

first and last cadets their diplomas—a tradition honored by the Presidents before him and hopefully future Presidents. He couldn't be bothered to fully participate in a ceremony that meant everything to these young officers and their families.

Earlier this month at Norfolk, at the Navy's 250th anniversary celebration, Trump dispensed with any pretense. He declared:

Let's face it. This is a rally.

He closed the ceremony by dancing to his campaign song "Y.M.C.A." by the Village People.

The Navy's 250th anniversary became about Trump, not about the history of sacrifice of sailors and the service they represent.

To my Republican colleagues who have served in uniform: You understand that service requires honesty, humility, and respect for those who came before you. You know that officers must give their best professional advice even if it is not what the Commander in Chief wants to hear. You know that when officers fear giving honest answers, people die, missions fail, wars are lost.

So when the President lies about military operations, he disrespects every soldier who was told the truth about the battlefield. When he fires officers for honest advice, he disrespects every officer who has had the courage to speak truth to power. When he turns military ceremonies into political rallies, he disrespects every servicemember who has kept politics out of their professional life. You know this. The question is what you—and all of us—will do about it.

We are at a crossroads. The damage Trump is inflicting is not theoretical; it is happening now. If we don't act, it will accelerate. America's civil-military relationship took 250 years to build, but it can be destroyed in a fraction of that time. Once the military is seen as a partisan instrument serving one party, once it is deployed domestically against political opponents, the trust that sustains it will evaporate, and that trust, once lost, can take generations to rebuild.

Consider the dangers if this continues. Will military officers refuse to serve under future administrations, depending on the party in power? Will they resist civilian authority over policy disagreements? Will the military itself fracture along partisan lines?

Consider what happens if Trump continues to deploy the National Guard against his political opponents. What happens when citizens see soldiers in the street to suppress constitutionally permitted dissent? What happens to recruiting when young Americans view the military as a partisan tool? What happens to military cohesion when soldiers treat fellow citizens as enemies?

These are not hypothetical questions. President Trump told our most senior military leaders that fighting the "enemy within" is their mission. He suggested using American cities as

training grounds. The precedent he sets will outlast his administration and be available to every President after him.

Congress has the constitutional authority and moral obligation to stop this. We are not powerless. We control the purse—although it appears so many times recently that we want to surrender that control. We have oversight authority; we are not exercising it properly. We can pass legislation, and we must act.

After 9 months of this Presidency, it is clear that my Republican colleagues must do more than recognize the problem; they must act. Republicans must work with us to call out the President and take concrete legislative action.

First, we must codify prohibitions on political activities at military installations and block Federal funds from supporting such activities. No more campaign rallies on military bases. No more merchandise sales to troops in uniform or civilian dependents or anyone else who wanders up.

Second, we must pass legislation—already in the Senate National Defense Authorization Act—to require explanations and notifications for senior general and flag officer dismissals. If these decisions are based on merit, the administration should have no problem explaining them publicly.

Third, we must strengthen the Hatch Act as it applies to political leaders interacting with military personnel. The rules that constrain servicemembers from politics must also constrain politicians from exploiting servicemembers for political purposes.

Fourth, we must establish clear standards requiring congressional approval for domestic military deployments except in genuine emergencies. The Founders gave Congress the power over the military for exactly this reason—to prevent any President from deploying troops as a personal force.

I recognize the political pressure that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle face, but we all took the same oath either in uniform or in elected office to support and defend the Constitution, not a President or party.

The American military is trusted by the American people because it has earned that trust by remaining apolitical, professional, and devoted to defending the Constitution of the United States.

I will close with this: Yesterday in Japan, President Trump boarded an aircraft carrier to address American sailors and marines. For a full hour, standing before hundreds of young men and women deployed thousands of miles from home, the Commander in Chief lectured them on his political grievances. He complained that the 2020 election was stolen. He mocked reporters. He whined about the Nobel Peace Prize. He boasted about deploying the National Guard domestically. He invented false stories about President Biden and jeered him. The sailors and marines, for their part, remained silent and respectful, like the professionals they are.

But the name of that aircraft carrier is worth noting: The USS *George Washington*. How fitting that our first President set the standard for the military we inherit today and how shameful that President Trump so badly fails that standard.

Washington recognized that the Presidency and the military are grander than any one person, and he recognized the danger of any man who believes otherwise. As he warned in his Farewell Address:

Guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism.

President Trump, I fear that Washington's warning has come to bear.

Simply put, President Trump is politicizing the military for his benefit. He is disrespecting our servicemembers, and he is setting precedents that will haunt us for generations.

Every day that passes, every political rally on a military base, every firing of an officer for honest advice, every statement about deploying troops against domestic opponents—each inflicts damage that becomes harder to repair.

To my Republican colleagues: This is your moment. You can help defend the military you cherish—and, indeed, you do cherish it. You have served in it with distinction, honor, and courage. You can exercise your constitutional authority as the majority power, or you can stand by and concede to an Executive who recognizes no limits.

I suspect history will not forgive this body—all of us—for remaining silent while the President transforms this military into his personal political tool. The military I served in and my colleagues served in deserves better. The country we all swore to defend deserves better. The young men and women taking the oath today deserve the apolitical, professional military our Founders fought and died to establish.

Let us together reassert Congress's power and preserve the military tradition we inherited.

