

and Border Protection. Another \$2.25 billion has gone toward personnel cost for Texas State troopers, law enforcement who were responsible for repelling additional illegal immigrants, arresting those who were committing crimes, as well as transnational gang members, cartel members, human smugglers, and human traffickers.

But this was just the start. There were costs associated with the prosecution of border crimes. At Operation Lone Star's criminal processing centers, State game wardens had to pitch in to help control the Rio Grande River on the border to help prevent illegal entries, and criminal processing centers required health and safety services.

We are all familiar with the saying "There is no such thing as a free lunch," but President Biden and Vice President Harris failed to pony up for 4 years and then asked Texans to pick up the tab for their bill. All told, Governor Abbott and the State legislature had to spend more than \$11 billion to make up for the Biden administration's blunders and malfeasance and nonfeasance when it came to border security and immigration.

So it is not particularly complicated. Securing the country's borders is a function of the Federal Government. And \$11 billion is no small amount of money for a State—particularly one that doesn't have an income tax—to provide that benefits the rest of the country. But this is no different than when the Federal Government steps in to help States that have to deal with extraordinary expenses during the wake of a natural disaster, as they did for Texas in the case of Hurricane Harvey. But instead of a natural disaster, what we had during the 4 years of the Biden administration was a manmade disaster.

While every State became a border State during the last administration, there are costs that Texas had to shoulder that our neighbors had not. It is just fair and right and just for Texas taxpayers to be made whole for the border security responsibilities it took on as a result of President Biden's dereliction of duty.

I am proud to support Governor Abbott's request for the State to be reimbursed. My colleagues on the House and Senate Appropriations Committees should expect me and Senator CRUZ and the entire Texas delegation to be strongly advocating for reimbursement for Texas in the coming weeks. I look forward to working with them in order to make this a reality.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

#### TARIFFS

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk to you about President Trump's tariffs. The media is in full meltdown. They are in a full meltdown mode after President Trump imposed duties and retaliatory tariffs this week on countries that

have basically been ripping the United States of America off, and they have been doing it for decades.

Apparently, globalists and Democrats are just fine with other countries imposing tariffs on the United States, but when it comes to President Trump trying to equalize it up, establish a level playing field for domestic producers, well, that is a bridge too far.

No one has been paying attention to President Trump. If they have been paying attention to President Trump, they should not remotely be surprised. He campaigned on this platform three times and has been crystal clear on his intentions. Now he is following through on his campaign promises. But in the corporate media—it seems to still be confused about all these tariffs. So let me spell it out.

President Trump's view on tariffs is as both a negotiating tool to get other countries to do a few things that we asked them to do and a way to boost American manufacturing and put American workers and businesses first, not last. President Trump has his work cut out for him after a disastrous 4 years for our small businesses and our corporations under the Biden administration.

The Biden administration made it clear to our friends and foes alike that globalists—the globalist agenda would take precedence over the safety and well-being of the American people. It is mind-boggling. Thankfully, those days are over.

The American people gave President Donald J. Trump a clear mandate to restore our country's superpower status and put all Americans first, all businesses first, everybody that does something in this country, and that starts, No. 1, with securing our borders.

Like I said many times, if you don't have a border, you don't have a country. And we have really struggled in the last four years. That is changing. That is why the master negotiator in chief, President Donald Trump, threatened to impose 25 percent tariffs on Mexico and Canada in just the last couple of weeks.

Over the last 4 years, the Mexican Government basically turned a blind eye while caravans of illegal aliens overran our borders, coming from Mexico, coming from Central America, all over the world, just overrunning our country. Thousands of women and children were trafficked, raped along the way. Drug cartels made an absolute fortune—absolute fortune—not just with drugs, by the way, but from payments of these illegals coming all the way through either Central America or South America to the United States—with a big basically tariff of their own, charging these people to come to the United States.

Lawlessness had become the status quo under President Biden. Nobody cared. The Democrats in this room—they didn't care. They didn't care what was going on. Let's just let them all come in. Let's let the drugs come in.

