

unbounded, and it is a recipe for expanded bureaucracy and greater frustration for Americans who are just trying to live their lives.

But growing government is the driving philosophy of the Democratic Party, and you can just look at the Biden years. We had the Federal Government mandating masks for 2-year-olds outside—not in a building, outside for 2-year-olds; the EPA regulating puddles and saddling farmers and ranchers with massive compliance laws, which we experienced in my State of South Dakota; electric vehicle mandates. If they had their way, by next year, 35 percent of the vehicles on the highway would be EVs. Thirty-five percent. Do you know what that number is today? It is about 10, 11, maybe 12. There is no way—no way—that could have been complied with. And there was a reckless tax-and-spending spree that caused a yearslong inflation crisis. Inflation got up in the double-digit range—something we haven't seen in several decades.

Republicans have spent the last year cleaning up from the consequences of Democrats' Big Government philosophy. President Trump has repealed a number of burdensome regulations and rules, and here in Congress, we have used the Congressional Review Act to repeal rules, regulations, and mandates that were creeping into seemingly every facet of Americans' lives. That includes four separate rules on appliances.

That is right—last year, appliances became the latest focus of Democrats' radical environmental agenda. One rule applied expensive, unnecessary, new standards to commercial fridges and freezers, the kind used in restaurants and grocery stores. The Energy Department estimated that it would take 90 years for a business to see savings from these more expensive appliances.

Another rule sought to take gas water heaters off the market, raising costs for homeowners and imperiling American manufacturing jobs.

Then there were the Biden administration's proposed reporting and certification requirements for everything from light bulbs and dishwashers to dehumidifiers and air-conditioners.

Reporting and certification requirements may not sound like much, but those requirements mean a lot of front-end work that has to be done—work that costs time and money and places a huge burden on businesses and drives up prices for consumers.

In its public comments on the Biden administration's appliance standards, Carrier, an appliance manufacturer, said that the Department of Energy failed to adequately account for "the cost and burden . . . to comply with updated requirements." A manufacturers association said that the proposed reporting standards had "no practical utility." Another objected to what they called "burden without benefit."

Thanks to Republicans' efforts, hard-working Americans and small busi-

nesses have been spared these costly regulations.

We have also been able to dismantle Democrats' regulatory assault on Americans' cars. President Trump repealed the Biden administration's electric vehicle mandate, and here in Congress, we approved legislation to repeal waivers that would have allowed California to impose a de facto electric vehicle mandate on the whole country.

We also passed a CRA resolution repealing the Biden rubber tire manufacturing rule—a gross example of unnecessary regulation. The Biden administration proposed new emissions standards for tire manufacturers—an industry that is already subject to strict emissions rules.

The Biden rule, while it would have reduced the emissions of certain pollutants, would have actually increased—increased—emissions of carbon dioxide and methane. That is right. You can't make that up. It would have increased emissions of carbon dioxide and methane, and it would have cost tire manufacturers \$13 million per year and possibly more than that.

Unfortunately, these are not the only examples of the overreach of the Biden administration's Green New Deal-style regulations. No, the Biden administration also went after energy production, heaping additional costs and restrictions on energy producers that would have driven energy costs higher and higher.

Earlier this year, Republicans repealed the Biden administration's marine archaeology rule. Energy producers are already required to submit an archaeological report before drilling in areas that are thought to include things like shipwrecks, settlements, and other archaeological sites, but the Biden administration wanted energy producers to submit reports even when there is no reason to suspect a project will be near an archaeological site. It was just another way to slow down production and heap more costs on energy producers—costs that would eventually have been paid by American consumers. Republicans repealed that rule.

Then there was Democrats' natural gas tax. In 2022, Democrats enacted a tax on methane emissions from natural gas producers—a tax that would have driven up energy prices and destroyed jobs in the energy sector. Republicans repealed this regulatory implementation through the CRA—the Congressional Review Act—process and then blocked this misguided tax in the One Big Beautiful Bill this summer.

