

America safer and stronger, investing in law and order here at home and a strong military to safeguard our national security. We are creating a brighter future with new opportunities for Americans wherever they live and whatever their American dream may be.

I want to take some time today to talk about how Republicans' agenda is at work in my home State of South Dakota, and I want to begin with the tax relief that Republicans have delivered.

Whether I am visiting a small business in Isabel, SD, or talking to farmers at Dakotafest, higher prices are a concern for South Dakotans, as they are for many Americans. Affordability begins with more money in your pocket, which is exactly what Republicans have delivered with the working families tax cuts.

If Congress failed to act this year, a typical family in South Dakota would have had less money in their budget. They would have been looking at a \$2,500 tax hike next year. A typical farm would have seen a \$5,000 tax hike. Tens of thousands of small businesses would have seen their taxes go up as well.

Republicans were determined not to let that happen. Thanks to the working families tax cuts, which we passed in July as part of the One Big Beautiful Bill, South Dakotans won't see a tax hike next year. Instead, they will start seeing tax relief in the new year when the new tax law takes effect. They will be able to take advantage of a larger child tax credit, a bigger standard deduction, and a bonus deduction for seniors this tax season. They will see larger tax refunds come April, and they can expect that to be the new normal because the working families tax cuts deliver permanent—permanent—tax relief. That is right—no tax hike next year; no tax hike ever.

Working families aren't the only ones who will be benefiting from tax permanence. Thanks to Republicans' tax cuts, farmers, ranchers, and small business owners can also look forward to having more breathing room in their budgets next year. They will benefit from permanently lower tax rates. The 199A deduction now is also made permanent. The full expensing provision, also now permanent, makes it easier to replace a piece of equipment and upgrade their operations. And the now-permanent research and development expensing provision is already helping South Dakota businesses innovate.

Then there is the death tax relief. South Dakotans believe the death tax is fundamentally flawed. It threatens too many family farms and ranches and family businesses. Republicans agree. And so in the Working Families Tax Cuts, Republicans permanently raised the death tax exemption threshold to protect a lot more family farms, ranches, and businesses from this unfair tax.

South Dakota farmers and ranchers are always at the top of my priority

list. These hard-working South Dakotans are seeing more than tax relief. The One Big Beautiful Bill made significant updates to the farm safety net to support farmers and ranchers through the economic headwinds they continue to face.

Our bill increases reference prices for every covered commodity and makes these prices more responsive to market conditions in the coming years. It increases crop insurance coverage and affordability. It supports livestock producers by making existing programs more responsive to drought and by funding prevention of animal diseases that can devastate livestock. And it invests in critical conservation programs, including programs that support South Dakota's wild bird populations, something that matters a lot this time of year as hunters flock to our State for pheasant season.

Republicans also made the Agriculture appropriations bill a priority. This year's bill, which was signed into law in November, supports agricultural research programs and facilitates marketing U.S. ag products both domestically and internationally. And it provides robust funding for the Farm Service Agency, which producers depend on to access the programs which keep their operations running smoothly.

We are not just strengthening farms and ranches; we are also working to support rural communities in South Dakota and across the country. The needs of rural areas look a little different from other places' needs. They do receive attention from the new Republican majority this year. As I said, we prioritized the Ag appropriations bill, which delivered significant funding for rural broadband. And I worked with the Trump administration to develop internet access to unserved areas.

Then there is healthcare. Folks whose homes are in a rural area know simply accessing a doctor or emergency room can be challenging. That is all the more true with the troubling trend of rural hospital closures over the last several years. With the One Big Beautiful Bill, Republicans have taken action to support rural hospitals. All 50 States have now applied for funding from the One Big Beautiful Bill's Rural Health Transformation Program, including South Dakota.

South Dakota intends to address key priorities with this funding. The State is looking to recruit healthcare professionals to rural areas and train professionals for rural needs, incentivize regional hubs for emergency services and maternal health, and bolster healthcare facilities that serve rural parts of our State. This fund will truly be transformative for healthcare providers in South Dakota and other rural areas across the country.

We also used the One Big Beautiful Bill to repeal a burdensome staffing regulation that would have threatened the viability of a number of South Da-

kota nursing homes. The Biden staffing mandate was unworkable in my State and many others. The One Big Beautiful Bill rescinded it, ensuring South Dakota nursing homes can continue serving our residents.

There is a lot more I could talk about that we have accomplished for South Dakota this year. There are the investments in Ellsworth Air Force Base, including full funding for the B-21 mission and supporting infrastructure. There is the support for local law enforcement in the One Big Beautiful Bill and new border security resources to help stop illegal immigration and the flow of drugs across our southern border. Ron Parsons is confirmed and back on the job as South Dakota's U.S. attorney.

We have repealed electric vehicle mandates that were simply not realistic for a State like ours, where long distances and cold weather are a fact of life.

The Biden administration's WOTUS rule has been repealed as well, saving farmers and ranchers from massive compliance costs.

And we are even doing our part to keep the pheasant population in our State strong. I come here every day to work for South Dakota, and we have done a lot this year that South Dakotans can be happy about.

But it is not just my State. Republicans' agenda is supporting Americans in all 50 States. We are working to make America safer and more secure, put more money in Americans' pockets, and create new opportunities for a brighter future.