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

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 UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE RELATING TO "RECORD OF DECISION FOR THE BARRED OWL MANAGEMENT STRATEGY; WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA"—Motion to Proceed

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, in a few minutes, we are going to vote on

my resolution, pursuant to the Congressional Review Act, to overturn a rule promulgated by the Federal Government, specifically, the Department of the Interior. I can't think of a rule that better demonstrates the arrogance, the hubris of the Federal administrative State. It has to do with God's creatures. I talked about this yesterday.

This is a barred owl, spelled B-A-R-R-E-D. This is a spotted owl. They are both magnificent animals. If you ever studied them, they both have very soulful eyes. They have incredibly—you probably never had an opportunity to pet one, but they have incredibly soft feathers. They are not enemies; they are cousins.

There are 19 species of owls in the United States. These two have been around about 11,000 years. They are not enemies. They both hunt mice and lizards and snakes and insects and mosquitoes. The barred owl is slightly bigger than the spotted owl. The barred owl is a better hunter. That is just the way God made them.

Now, the Department of the Interior—this started under President Biden, but I don't want to mislead anyone. Secretary Burgum, our current Secretary of the Interior, very much opposes my CRA and supports this regulation I am trying to overturn.

What would the regulation do? Here is what it would do. The Federal Government, as I said yesterday—it was true then and is true now—which can't even deliver the mail when the stuff has an address right on the front of it and, in particular, the Department of the Interior, under President Biden and now under President Trump—as an aside, it is very hard to piss off both the Biden administration and the Trump administration, but I have managed to do that. That is OK. I think I am right. The Department of the Interior is proposing to kill 453,000 barred owls. Kill them—mamas, daddies, babies. Why? To protect, they say, the spotted owl.

You go: Whoa, why does a spotted owl need protecting from the barred owl? They are cousins. They share the same habitat. Sometimes they have sex. It is not unknown that a barred owl will marry a spotted owl. A barred owl marries another barred owl for life, in fact, and sometimes a barred owl will marry a spotted owl.

The barred owl doesn't eat the spotted owl. The barred owl doesn't kill the spotted owl. But the barred owl is a better hunter. And the Department of the Interior says because of that, they have to kill 453,000 barred owls to help the spotted owls. That is what the Federal Government has come down to.

We now have DEI for owls. According to the Department of the Interior: Bad owl; good owl. But we are not talking about an admission to college. If you are on the wrong end of this DEI proposal, you don't just not get—the owl doesn't not get admitted to college; the owl gets killed.

I have been around a little while. I have seen a few vampire movies. This isn't the first one of these, but this is one of the worst examples I have ever seen of the arrogance and the hubris of the Federal Government.

This is bone-deep, down-to-the-marrow stupid. Let me tell you why. First of all, it is not going to work. The Federal Government is going to send out a bunch of hunters. Here is one of their hunters. That is what they will probably look like. They are going to send out a bunch of hunters at night with flashlights and shotguns. Because the owls are nocturnal, they live at night; they come out at night. They hide during the day.

Both barred owls and spotted owls live about 40 feet up in the trees. So they are going to send these cowboys out there with their little lights and they are going to point up and they are supposed to shoot the barred owl and not shoot the spotted owl.

Dream weaver. Dream weaver.

So to kill the barred owls, it is inevitable they are going to kill some spotted owls.

No. 2, I have been all through the regulation. I see no indication where using lead shot is prohibited. We changed the rules about using lead versus steel shot because we realize how dangerous lead is. So they are going to kill—if they use a lead shot, which is a lot cheaper than steel shot—yes, they will kill some barred owls, and they will also kill some spotted owls. They will also kill some eagles. They are also going to kill a bunch of hawks, and they are going to kill a bunch of other wildlife because they eat the lead and the lead kills them.

It is not going to work.

The third reason it is not going to work and what the Department of the Interior won't tell you is that the barred owl, which is native to the Eastern United States, started moving west into the jurisdiction of the spotted owl about 100 years ago. It has been steadily moving west because the old-growth forests, where the barred owl lived in the Eastern United States, in north-eastern Canada, was cut to make room for people. So the barred owl started moving west, and now the barred owl is in Washington and Oregon and Northern California and British Columbia.

Once again, they don't eat each other. They don't kill each other. But the spotted owl that the Department of the Interior says it has to save was losing population well before the barred owl moved in. Do you know why that is? Because what is happening in the West is the same thing that was happening in the East. Because we gained population and people moved to the suburbs, we reduced old-growth forests, which reduces the habitat for both owls. I am not saying that we shouldn't harvest trees appropriately. I am not saying that. We have also had wildfires. That is what is damaging the spotted owl. It is not the barred owl.

The final point is that this isn't going to work in that, unlike some of

the employees in the Department of the Interior, the barred owl isn't stupid. Once you start shooting the barred owl, the barred owl is just going to move on up to Canada. Then, as soon as the coast is clear, the barred owl is going to come back, OK? So you are not going to do anything to help the spotted owl.

The second reason that this regulation is bone-deep, down-to-the-marrow stupid is that it is going to be expensive. In, I think, 2024, the Department of the Interior issued a contract to kill, I think it was, 1,500 barred owls. I don't know how they could do it. I don't know how they had the authority, but they did it. That is the way the bureaucracy works. They hired hunters. They paid them \$3,000 a bird—\$3,000 a bird. So, if they went out at night with their little flashlights, looking 40 feet up in the trees, and they killed a daddy barred owl, they got \$3,000. If they killed a mama barred owl, they got \$3,000. And if they killed a baby barred owl, they got another \$3,000.