Our efforts continue. A few weeks ago, the Senate passed a resolution blocking the Biden administration's restriction on energy development in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska—an area established specifically—specifically—for the purpose of providing the United States with energy resources. The Biden administration tried to close a significant portion of it, but when President Trump signs this resolution and repeals these re-

strictions, we will once again be able to leverage these abundant natural resources for the benefit of the American people.

Regulations have consequences. Democrats may believe there is nothing that couldn't be improved by a little government intervention, but Republicans and I think the American people know what too often happens when government decides to get involved.

Reagan said 40 years ago:

[T]he nine most terrifying words in the English language are: I'm from the government, and I'm here to help.

When I am talking to business owners in South Dakota, I often tell them to let me know how we can help, even if that means getting out of the way.

And, Mr. President, that is often the right answer. While some regulations are necessary, too often regulations do more harm than good. And regulations mean costs—costs that are almost always passed on to the consumer.

Republicans are continuing our efforts to get government out of the way and to bring down costs for the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

#### WYOMING SERVICEMEMBERS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, each year, I look forward to spending Thanksgiving with Wyoming men and women in uniform who are serving overseas. I had the privilege of doing it again this year. This Thanksgiving, I was with Wyoming airmen at Ramstein Air Base, which is in Germany.

These young men and women came from Casper, Cheyenne, and Riverton, serving our Nation. They are doing an outstanding job in their work and supporting missions in Europe, in Asia, and in the Middle East. They are a long way from home—eight time zones away from Wyoming—away from family, away from friends, away for the holidays.

And I go every year, wherever I can find Wyoming troops, to thank them for their service, to thank them for their commitment, to thank them for what they do to keep us safe and to keep us free, and for the sacrifices that they are making. And I also want them to know that the people at home are thinking about them and know that they are a long way from home and caring for all of us.

To me, they are heroes. They wear the uniform not for their safety but for ours. We see it abroad, and we also see it at home.

And what we have seen at home is, since August, National Guard troops have been deployed right here in Washington, DC. As a result, Washington, DC, is safer for residents and for visitors, for people who come from your State and from mine who want to come and see the Nation's Capital. What we have seen since this has begun is that

the numbers of murders, rapes, and robberies have fallen dramatically.

Tragically, just 1 day before Thanksgiving, two members of the National Guard were targeted. It was an ambush attack, and it happened just blocks away from the White House. It was an act of terrorism. The act was not only on our National Guardsmen; it was on our entire Nation.

One of the servicemembers was Sarah Beckstrom. She was an Army specialist from West Virginia. She died on Thanksgiving Day. She was only 20 years old.

The other is Andrew Wolfe. He is a staff sergeant in the Air Force, also from West Virginia, and is 24 years old. He remains hospitalized in critical condition, fighting for his life.

We join all Americans in praying for them and their families.

The terrorist who attacked them was an Afghan national. He is one of tens of thousands of Afghans who were flown into our country following Joe Biden's disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan. We now know for a fact that thousands of these individuals were not properly vetted.

I specifically questioned Joe Biden's Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, here in the Senate about this, and I questioned him under oath. Under oath, he testified—Joe Biden's Secretary of State—that “most of them were not” vetted.

It didn't matter to Joe Biden. He waved them all into our country.

Republicans warned repeatedly that bringing people without proper clearance from a war-torn country was a major national security risk. The negligent Biden administration ignored the warning.

In 2021, 13 American heroes were killed in the botched withdrawal from Kabul, Afghanistan. One of them was Wyoming's own Rylee McCollum. He embodied the best of Wyoming. He was a marine. He joined the Marines on his 18th birthday.

I spoke at his funeral. He was Wyoming's wrestling champion. He was about to become a father. He was just 20 years old when he died. He was the same age as Sarah Beckstrom from West Virginia.

#### TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, the fallout from Joe Biden's disastrous decision hurt Americans then, and it continues to hurt Americans today. President Trump and Republicans are working to reverse these failures. The President is strengthening law enforcement. He is deporting criminals who are here in our country illegally, and he is taking a hard look at anyone who has been improperly vetted. His actions will make America safer and more secure.