We lose 300 people pretty much every few days to illegal drugs in this country with overdoses, but let's not worry about that. Let's just worry about controlling our country the way they wanted to. Well, it has been a disaster.

Mexico showed zero signs of willingness to negotiate when President Trump took office. When he did take office, on January 20, they woke up real quick. President Trump correctly understands that Mexico's economy is heavily dependent on the United States of America and the citizens of this country. In fact, more than 80 percent of Mexico's exports come to the United States—80 percent come here—and American citizens buy those products that are made in Mexico. Mexico's economy would almost instantly—instantly—feel the effects of a 25-percent tariff, leaving Mexico's President, Claudia Sheinbaum, no choice—no choice—but to come to the negotiating table under the master negotiator, Donald Trump. So that is why he uses his tariffs—to get his point across—because people across the world take us for granted.

As a result, within hours—hours—of President Trump's announcement of the tariffs, Mexico caved. They saw real quick. Obviously, they are not stupid. They agreed to help the United States secure the border and crack down on the cartels and the illegal drugs coming in almost immediately. We could have done the same thing with the past administration, but it just shows you they couldn't have cared less what happened at our border.

Our neighbor to the north also caved to President Trump after a 25-percent tariff was threatened on Canada. Not only are illicit drugs, like fentanyl, coming into our country from Mexico, but there was also about a 2,000-percent increase in drugs that came across the border in 2023 and 2024 from Canada—a 2,000-percent increase. In the last fiscal year alone, enough fentanyl was seized at the northern border to kill 9.8 million Americans.

To me, that would be a very serious problem, but do you think the Democrats cared? No. There was no action at all by the Biden administration on Canada and no action on Mexico. But thanks to President Trump's leadership, our North American neighbors to the north and south are making changes now daily that will protect American citizens from deadly drugs, criminals, and human traffickers.

The No. 1 job of the President of the United States is to protect the people in this country first, and that is what President Trump is doing.

In addition to using tariffs as a negotiating tool, President Trump also views tariffs as a way to right the wrongs of past ineffective trade deals. That is why, this week, he is imposing a 25-percent tariff on all steel and aluminum imports, including those of Canada and Mexico.

Contrary to what the media is telling you, this isn't unprecedented. It is not

unusual. In fact, President Trump has helped shine a light on the fact that U.S. exporters face higher tariffs more than two-thirds of the time. We pay more tariffs than anybody. For example, among our major trading partners, China applies higher tariffs on 85 percent of U.S. products, and 90 percent on U.S. products from India.

Just think about that. We are paying tariffs on things coming into this country, but when we send things out, we get the heck tarified out of us from other countries. It is not fair trade.

These export imbalances don't just impact bottom lines; they also discourage domestic production. We have got to produce more in this country, and we have got to build more things in this country. That is what President Trump is trying to do. If we don't cut back on spending and start producing more in this country, this will not be the United States of America much longer because we will be bankrupt, and we will be reporting to somebody like China, which is buying our Treasury bills right and left—or they were.

One report conducted by the Department of Commerce in the first Trump administration found that excess production and capacity, particularly in China, have been major factors in the decline of domestic aluminum production. Basically, we are getting overwhelmed by aluminum from China that is not near as good as what we make in this country.

President Trump built one of the strongest economies in modern history in his first term—in modern history—but the Democrats failed to know that. They wanted to change it, and did they ever. They almost destroyed our economy. Jobs and wages were up when President Trump was in, and inflation was down. Americans had more money in their pockets. Thanks to President Trump's strategic tariffs, along with the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, companies were reshoring businesses back in the United States, right and left. They were coming back because they could make a profit.