Do you know how they really hit the jackpot? It was when they would catch a mama barred owl in her nest, protecting her baby chicks. With one shotgun shell, you hit all three baby chicks. That is \$9,000. That is what we are going to use taxpayer money for.

Now, the Department of the Interior wants to send out these folks to kill 453,000 barred owls at \$3,000 a pop. That is \$1.3 billion—not million but billion dollars—to try to protect the spotted owl, not because the spotted owl is hurting anybody, not because the barred owl is hurting anybody. The barred owl is just a better hunter, and the Department of the Interior will tell you that. The barred owl is better. They both eat the same thing. They are better at catching prey, and they think that is putting pressure on the spotted owl.

The spotted owl isn't on the endangered species list. If the spotted owl is in such bad shape, why hasn't the Department of the Interior moved to put the spotted owl on the endangered species list?

Do you know why? Because they can't, because they are not in danger.

The Department of the Interior likes to use the word "threatened"—"threatened," "threatened." Well, hell, the zebras are threatened by lions, but the Interior Department—at least not yet—isn't suggesting we go kill all the lions because they eat zebras.

I don't want to mislead anyone. This regulation was promulgated under President Biden, but Secretary Burgum, with whom I have spoken—I have great respect for him—is adamant that this is a good rule and a good regulation. In fact, he told me, as I mentioned yesterday, that by opposing his idea, I was slandering the Trump administration. I am slandering the Trump administration. No, sir, I am trying to help the Trump administration. I am trying to save the Department of the Interior and the Secretary from himself.

In a rare moment of candor, let me tell you what one employee from the Department of the Interior said to a reporter. He probably got fired for it, but this is what he said, and he was—and is—a Fish and Wildlife employee and expert.

He said:

I think all we can really do is try our best to provide a habitat for spotted owls, and in the long run, we are just going to have to let the two species work it out.

The final point I will make, and what aggravates me the most about this, is I know the employees at the Department of the Interior are smart and virtuous. I know they are smarter and more virtuous than me. But who appointed them God? Who appointed them Pope?

Animals migrate all the time. It happens all the time, not just mammals but all animals. They move location.

So we are going to be in the business of telling animals: Well, you can live here, but you can't live there.

We are also going to be in the business of choosing which owls can live and which owls can die.

I am going to end like I ended yesterday. This is my advice to my friends at the Department of the Interior, and I don't mean any disrespect in saying it: Life is hard. Life is very, very hard, but it is a lot harder when you are stupid. This regulation is stupid, and we will live to regret it, just like China, back when Mao, during the Great Leap Forward, issued a decree—in his arrogance and in his hubris—to kill all the sparrows in China. And they did, just like we are going to kill all the owls. Two million of the Chinese people died. That is what happens when you mess with God and Mother Nature. As a result, they had to import sparrows. We will end up, someday, if they do this, having to import barred owls. We will regret it.

I don't know, Mr. President, what I am supposed to say next to start the vote, but I am ready.

Here it is.

#### MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 190, S.J. Res. 69.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BANKS). The clerk will report the joint resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 190, S.J. Res. 69, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service relating to "Record of Decision for the Barred Owl Management Strategy; Washington, Oregon, and California".

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the rollcall vote begin immediately.

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

#### VOTE ON MOTION

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

Mr. KENNEDY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGOS) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 25, nays 72, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 597 Leg.]

##### YEAS—25

Blackburn	Grassley	Moran
Booker	Hagerty	Murkowski
Britt	Hoeven	Paul
Cassidy	Johnson	Sanders
Collins	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Cramer	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Ernst	McCormick	
Gillibrand	Moody	

##### NAYS—72

Alsobrooks	Hawley	Reed
Baldwin	Heinrich	Ricketts
Banks	Hickenlooper	Risch
Barrasso	Hirono	Rosen
Bennet	Husted	Rounds
Blumenthal	Justice	Schatz
Blunt Rochester	Kaine	Schiff
Boozman	Kelly	Schmitt
Budd	Kim	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Shaheen
Capito	Klobuchar	Sheehy
Coons	Lee	Slotkin
Cornyn	Lujan	Smith
Cortez Masto	Lummis	Sullivan
Cotton	Markey	Thune
Crapo	McConnell	Tillis
Curtis	Merkley	Van Hollen
Daines	Moreno	Warner
Duckworth	Mullin	Warnock
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Fetterman	Murray	Welch
Fischer	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Graham	Padilla	Wyden
Hassan	Peters	Young

##### NOT VOTING—3

Gallago	Hyde-Smith	Wicker
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The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3071

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, in a few minutes, my good colleague from New Mexico Senator LUJÁN will be offering a unanimous consent request, and I want to thank him for his extraordinary leadership on the issue of SNAP, leading the way on an urgent issue for millions of Americans.

Now, right now, we are facing down two crises at once: a healthcare crisis and a hunger crisis, and both are caused by and intensified by one man and one man only: Donald Trump.

We are now 3 days away from open enrollment, and now, for the first time in history, a President is refusing to fund SNAP during a shutdown; 42 million Americans—young children who need food, veterans who might have PTSD and need help, senior citizens who rely on SNAP to help feed themselves, and so many others—people who are out of work because they lost their jobs through no fault of their own—need SNAP.

