

chance. The Times reported this weekend:

[An] examination of Mr. Biden's record found that he and his closest advisers repeatedly rebuffed recommendations that could have addressed the border crisis faster.

Let me repeat that: They "repeatedly rebuffed recommendations" to ease the border crisis.

Well, I am glad that the New York Times is finally reporting what we have known for a long time, and that is that the Biden administration was completely uninterested in solving the border crisis.

Fortunately, those days are over. When President Trump and Republicans took control this year, we moved to quickly restore order at the southern border, and the numbers speak for themselves.

Customs and Border Protection reported a record low number of encounters in November. Fewer than 250 people per day are being apprehended. Compare that to the Biden administration, where law enforcement was catching more than 5,000 per day on average.

And, in November, for the seventh month in a row, zero illegal immigrants have been released into the United States.

So under the Trump administration, we have a 95-percent drop in apprehensions at the southern border, and not a single one of the individuals apprehended is being released into the country. This is remarkable, remarkable progress. This is what the American people expect when it comes to securing our border.

Republicans are doing everything we can to ensure that this will be the new standard for border security for a long time to come.

Our One Big Beautiful Bill, which we passed in July, makes a generational investment in the resources that law enforcement needs to secure the border and deter illegal immigration. We funded completion of the border wall, new technology and equipment for law enforcement, additional Border Patrol agents, expanded detention capacity, and expanded partnerships with local law enforcement to enforce immigration law.

These investments are beginning to be implemented across the immigration system. Hiring efforts are underway to bring on additional agents. More than 1,000 State and local law enforcement agencies have partnered with the Federal Government to enforce immigration laws through the 287(g) Program. And the Department of Homeland Security is awarding contracts for new technologies and wall construction at the southern border—investments that will improve law enforcement's ability to apprehend the illegal immigrants and smugglers who attempt to cross our southern border.

Republicans promised to secure the border. We wasted no time in delivering on that promise. And thanks to the One Big Beautiful Bill, the American people can be certain that border security is here to stay.

I am grateful to the men and women on the frontlines who come to work every day committed to a safer and a more secure America, and Republicans will continue to work to ensure that they have everything they need to get the job done.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

AFFORDABILITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, today, Donald Trump will travel to Pennsylvania and try to convince the American people that he is lowering their costs, but the American people, seeing their costs go up left and right, aren't going to buy it. Tonight, Donald Trump will throw a barrel of hay into the audience and tell them it is spun gold, but the American people know he is lying because everywhere they look, prices are going up and up and up.

We have all read how the White House very soon will start getting "serious" about messaging more on affordability. They don't get it. The problem is that affordability is not a messaging issue; it is real. It is real when people go to the supermarket or buy a car or try to buy a house or see their electric bill, their healthcare bills.

The American people know it is real, and Donald Trump tries to wish it away. He believes that people will believe his words when he says it is a hoax. They won't. They won't. There aren't enough speeches in the world to paper over the fact that Donald Trump has sent costs up and up, not down. His tariffs raised the price of groceries, raised the price of clothing, raised the price of energy. And it is not just his tariffs. It is his policies that cut out the cheapest form of energy we have: clean energy. It is his policies that allow food producers to get away with monopoly pricing. It is his strategy to impose tariffs on the American people and say: It is good for you.

The fact is that Donald Trump can do nothing to erase this, that life is more expensive under Donald Trump than it was before he took office. He will hate to admit it, but life is more expensive under Donald Trump than it was under Joe Biden.

Just 36 percent of Americans approve of his job and the job he is doing on the economy. Thirty-six percent of Americans—that is it—approve of the job Trump is doing on the economy, according to a poll by Marquette University, which is widely respected. Even a significant portion of Trump voters—37 percent—say the cost of living is the worst they can ever remember, according to POLITICO. So when Trump vot-

ers say it was better under Biden than it is now, whoa, something is wrong.

So, no, Donald Trump, affordability is not a hoax; it is not a Democratic scam. You try to make everything, even the most commonsense things, partisan.