That is what it is all about when you have a corporation—you have got to make a profit. President Trump was able to, because of tariffs, make more money for manufacturing in this country than going out of this country. You had companies like Ford canceling plans to build in Mexico—back in President Trump's first term—and, instead, opening one in Michigan. This turned out to be extremely important when COVID hit, and we were forced to rely on goods that were manufactured right here in the United States. We also found out pretty quick, just in drugs alone, that we make very few drugs in the United States. Where are they made? They are made in India and China. They have got to come back here. We have to be self-sustaining. Whether it is our healthcare technologies, agricultural products, or steel and aluminum, there is no reason for us to depend on other countries.

We are the No. 1 country in this world—we have been and will be in the future—in manufacturing and production. America has some of the best and brightest manufacturers and the best and brightest producers, farmers, and businesses. We take second to none. And from a national security perspective, it is dangerous to be reliant on other countries, which may not have the best interests of the United States' in mind. You can't blame them. They are looking out for themselves first. Well, we need to do the same thing.

That is not to mention the fact that the United States produces the cleanest steel in the world. You would think the Democrats and the climate cult would at least be happy about that. Think about that.

You know, President Trump just put tariffs on steel and aluminum. A lot of the steel and aluminum come in, and because of how they make it, it is some of the dirtiest steel in the world. We make the cleanest. Why in the world would we want to import something that is going to be detrimental to our country alone with this environment?

The tariffs being imposed this week are an important step in President Trump's plan to restore fairness to trade, to boost domestic manufacturing, and to put consumers and producers first. It is about time.

Three weeks into his Presidency, President Trump is keeping his promises. President Trump's strategic tariffs will strengthen and revitalize our Nation's economy, stop the flow of illicit drugs and illegal immigration, and make sure our trade deals are fair to both taxpayers and American manufacturers—America first. President Trump is utilizing every tool at his disposal, as we speak, including tariffs, to usher in the golden age of the American economy. We have to make that change. If we don't, we will not survive as the No. 1 country in the world. We will not regain that status, and we will be losing our national security.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CURTIS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:30 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. BRITT).

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

#### NOMINATION OF TULSI GABBARD

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, today I will be speaking about the nomination of Tulsi Gabbard to be Director of National Intelligence and my reasons for opposing her confirmation.

First, I believe the Senate must consider with this nomination the examples of blatant lawlessness of the administration. At every turn, Donald Trump is attacking the rule of law, disregarding the constitutional role of Congress, and trying to purge civil servants who defend our country every day. Meanwhile, Elon Musk's minions are gaining access to some of the government's most sensitive systems and records. American democracy and national security are at stake. If the Senate is going to confirm nominees, we need to know whether they will stand up for democratic principles, no matter what.

At our hearing, I asked Ms. Gabbard what she would do if Donald Trump tried to illegally withhold funds from the intelligence community inspector general. This was hardly a hypothetical question. Donald Trump has, in fact, sought to unilaterally cut off funding for a broad range of organizations despite the money having been appropriated by Congress. It is not just me saying this is illegal, the courts have ordered the administration to cut it out and resume the funding.

But when I asked Ms. Gabbard the question, she said:

I don't believe for a second President Trump would ask me to do something that would break the law.

Well, he is breaking the law and the country needs leaders who acknowledge that fact and stand up to him.

My concerns about Ms. Gabbard are also based on her recent turn toward extreme partisanship. Other partisans have been confirmed to leadership positions and intelligence Agencies. George Herbert Walker Bush was the head of the Republican National Committee, and he was successful enough as Director of Central Intelligence that they literally named the headquarters after him. Party affiliation is not the issue.

The problem is when partisanship distorts one's views of intelligence matters. Ms. Gabbard has written about a coup being perpetrated by the so-called deep state that includes, among others, the DNC and also the FBI, the CIA, and "a whole network of rogue intelligence and law enforcement agents."

Madam President, I have spent almost a quarter century as a member of the Intelligence Committee seeking to bring to light and stop government abuses across a range of programs and activities. These conspiracy theories do not help the bipartisan reform movement. They only serve to encourage a President who wants to tear down the entire intelligence community and replace it with loyalists.

So what happens next? If Ms. Gabbard is confirmed, my first order of