Why are we not doing it? Not because the money is gone; it is there. Not be-

cause it is not permitted; it is legal. But because Donald Trump ordered it stopped. It falls on his shoulders.

Let's be clear: This does not need to happen. Never before under any President, Republican or Democrat, has SNAP been cut off during a shutdown. We are not talking about—we are talking, with the shutdown, we all know our position. We need a negotiation, but this SNAP doesn't have to happen in any case and only because Donald Trump is doing it, and the Republican leadership goes along with Donald Trump to let SNAP expire.

Trump did this once before. In 2019, he funded SNAP during his last shutdown. Back then, Trump kept SNAP funded. This time, he is deliberately pulling the plug, even though in September he said he would fund it and could fund it, independent of any shutdown.

Trump is weaponizing hunger. He is using kids and parents as pawns. Donald Trump is a vindictive politician and a heartless man.

Just a few weeks ago, Trump's own USDA confirmed it had \$6 billion in emergency funds to keep food and aid following. When asked about SNAP, Trump assured everyone it will be fine; he said it.

Then suddenly, last Friday, Trump ordered USDA to delete the plan, take it off their website, and refuse to use the money. No reason. No explanation. Just cruelty. Two-thirds of SNAP recipients are kids, seniors, or people with disabilities. That is whom Trump is cutting off: kids who rely on school meals, seniors on fixed incomes, veterans trying to get by, families trying to get groceries. That is the real-world consequence of Trump's decision.

And while he is manufacturing two crises here at home, where is his focus? Overseas, on a ballroom, on sending \$40 billion to Argentina.

There is money for Argentina but not for SNAP? And the Argentina money far exceeds the money needed for SNAP by at least a whole month.

Every President before, Democrat and Republican, has used the same funds to keep families fed. Trump could fix this today with one stroke of his pen. We don't have to wait; we don't have to discuss; we don't have to deliberate.

Let's be clear: Republicans have been on a crusade against SNAP all year. They have slashed it by a historic \$200 billion this summer in their so-called Big Beautiful Bill to pay for tax cuts for billionaires. And now they are doubling down, using the shutdown to devastate families and leave kids hungry.

It is heartless; it is cynical; and it is wrong. Well, Senate Democrats are not waiting, and that is why I am so grateful for Senator LUJÁN.

In a few minutes, we will force a vote to avert this avoidable crisis. I thank Senator LUJÁN. I thank him for championing the Keep SNAP and WIC Funded Act, which will make sure that 42 million Americans don't lose their benefits. It will make sure 7 million moms

and babies on WIC aren't left behind. It is simple. It is moral. It is urgent.

If the other side wouldn't block it, I bet you it would pass overwhelmingly.

There is another bill by Senator HAWLEY a Republican, conservative. I believe it has 11 Republican cosponsors already. It is another bill that could pass. It doesn't have WIC, but it does have SNAP.

Democrats are ready to do what every President in American history has done except for Trump; avert this problem. We are willing to work with anyone to get this bill on the floor and stop this cruelty.

But right now, unfortunately, Senate Republicans are frozen, paralyzed by fear or cynicism, while enabling Trump to use millions of hungry Americans as political hostages. Senate Republicans should let this bill pass.

Mr. President, I yield to Senator LUJÁN for the unanimous consent request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. LUJÁN. Mr. President, I rise today to ask my colleagues to pass my Keep SNAP and WIC Funded Act of 2025, which has the backing of the entire Democratic caucus—the Democratic Members of this Senate.

Now, we all know access to food is a human right. It is that simple. And we are all fortunate enough to live in the United States of America, a nation that is rich; it is abundant. A nation that is rich in agricultural tradition can be abundant in harvest.

Now, in a nation blessed with such abundance, allowing our fellow Americans to go hungry is, sadly, right now, a policy decision—I would argue a political decision, not a financial necessity.

Now, the Trump administration has yet again made the decision—made the choice—to allow our fellow Americans to go hungry. Now, let's be clear: The only way to ensure the SNAP benefits are issued by November 1 is for the Trump administration to release the billions of dollars it has sitting in an account in USDA that Congress appropriated, Democrats and Republicans working together to appropriate, to use for this purpose.

As a matter of fact, never in the history of the United States has SNAP been allowed to lapse like this. As a matter a fact, during President Trump's first term, Secretary Purdue, President Trump, they tapped the same fund to allow SNAP benefits to continue to roll.

Now, President Trump says that the use of SNAP contingency funds is illegal. Well, here is the document that was taken down from the USDA website that was up just days ago. He decided to take this down and now even the Speaker of the House is lying to the American people saying that it is not allowed.

President Trump found \$40 billion in U.S. taxpayer dollars to send to his political allies in Argentina just last

week. But when it comes to feeding our own—our own people here in the United States of America—he refuses to act.

Back home in New Mexico, one in five people rely on SNAP. They aren't strangers. They are neighbors, coworkers, friends, children, people I go to church with. They are the folks we say hello to at the grocery store or at a Little League game.

President Trump's refusal to release SNAP funding doesn't just impact New Mexico. States like Louisiana, where Speaker JOHNSON is from, are facing the same crisis. Louisiana is third on the list of constituents that will be negatively impacted.

Now, I have been fortunate enough to visit several food banks across New Mexico and meet with community members who are working around the clock to make sure neighbors have something to eat.