The affordability crisis is very real. It is being felt by everyone, and the American people know it is Donald Trump's fault. No speech in Pennsylvania or anywhere else can undo that.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. President, but I have good news for the President. He and the Republicans do have one chance left to do something meaningful about lowering costs, something real—not a speech, something real—and that is to work with Democrats to extend the enhanced ACA premium tax credits before they expire at the end of the year.

Democrats have put forth a simple proposal for a clean, 3-year extension of the ACA credits. We will move forward on this bill on Thursday. Senate Republicans have 2 days—2 days—to choose to vote to lower the American people's healthcare costs or to vote to continue sending those costs through the roof. That is what is at stake on this vote.

If our bill becomes law, we will accomplish the single most important thing we can do right now to lower prices, prevent premiums for tens of millions of Americans from shooting through the roof. We have an obligation to act now.

Now, if Republicans are left to their own devices, there is not a snowball's chance in hell that they fix this healthcare crisis on their own. Republicans are nowhere, by their own admission.

Leader THUNE has come down to the floor day after day excoriating the ACA, brings a lot of charts, has quotes at the ready, and on and on and on, but he doesn't have a plan. He has no proposal.

Charts are not a plan, Leader THUNE. It is not enough for Republicans to say that they don't like the ACA. That is not a secret. We know that. They have been trying to get rid of it since 2008. They nearly succeeded until the courage of John McCain stopped them in 2019.

The real question is, What will Republicans do to prevent premiums from skyrocketing in 3 weeks? So far, we have heard no real answer. The only ideas we have heard from Republicans are loaded with poison pills, unworkable restrictions, and don't do anything to bring premiums down, which is most important. None of their proposals address extending the ACA credits—the most important thing we can do now. So those kinds of proposals don't get the American people's support or Democrats' support.

The party is adrift at sea. The Republican Party is adrift at sea, trying to find a plan. So far, we have heard no serious plan at all. And that is not just me saying it. Here is what a Republican Senator said yesterday:

I mean, what signal will it send if Republicans say, “we’re going to say no to the Democrats’ plan. But we’re not gonna offer anything?” The message that would send is: “Good luck to the American people, we don’t really care.”

That is from a Republican Senator. I couldn’t have said it better myself.

So Republicans should join us on Thursday, vote yes on our proposal, extend the ACA tax credits by 3 years, and greatly reduce the specter of premiums going up and up and up.

CHIPS

Mr. President, on chips, this one is an amazing one. Donald Trump is just selling out America for his own ego and his own gain. That is what he is doing on chips when, yesterday, Donald Trump announced he was giving the green light to NVIDIA to send even more powerful AI chips to China—the H200, which are used to train AI models.

Let’s be clear. You can’t claim to be “tough on China” if you willingly sell them some of the most advanced chips in the world so they can use them to strengthen their military.

People on both sides of the aisle are aghast that Trump would do this. Does he think it through? Does he care about what will happen tomorrow or just his little announcement today?

Donald Trump’s announcement selling these chips to China is dangerous. They will use them to strengthen their military, their technological edge—all at the expense of American and world national security.

Even Donald Trump’s own Department of Justice warned about the dangers of these chips making their way to China. Here is what they said—the Department of Justice, DOJ—when they acted against a chip-smuggling operation yesterday. This is Trump’s Justice Department:

These chips are the building blocks of AI superiority and are integral to modern military applications. The country that controls these chips will control AI technology; the country that controls AI technology will control the future.

Donald Trump, you are letting China control our future; you are selling us out—all so can you have a little, 1-day ego gain of making some kind of announcement, which no one is going to believe anyway.

Donald Trump should listen to his own DOJ about the danger of giving China these chips before cutting stupid deals that cost America dearly in the years to come, but, unfortunately, this is textbook Donald Trump. He is so desperate to get a deal with President Xi so he can get that photo op that he will sell out America’s long-term security for a short-term political gain. This sellout is not only going to hurt us, it is going to hurt our children and our grandchildren as China begins to dominate the world in AI.

Then he comes up with this tawdry deal where he says: NVIDIA makes money, and the United States makes money.

The short-term gain of dollars from selling these chips is so much outweighed by the danger when China takes the lead on AI using the chips that were made in America and sold to them by Donald Trump.

