are carrying American flags, some carrying Mexican flags.

In an over 2-mile walk, hundreds of students [yesterday] made their way from Little Village Lawndale High School to the . . . Little Village Arch, denouncing recent ICE action and supporting immigrant communities.

Immigration enforcement descended on Little Village last week, resulting in multiple people being taken into custody. The sobering effect the arrival of federal officers had on the community inspired the walkout [by these students] . . . Social Justice High School senior Lia Sofia Lopez said.

And here I am quoting her:

"They hurt us like they've never hurt us before. They attacked our community, they surrounded the parks, they surrounded our school. I've never felt more unsafe in my life than that day," Lopez said. "We need to protect our people's peace. We need to protect their freedom and dignity. Because if we don't, no one else will."

Lopez and other students organized the walkout, which included her peers from the four schools on Little Village Lawndale High School's campus.

These students walked peacefully through the community.



With less than a week of planning, Lopez said she was pleased with the large turnout and made sure her fellow students knew the risks of protesting, including the presence of federal agents, telling them “they will not stop!”

This is what she told fellow students. “they will not stop because you are children” and “they do not care,” she said.

Still, fear did not stop these students yesterday. They were accompanied by Chicago police officers as they moved along the road.

Chants of “say it loud, say it clear, immigrants are welcome here,” and “the people united, will never be divided” drew honks from cars stopped along the marchers’ path.

The march through the village drew people to the sidewalks, cheering and blowing whistles in solidarity with [these] students . . . Others hung out of windows that overlooked the streets or pressed themselves against storefront windows, smiling and recording. The community engagement was not lost on Lopez, who said her “beautiful, vibrant home” has gone quiet amid the recent federal action.

And then she said:

I’ve seen so many people come out smiling and feeling safe, which is something we haven’t felt [in this area] in months. And that’s what I want. That is all I want,” Lopez said. “This protest was just for us to get peace, to be able to walk down the street again without being scared, to be able to live your life.”

For Lopez, protesting was worth whatever potential consequences. When her peers and family expressed concerns, she pushed back.

She said:

“I said to them, I don’t care if I get expelled, I don’t care if I get detained . . . I will do this for my people, for my community, because they deserve it,” Lopez said. “They deserve people to speak out for them. They deserve people to show the love and appreciation that they give to us and to our students, Social Justice and Little Village Lawndale High School as a whole.”

That was an extraordinary amount of courage from a high school student in the city of Chicago. She knows her parents and many other families are afraid of what might happen because of the ICE agents that are roaming through, showing their strength to bust up Halloween parades, showing their strength to drop tear gas canisters in front of churches when people come out after services.

This extraordinary show of courage and commitment to our country is nothing new.

I, 20 years ago, introduced a bill called the DREAM Act. And as I described this act, it said, if you were brought to this country as a small child, you should have a chance for a path to citizenship.

I used to tell that story, and then I would wait afterward. And when I would go out to my car, outside of the hall, there would be young people waiting for me in the dark, looking in both directions, afraid that someone would see them, and say: Senator, I am a Dreamer. Thank you for this legislation.

Though I have never been able to make it law, I am happy to say that President Obama used his Executive

power to create DACA to protect 800,000 of these young people around the country.

Now, this generation of young people is doing what happened next in the story of the Dream Act. After DACA was created, most of these young people—despite the advice and warnings of their parents—came out publicly and said: I am a Dreamer. I want to be part of America’s future.

It was extraordinary courage on their part. Now this generation is doing the same, marching down 26th Street to say they want an end to this harassment by ICE officials.

This is not what America is all about. If you are engaged in stopping the worst of the worst—criminal elements among immigrants—count me in. But harassing innocent families that have not violated the law is not the way to do it.

So far, 70 percent or more of those who have been detained by ICE as part of this venture have no criminal record whatsoever. It is harassment and terror, plain and simple.

I salute these students in Little Village for the courage that they showed. I hope that the students across the Chicago area and beyond will stand in solidarity with them in peaceful protest of the intimidation that is taking place in Little Village.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

MR. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak for up to 15 minutes prior to the scheduled rollcall vote.

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

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT RELATING TO “NATIONAL PETROLEUM RESERVE IN ALASKA INTEGRATED ACTIVITY PLAN RECORD OF DECISION”—Motion to Proceed

MR. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I rise to urge my colleagues to overturn the Biden administration’s sweeping restrictions of what we call in Alaska the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska—so to pass the CRA, the S.J. Res. 80, that we are going to vote on here in a couple of minutes.

When I say the Biden administration’s restrictions, in this case, that is not strong enough. What the Biden administration did when they came into office is they took the NPRA—that is right there, the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska—and they said we are going to essentially shut this down.

So what is the National Petroleum Reserve of Alaska? Well, it started out—in 1923, President Warren Harding said: This is so important, this area of Alaska, we are going to call it the Naval Petroleum Reserve of Alaska for the U.S. Navy for oil.

Then Congress later came and in law said: No, we are going to designate this the “National Petroleum Reserve of Alaska.” It is the size of Indiana, and we are going to make sure it is developed for oil.

Development—that is what this body did.

Joe Biden comes in and says: Nope. We are going to take an Executive order, and we are going to shut it down.

And that is what they did.

So the most important element of this is not just Biden flaunting the law, which he did in Alaska many times, as I am going to get to—he canceled the voices of the most important people in Alaska who lived there.

So let me go to the next slide here. A lot of people have seen this. This is what I call the Last Frontier Lock-Up. OK. This is a map of Alaska. Here is NPR-A up here. Again, we are a big State. That is about the size of Indiana.

Biden issued 70 Executive orders and Executive actions singularly focused on my State during his 4 years—7-0. One of them is the lockup of NPR-A, on this huge list.

By the way, I went to the President, President Biden, when this list was at 48, and I handed it to him and said: Mr. President, what are you doing? Do you even know what you are doing?

John Podesta was in there—all the bad, you know, far-left, radical enviros.

You are crushing our State, you are crushing American energy, you are killing workers, and you are not listening to the Native people of my State who don’t like this. And by the way, Mr. President, we have the highest standards in the world on resource development in Alaska.

But they didn’t listen. So 7-0 Executive orders singularly focused on one State. It was an outrage. But it showed their priorities, which was not to unleash American energy but to listen to the radical far left, who always wants to shut down Alaska. They don’t care about the Native people; don’t care about jobs; certainly don’t care about union jobs.

So the good news is that when President Trump came into office, he said: Enough of that. We are going to unleash Alaska.

So day one—this is a day-one Executive order from the President of the United States. He said: We are going to unleash Alaska’s extraordinary resource potential.

That is a day-one Executive order from President Trump, and so that is what we are doing. We are going to do it through the executive branch—what the President is doing—and here in the legislative branch. So, not surprisingly, this morning, there was a Statement of Administration Policy from the Trump administration saying they “strongly supports passage of S.J. Res. 80” of my CRA.

MR. PRESIDENT, I ask unanimous consent that the October 29, 2025, Statement of Administration Policy be printed in the RECORD.