Joe Biden's disgraceful withdrawal was not an isolated failure. It was part of a pattern of dangerous, destructive, and deadly policies. More than 10 million illegal immigrants entered our

country under Joe Biden and the Democrats. Millions more are known “got-aways.” They are individuals who were seen by the Border Patrol but never charged, never stopped, never questioned.

How many more terrorists slipped into our country because Democrats threw open the borders? Where are they now? What are they up to? We don't know.

Most Americans understand that national security begins with border security. That means we must stop people from entering our country illegally. It means we must ensure dangerous individuals do not enter our country, even through legal means, and it certainly means we must remove dangerous criminals that are in the country today.

As the Trump administration recently warned, “mass migration poses an existential threat to Western civilization.”

So what do the Democrats think? Well, on Sunday, on “Face the Nation,” CBS asked the junior Senator from Virginia if the vetting process should be strengthened after the shooting. Now, that is exactly what President Trump is doing. The Senator refused to answer that question. Instead, he told a national television audience that having the National Guard in Washington, DC, was a “political stunt.” He blamed President Trump.

“Political stunt”? It is a matter of public safety.

President Trump is the one who is protecting American citizens from terrorist attacks—attacks like the one witnessed last week, just in front of the White House. President Trump and Republicans want every American to be safe, to be secure, and to be prosperous. This is our top priority.

After last week's brutal attack, securing our border and our communities is more urgent than ever, and Republicans are going to continue to remove criminals from the streets and get the terrorists out of the country.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

#### HEALTHCARE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, many of us bring life experiences to the Senate Chamber, and it shapes our judgment on critical issues.

When I was first married, my wife and I were blessed with a beautiful little baby girl. I was going to law school here in Washington, DC. It turns out that our little girl had a serious, serious medical problem.

The difficulty I faced was the fact that I had no health insurance. I was a law student, and I ended up going to Children's Hospital here in Washington, DC, with my wife and our little baby girl and sitting in the charity ward, which basically was there for people who couldn't pay their medical bills and had no health insurance. We

waited for the door to open and for our family name to be called out to meet, for the first time, the doctor who was going to treat my little girl.

I never felt more helpless in my life, as a father, to have that baby with that medical problem and to have no health insurance. I am sure that colored my judgment the rest of my life and my service of over 40 years in Congress.

I have always voted to give families a better chance of having health insurance. Having lived without it, I value it so much. It has been a major part of my feelings about healthcare and about the role of Congress.

And so then, 15 years ago, when President Obama, my former colleague from Illinois, was President of the United States and set out to achieve something that had never been done in the United States—to dramatically expand the coverage of health insurance to families that otherwise wouldn't qualify under the existing law or couldn't afford it—I worked hard to pass that bill. It took us a long time and a lot of effort.

I was whip of the Senate Democrats at that point, and I used to go to Harry Reid's office several times a day to talk about the next step in passing the Affordable Care Act.

The day finally came. I won't dwell on the minutia or the details of how we reached, but we did it. Unfortunately, throughout that process, we never—had one Republican vote of support, ever. We were fortunate to have 60 Democrats at the right moment politically to pass a bill in the U.S. Senate.

I was sorry that the Republicans didn't join us in this effort. They could have made a better bill out of it—I am sure of it—if they had joined us, but they decided not to.

And so, for the last 15 years, the Affordable Care Act has offered to millions of Americans health insurance coverage, which was unthinkable before it passed.

Let me give you a couple of examples.

There was a time when health insurance plans in the United States, before the Affordable Care Act, didn't cover mental health issues or addiction issues. You think to yourself, well, those are serious issues. They affect people's health. Why wouldn't they cover it? Because they are expensive, and they didn't want to.

But two Senators came out on the floor here—one a Democrat, Paul Wellstone of Minnesota, and the other a Republican, Pete Domenici of New Mexico—and pushed to include as a requirement, in all health insurance plans, that they cover mental illness.

I supported that. My family, like most families, has a story to tell when it comes to mental illness, and I viewed it as an issue of health, not an issue of a curse that a person has to try to outlive. So we included it. Thank goodness we did. Not only did mental illness have health insurance coverage, but