To every one of our community members who have stepped up, I want to say thank you—not just across New Mexico but across America. I am proud to represent a community that takes care of each other when times are tough.

It shouldn't have to be this way.

Since the creation of SNAP, there has never been a lapse—there has never been a lapse in SNAP funding during a government shutdown. The Trump administration has the authority and the funds to keep SNAP running during this shutdown. Don't take my word for it. Look at the USDA's own guidance that they removed from their website that justifies this.

Any failure to do so right now falls squarely on the Trump administration and Republicans. We could vote on this today, on this bill or one that Senator HAWLEY has authored as well that has many Republican colleagues that are cosponsors, to prevent a hunger crisis.

This pain does not need to happen. President Trump is choosing to inflict pain on American families by holding meals hostage. That is why I am leading this legislation to ensure that no child, parent, or veteran misses a meal because of the Republican shutdown.

It also says that if States or Tribal governments are in a position right now to fund SNAP programs, that they do get reimbursed, unlike what President Trump has been threatening them—that they will not. We cannot stand by and let our neighbors go hungry.

So I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and I appreciate everyone that has reached out to my office to have a conversation about this piece of legislation. I hope we can work together and find a path forward.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to come together to pass this bill now and fund SNAP and fund WIC before this hunger crisis hits our communities.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to immediate consideration of S. 3071, introduced earlier today; that the bill be

considered read three times and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The majority leader.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, let me just point out, if I might, that we are 29 days into a Democrat shutdown. And the Senator from New Mexico is absolutely right—SNAP recipients shouldn't go without food. People should be getting paid in this country. We have tried to do that 13 times, and you voted no 13 times.

This isn't a political game. These are real people's lives that we are talking about. And you all just figured out 29 days in that, oh, there might be some consequences. There are people running out of money. Yeah, we are 29 days in, and they have done their best to make sure that a lot of these programs are funded, but at some point, the government runs out of money.

Thirteen times people over here voted to fund SNAP. Thirteen times they voted to fund WIC. My aching back. Finally realized this thing has consequences.

Well, you know what, what Democrats are doing here—they are making plans to keep the shutdown going, and they realize all of a sudden, 29 days in, that this is a real consequence, real-life pain for American families—something that results from their shutdown.

So are they making plans to end the shutdown and reopen the government? Nope. They are going to propose a bill to fund food stamps during their shutdown. This request is a transparent admission that Democrats want to keep the shutdown—for what? Another month? Longer? This bill is a cynical attempt to buy political cover for Democrats to allow them to carry on their government shutdown for the long term.

Now, I will point out that we did 13 short-term, clean CRs when they had the majority, and President Biden was in the White House—13. They have now voted 13 times against a clean CR.

I have no idea where you are coming from.

The Democrat leader said that President Trump could end this with a stroke of his pen, and he is right. We pass that bill, and with a stroke of his pen, he will sign it into law, and the government opens up, and SNAP beneficiaries, SNAP recipients get food assistance. But do you know what else? TSA workers get paid, air traffic controllers get paid, Border Patrol agents get paid, and troops get paid. These people here get paid who are working without pay. Do you want to extend that and keep that going? Give me a break.

So the people who aren't going to get the benefit of what they are trying to do today are all the other programs that are affected: Head Start; grants to law enforcement to fight fentanyl and hire more cops to protect communities;

rural development programs that are important in my State and the Senator from New Mexico's State, I assume; as well to support housing, utilities, and infrastructure projects in rural communities; small business loans; certain direct loan and emergency programs that farmers rely on; National Guard training critical to our Nation's military readiness; veterans' transition assistance as they come out of service; veterans cemetery services. Right now, there are no headstones, memorial certificates, or cemetery maintenance.

Programs that are at risk: rental and housing assistance; delays in processing FHA-insured loans; delays in aircraft inspections and maintenance for air traffic control equipment.

People that are currently not getting paid: I mentioned some of them but air traffic controllers; TSA officers; Capitol Police; the people who protect us in this building; NOAA employees who are tracking hurricanes and other potential weather disruptions and disasters; food inspectors; other food and drug safety officials; mine safety inspectors.

People who don't have pay certainty right now: troops; Coast Guard; ICE; Border Patrol; Federal law enforcement; Federal wildland firefighters.

Extenders that have lapsed: telehealth and at-home care; community health centers; teaching health centers; special diabetes programs; payments for ambulances, hospital at-home services.

Other lapsed authorizations: CISA to prevent against cyber attacks; National Flood Insurance Program to prevent closure on homes in flood zones.

That is what you are leaving on the table. The bill at the desk takes care of all of it—funds SNAP, funds WIC. And, yes, with the stroke of the President's pen, he can sign it into law, and everybody starts getting paid again.

This has got to stop. Hostage taking. Now you want some political cover. How long is this going to go on? How much longer do you want to see it go on, just out of curiosity? So you think this buys some time. You want the shutdown to go on for another month, and then we are going to have other people come down here: Well, let's carve this out or carve this out. Why don't we just open the government?

I have never seen anything like this. I have been here a good amount of time. I have seen continuing resolutions and appropriations problems and funding fights and government shutdowns. I have been through a few, but I have never seen anything like this. This just isn't done.

You want to have a discussion about healthcare? Absolutely. Let's do it. Open the government. Let's do it. The President will sit down with Democrats next week if you want to talk about healthcare.

That is not what this is about.