So I ask one question: Where is the outrage from my Republican colleagues? Are they just going to sit by while Donald Trump sells America out to Xi Jinping?

That is what is going on here. The chips deal is terrible. It will cost our national security dearly, and the President must reverse course before it is too late.

SECRETARY HEGSETH

Mr. President, on the NDAA and Hegseth, well, today, as has already been widely reported, Secretary Hegseth and top administration officials will hold a classified briefing for the Gang of 8.

At the Gang of 8 hearing, I will ask Secretary Hegseth directly: Will he commit to providing all Senators access to unedited tapes of the September 2 boat strike?

Again, Hegseth, will you commit, with no BS, to providing all Senators with access to the unedited tapes of the September 2 boat strikes?

Because the longer the White House and the Pentagon hold on to the tapes, the more the American people are wondering: What are Donald Trump and Pete Hegseth trying to cover up? Are they lying to the American people or are they just trying to hide their incompetence?

No one in the administration can seem to get their story straight. Last week, Donald Trump said he would have “no problem releasing the full video of the strike.” Then, yesterday, he walked back his statement, claiming he never said it and it was fake ABC news.

You know, Donald Trump says something, doesn’t like what he said and made a mistake, and then he says it is fake news. But he said it, and the American people heard it, and it is on tape, and then he blames one of the networks for simply broadcasting what he said. What is going on in this country and how do we let this man do what he does—destroying our values, our morals, the fact that America has always been an honest country?

So let me be clear. The only thing that can bring more clarity to the American people is the full release of the unedited tapes, plain and simple. Republicans and Democrats in Congress agree. That is why there is a provision in the most recent version of the NDAA that demands a release of the unedited tapes to Congress. If the Pentagon fails to hand over those tapes, Pete Hegseth’s travel budget will be slashed by 25 percent until he complies. That was a bipartisan shot across the bow to Donald Trump—hand over the tapes—done by Republicans. I salute them for their courage in bucking him and bucking Hegseth.

The inclusion of this NDAA provision restricting travel shows Congress is

united in wanting to see these tapes as soon as possible, and both Donald Trump and Pete Hegseth must comply, say the Republican Senators, or the DOD is penalized.

I strongly support this provision and worked with Senator REED, Senator WICKER, and others to keep it in. I hope it will compel Donald Trump and Pete Hegseth to do the right thing: release the tapes and give the American people the transparency we all deserve.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, as I was coming to the floor today, I heard the minority leader CHUCK SCHUMER talking about wanting to send more government checks to insurance companies. That is what he said he wants to do. He is going to have a vote on it later this week. He wants to extend 3 more years the checks Democrats say we ought to send to insurance companies. I disagree with them.

When it comes to healthcare, American people deserve to have the care they need from a doctor they choose at lower costs, at a cost that they can afford. ObamaCare has done just the opposite. And today, ObamaCare is collapsing under its own weight.

What are the Democrats trying to do? They are trying to prop it up with an additional \$83 billion handed directly from the Federal Government to insurance companies. They want to send \$83 billion directly from the Treasury into the bank accounts of the very profitable insurance companies that have been made more profitable under ObamaCare. Democrats want to use your money to cover up for their failures. That is what is happening here.

So, this week, the Senate is going to vote on the Democrat plan to extend these Biden COVID bonuses for 3 more years with absolutely no reforms to a failing Obamacare program—no reforms, not one.

What do we see with the program so far they had? It caused waste, fraud, and corruption. Rich people get subsidies; insurance companies get rich. They all like it. That is why the Democrats are for it.

I practiced medicine in Wyoming for 24 years as an orthopedic surgeon. I was doing that before serving now in the U.S. Senate. I can tell you, these Biden COVID bonuses are a bad prescription because the side effects are so harmful: widespread fraud and corruption, direct payments to line the pockets of big insurance companies, taxpayer-subsidized healthcare for millionaires. That is right, millionaires. You can earn \$1 million a year and still get subsidized handsomely by what the Democrats are proposing, and they are bringing it to the floor to be voted on this week. That is the solution the Democrats have, throw more government money at a problem that caused the problem in the first place.