So we are not going to pick winners and losers. It is time to fund everybody who is experiencing the pain from this

shutdown. If the Democrats really want to fund SNAP and WIC, I have a bill for them sitting right there at the desk—a clean, nonpartisan CR to fund SNAP, WIC, and the entire government, and all the many programs and people that the Democrat SNAP bill completely ignores.

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. If they want to prevent damage from their shutdown, they can end the shutdown. The bill is right here at the desk.

Mr. President, I ask that the Senator from New Mexico modify his request so that the Senate can proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 168, H.R. 5371; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator so modify his request?

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. LUJÁN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I respect the majority leader, the Republican leader. I see some of his staff in the room as well, people that I have worked with. They know when I work with them and when others don't. But I understand the words that were being used today to spin an argument as to why there should be justification for 40 million people to go hungry.

You know, I get in trouble sometimes because I use language from the little farm that I still call home, but I have learned the rules of decorum on the Senate floor, so I won't use them today. But some of the lessons my father taught me early in my life, even after I was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, when he would leave a shovel by the front door when I would go home on the weekends, and he would leave my rubber boots there to make sure I put them on because we were going to go clean the barn.

We raised cattle. We raised sheep. We raised all kinds of animals. After those animals eat, they make something. Some of us use it to fertilize our land; some people call it manure. I won't refer to it as the language that I usually call it when I am not on the Senate floor.

I also thought it was important to tell people the truth and be honest with the American people. What the good leader left out when he was talking about the number of votes that Republicans voted on under a Democratic President, under a Democratic majority in the Senate and in the House, was that there was not a shutdown. We negotiated.

People came to me—as a matter of fact, a lot of my Democratic constituents told me: Democrats gave way too much to those Republicans when you were in the majority.

Well, when you have to negotiate, when you hold power, when you are in the majority, you meet people. You

pull them in. You don't tell folks: You know where my office is.

You all have heard me talk about the late Governor Bruce King, cattle farmer out of New Mexico. He used to tell us: When people can't figure out what is going on, you lock them up in a barn, and you don't let them out until they figure out how to get along.

Well, we don't have a barn. Maybe they have an office around here to send some people. There is a White House. It is easy to get in—there is a big hole in it. Invite some people over there to sit down.

President Trump said not long ago that if there is a shutdown, it is up to the President to bring people together to prevent it, and if there is a shutdown, it does not bode well for the President of the United States of America. He is absolutely right.

It is not just a Democratic bill to fund SNAP that is on the floor today; there is a pending bill that has been introduced into the U.S. Senate that has 11 Republicans that are cosigners, including the Republican who authored it, a colleague out of Missouri. He doesn't want his folks to go hungry, and he said: Enough of this nonsense. Let's have a bill on the floor.

Give him a UC. If you don't want to give the Democratic bill a unanimous consent, give the Republican-authored bill a unanimous consent. I am a cosponsor of that one, too, because I am willing to work with folks. You all know that. You all know that.

Look, days before Americans start receiving notices that healthcare premiums are about to skyrocket, as the Trump administration moves to cut off SNAP benefits, this dysfunction is what the American people have come to expect from Republican majorities in the Congress and the White House.

I appreciate my colleague saying the blame is on our side of the aisle, but we are in the majority—oh, not yet. Maybe soon. We are in the minority.

With power comes responsibility. Republicans are in the majority in the Senate—fact. Republicans are in the majority in the House of Representatives—fact. Donald Trump, the President of the United States, is a Republican—fact. It cannot be refuted. They are in charge. The American people know that.

So just as a reminder, SNAP has never not been funded when there have been shutdowns in the past, including in President Donald Trump's first term. And even under President Trump's second term, he tapped a billion of the \$6 billion to pay for staff to administer SNAP. They did it.

Now they want to take down policy from a website that says that they can justify doing this, showing the law. That is the nonsense. That is the garbage the American people are tired of—the political this, the political jostling, all of that.

We have got people that are going to go hungry. This has never happened before, you all. There is a better way to do that.

So, Mr. President, in response to the request from the majority leader—the Republican leader—on behalf of constituents from South Dakota, constituents from New Mexico that don't—do not, so that I am clear; sometimes people confuse my New Mexico accent—that do not want to see their health premiums double and triple and bankrupt them—and some people that can't afford to get insurance won't be as lucky as me, where I survived a stroke 3 years ago.

By the way, this is what a stroke survivor looks like, if you get access to a doctor. You don't have to worry about going bankrupt if you can't pay the bills. This is what you can look like. You can get better. And in America, we should strive for that.

So, again, on behalf of constituents from South Dakota that don't—do not—want to see health premiums double and triple, on behalf of my New Mexico constituents that do not want to see health premiums double or triple, I will not modify my request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection to the modification is heard.

Is there an objection to the original request?

The majority leader.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I regret the fact that the Senator from New Mexico and his Democrat colleagues are unwilling to modify his request to include keeping the government open.

And I would say—a rhetorical question to my colleague from New Mexico: If the government reopens, do SNAP beneficiaries get paid? Yeah. Right? So do WIC beneficiaries, veterans, low-income elderly people, people who need this assistance.

It is not like you are doing anything here that isn't accomplished by reopening the government and paying everybody else, and you guys know that.

There are a lot of people, today, who aren't getting paid. Last Friday, Federal employees didn't get paid for the first time. I should say air traffic controllers didn't get paid for the first time. And it only worsens over time.

And so I would be more than willing—and have said this multiple times, as you all know—to sit down, get a group together, and talk about healthcare.

We think that ObamaCare and, particularly, the enhanced subsidies, are in desperate need of reform. There is no income cap. There is no asset test. People are making 500, 600 grand a year and getting subsidies from the Federal Government for their healthcare.

There are zero-dollar premiums. There are millions of Americans who don't even know they have coverage because the way that program is structured, the payments go directly to the insurance companies. Insurance companies are out there auto-enrolling people and making bank. A lot of people don't even know they have insurance coverage.

So this program is desperately in need of reform. The waste, fraud, and

abuse in this program has kind of gotten to an epic level, because if you look at what has happened since 2013, when the exchanges went online, insurance premiums in the individual marketplace on the exchanges have gone up 221 percent. I mean, you tell me anyplace else in the economy that goes up 221 percent in that amount of time. It is going up double-digits every year.

In the employer market, it would be 6 to 7 percent.

So it is a program that is fundamentally in need of change and reform. It is unsustainable, and it is unaffordable. And to give you an example of that, doing the very thing you are talking about, which is included in your bill, which was offered as an alternative to the Republican proposal—the clean Republican proposal that simply opens the government—the proposal included in your bill is a \$400 billion item, a cost to the taxpayers.

And so we are willing to sit down and see—and I have said, on behalf of the President, as well, that he is willing to sit down—and talk about how we can reform and make healthcare in this country more affordable and less inflationary, because this program is inflationary. It is going up every year.

Now, you all are going to blame the doing away with the Biden bonus payments in that legislation for the increase. But the fact of the matter is, that will be a very small part of that because of the way the program is structured in the first place. There is no incentive to constrain or control costs.

So let's have that conversation. I have said that. We can sit down and do it.

But as many of you have said—and there are quotes out there from all of you—from all of you: In previous shutdowns, or when there are fights over a continuing resolution, you can't negotiate when you have a gun to your head.

The Democrat leader said that.

And so let's just get beyond this silliness and fund the government and make sure that SNAP recipients and WIC recipients and recipients of other government programs, which I mentioned—it is a long list, which isn't covered by your bill, by the way—that those people and those programs also get taken care of. We have a chance to do that.

And we actually have a chance, I think, to have a normal appropriations process, where we move bills across the floor, open them up to the amendment process—something that hasn't been done here in a while. We can do that.

I want to start now, but it starts when we open up the government. So let's just do what normal people would do.

And the Senator from New Mexico is right. I represent a lot of hard-working Americans—farmers, ranchers, small business people, schoolteachers, educators. My dad and mom were educators. And I just think that there are

a lot of people out there who look at this and say: This doesn't make any sense to me. If they want to talk about healthcare, then let's do that. But why take the Federal Government hostage and every Federal employee—including everybody in this room that is not getting paid—that isn't covered by the bill that you are putting forward. The bill that does cover everybody is the one right there, which we have now voted on 13 times.

Just a few of you decide to vote differently. Let's get on appropriations bills and start funding the government the old-fashioned way.

I am for that. I think everybody over here is up for that. I know the chair of our Appropriations Committee, SUSAN COLLINS, and most of the appropriators have worked together in a constructive way, in a bipartisan way, to get bills to the floor that we can consider. But, so far, everything we have tried to do here, at least in the last few weeks, has been blocked, including getting on the Defense appropriations bill and going to conference on three bills we have already passed.

So as much as I appreciate what the Senator from New Mexico is trying to do here, and he is not—I don't question his intentions. I think he is sincere. But I also think that this is missing the larger point here, and that is, this government is closed. And what you are trying to do and accomplish here is make it harder, not easier, to get the government opened up again and to make sure everybody else gets paid.

So, Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Washington.

#### HEALTHCARE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I want to thank the Senator from New Mexico for coming out here and making it very clear who we are fighting for. And it really is Americans across this country, who are seeing their costs skyrocket across the board. And, as Democrats, we want to make sure that, yes, they are paid, but they also have the ability to get their healthcare.

I heard the majority leader just now say they are not going to operate with a gun to their head. I would say to the majority party that the gun to the head is to all these people who are opening up their healthcare notices this week and are finding out that their costs are skyrocketing. Why? Because what the Republicans have said—and just said again—is that they want to talk about it. Talking about it is going to do absolutely nothing for those people who are getting those bills and those payments today.

So I wanted to come to the floor today and talk about that. And I would say to my Republican colleagues: Yeah, we all want to have bipartisan bills. We want to work on bipartisan appropriations.

But what we have in front of us is a CR that is partisan, that says: Do it my way or the highway, and do not discuss the priorities of the Democrats.



When you are asking us for votes—when you are asking for Democratic votes—you can't just demand whatever you want and say: If you don't do it, then we are going to sit here—which is what the Republicans have done.

I would ask the Republican leader, as I have done so many times: Talk to the Democratic leader. Bring the President in the room.

I have been here many, many times when we have had to find a way out of a challenging situation. And you know who has always been at the table? The President, the majority leader, and the Speaker of the House, and the minority leaders—on both sides of the aisle. And that has not happened yet.

And that is why we are sitting where we are, where, today, my constituents who are hurting are saying to me: Where are the Republicans, and why are they not talking to you about how we solve this issue?

The majority leader said: Well, there are problems with it.

They could have done this months ago. And they say: Oh, now, we can open up the government, and we will talk about it.

What does "talk about it" do to my constituents? Because, last week, window shopping for next year's health plans actually started in my home State, and, this week, open enrollment begins nationwide. I am hearing from families in my State today who are panicked.

While Republicans are refusing to act on this and saying they are going to talk about it, their premiums—their family's premiums—are going through the roof, and their healthcare coverage is slipping out of reach.

There are so many stories. I have talked to small business owners. I have talked to patients, and I have talked to parents. And I have lifted up their concerns here on the Senate floor, and I am going to keep doing everything I can to shout out these stories from the rooftops, because, right now, Republicans are doing everything they can to ignore this and to say: Deal with it later.

And what is "later"? Well, later never comes.

Why do I know that? Because we brought up this issue, time and time again, throughout the summer, when the Republicans were giving away tax breaks to billionaires, and saying: This is an issue that is confronting us.

And it was "later" then. It is "later" now, and "later" is way too late.

There are many stories about this, too awful to ignore, and there are millions of families that are facing absolutely catastrophic price increases. I have heard from seniors whose premiums are increasing eightfold.

So in order to make the scope and scale of the problem that Republicans want to ignore and talk about later, I thought I would share a list—just the top lines—of what I am hearing from my constituents about how their healthcare costs are going to sky-

rocket if Republicans refuse to work with us, or even talk to us, about this issue and help us find a solution so we can all move on by saving the healthcare tax credits.

I am going to share some of those stories today.

There is Kathleen. She lives in Bel-lingham. Now, if Republicans refuse to act, she is going to see her monthly premium triple.

Sharon, in Thurston County, in my State—if Republicans refuse to act, her premium is going to double, increasing by over \$100 a month.

And we are just getting started, because if Republicans refuse to act, Nannette in Tumwater and Stacya in Seattle are both going to see their premiums increase by \$400 a month—not a year, a month.

If Republicans refuse to act, Leslie's husband in Brewster is going to see his premiums increase by \$780 a month. Tom will see his premiums increase by over \$800 a month. Jennifer will see her premium go up by at least \$890 a month.

And, I have to emphasize, we are talking about families, seniors, small business owners, people who cannot afford that kind of increase.

And yet if Republicans refuse to act, Jason in Seattle is going to see his premium increase by over \$900 a month; Maya in Woodinville, \$1,000 more a month. I can't even imagine that.

But if you think that is outrageous, well, Republicans don't think it is worth talking about—or talk about it later, when it is way too late, or pretend that they are going to do something about it, but not really.

Talk about a gun to their head, if we do not act, Diane in Wenatchee is going to see her premium increase by over \$1,400 a month.

Leighann told me \$1,500 a month that her premium will increase; Terry, a \$1,600-a-month increase; and the Banergee family told me they are going to see their premium go up by more than \$1,600 every single month.

The Republican plan: talk about it; do nothing. For all of us who have been here, we have been waiting for the plan for a long time and have never seen it—have never seen it. It is always just a plan.

Rebecca in Seattle will see her premium increase by more than \$1,700 a month.

By the way, that plan is not in writing. It is a thought in somebody's head that has never been told to anybody. What do we have here today? Republican silence.

James and his wife are going to see their premium go up by a completely unreasonable \$1,800 a month. Damian said his is going to go up \$2,000 a month. Why? Because Republicans are refusing to act. That is whom we are fighting for here today.

I could go on and on, but those cases I just told you about all came from Washington State. That is a drop in the bucket. There are several million

more examples just like this in red States across the country.

Bob in Idaho told me his premium will jump by nearly \$1,900 a month; Nancy in Florida, \$1,000 a month; Cheri in Tennessee will see her monthly costs go from \$10 to \$1,140.

I mean, we could do this all day. Yet Republicans can't be bothered to do it at all. These are their constituents. Nearly 4 million people in Texas rely on these tax credits. Republicans don't want to save over 4 million in Florida.

The increases they are going to face are unthinkable. In five States—all red States—families who rely on these tax credits are going to see prices more than quadruple. That is on average.

It is unthinkable, it is unconscionable, and totally untethered from reality for Republican leaders to think they can just ignore this tsunami or this price hike.

So I say to my Republican friends: You have to get your heads out of the sand. This is a real problem for families. Later is way too late, and I don't think it exists.

The majority leader just said that families don't know that they get this. There is something wrong with that? They find out that their healthcare—that they are being helped by their neighbors and their friends and the people in this country who say it is important for all of us to make sure our healthcare premiums are lowered? I would say to my Republican colleagues: Listen to your constituents. It is their health. It is their lives. They are telling you that. They want action. Open enrollment for this country starts Saturday. The time to act is now. So I hope they start listening.

Please join us at a negotiating table, not out here on the floor just throwing things around. Join us. The majority leader can call the minority leader and the President and get them in the room, which is what we always do when we have a challenge in front of us. That has not happened. That is unconscionable because people in this country are hurting.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

#### TERMINATING THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY DECLARED TO IMPOSE DUTIES ON ARTICLES IMPORTED FROM CANADA

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate execute the order of October 7 in relationship to S.J. Res. 77.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Committee on Finance is discharged and the Senate will proceed to the consideration of S.J. Res. 77, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 77) terminating the national emergency declared to impose duties on articles imported from Canada.