Mr. President, we are keeping our foot on the gas.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The 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 PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

#### SHOOTING AT BROWN UNIVERSITY AND SHOOTING IN SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, we convene after a weekend of both horror and grief. Saturday afternoon, as students were studying for finals, a masked gunman opened fire inside a classroom at Brown University. Nine students were injured, and two were killed. The victims were not even 20 years old. This is every father's and every mother's worst nightmare. For now, the shooter remains at large, and we urge residents in the area to listen

to guidance from local law enforcement.

Then, just a few hours later, on the first night of Hanukkah, on a popular beach in Sydney, Australia, two terrorists opened fire on Jewish Australians who gathered in celebration. At least 15 were killed, another 29 injured. Among the murdered was a 10-year-old girl and an 87-year-old Holocaust survivor. Also among the murdered was Rabbi Eli Schlanger—a pillar of Brooklyn's Crown Heights community—who welcomed a son into the world just 2 months ago.

May the memories of all those killed and injured this weekend be a blessing.

I have warned repeatedly that anti-Semitism is a scourge around the world that must be condemned loudly and fought vigorously at every turn. The Jewish people have been collectively demonized, increasingly so in the last few years. This tragedy in Sydney shows the danger—the abject danger—of letting anti-Semitic rhetoric and action go unchecked.

So those of us in elected office have a responsibility to speak out against anti-Semitic rhetoric and conduct wherever it arises and whenever it arises.

Separately, Congress must also take action against another poison of our age, that of rampant gun violence.

Australia is no stranger to gun safety legislation. They famously took strong action in the 1990s, so gun violence plummeted. Yesterday, Australia's Prime Minister said the country will take another look at their gun safety laws and see where they can make improvements. If Australia can find the courage to act after a tragedy like the one at Bondi Beach, Congress should certainly find the will to act after a tragedy like the one at Brown University.

For the sake of those who were killed this weekend and for the sake of so many lives we can save moving forward, Congress must again act against gun violence and act against all forms of violent hate.

#### ALL SENATORS BRIEFING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now on the all-Senators briefing tomorrow morning: Senators, tomorrow morning, will attend a briefing by Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth and Secretary of State Marco Rubio on the latest developments in the Caribbean, including getting to the bottom of what happened during the September 2 boat strikes.

I have been calling on Secretary Rubio to provide an all-Senators briefing on these important topics since October, and I am pleased he has finally—finally—heeded our call. I expect him and Secretary Hegseth to come tomorrow prepared to answer tough questions from Senators about what exactly is going on with our forces in the territory surrounding Venezuela. The Senate also demands to see the full and

unedited tapes showing exactly what happened during strikes on the alleged drug boat on September 2.

Last week, I asked the Secretary of Defense point blank if he would provide the video of the boat strikes to every Senator. A simple yes from Secretary Hegseth would have been sufficient because, frankly, asking for the tapes is not a crazy request; it is basic oversight—something Senators are certainly entitled to see. It is part of our responsibility as Senators. But the Secretary hedged and said he needed more time to study this issue. More time? More time to study exactly what? It has been 3 months. What the hell is there to study? What is there to study? I made this request to the Secretary a week ago, and, to date, he has still not provided access to all Senators.

So, ahead of tomorrow's briefing, we need to be clear about one thing: Every single Member is entitled to see the full, unedited video of what happened during the series of strikes on September 2. Anything less than full access for every Senator would be unacceptable.

If Secretary Hegseth continues to conceal the truth, then what exactly is he trying to hide? Maybe he needs more time to study what he should hide and what he shouldn't hide. That would be totally wrong, inappropriate, and dishonest.

We also need immediate answers about what on Earth Donald Trump is planning to do in Venezuela. You get different answers all the time and no clear understanding by the American people of what he is up to and what his goal is. How far will he go? Will he get us into an endless war? We have thousands of troops on our largest aircraft carrier in the Caribbean but zero—zero—explanation for what Donald Trump is trying to accomplish.

Americans do not want to get our troops ensnared in another endless war, and the risk for war will only get worse the more a belligerent Donald Trump acts off the coast of South America.

Just this weekend, a U.S. Air Force tanker jet had a near-midair collision with a JetBlue Airbus flying to the United States. The Air Force tanker reportedly did not have its transponder on, of all things, and flew right through the Airbus's flightpath, forcing it to climb to avoid a crash—a near miss.

A near miss with this commercial flight should serve as a warning. All it takes is one accident, one moment of miscommunication with Venezuela, and things can spin out of control in an instant. That is exactly what the American people do not want to see. We have seen that happen in the past; that one incident can lead to an endless war.

So, tomorrow, Secretaries Rubio and Hegseth owe Senators some pretty big answers to some very important questions about what is happening in the Caribbean. What are their goals? What

are their plans? What are their limits? Anything less than full transparency and candor from the two Secretaries will be unacceptable to the Senate and to the American people.

#### NEW YORK

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now on my 62-county tour and the cost of healthcare: Well, today is a special day for me as I completed my annual 62-county tour. Every year, I visit every one of New York's 62 counties, and today's 62nd county was Columbia County, with a visit to the Ooms Dairy Farm in Columbia County.

When I first ran for the Senate, I promised New Yorkers I would visit every single county at least once a year, and I have kept that promise up for 27 years. This is the 27th year I have had that tour. I love it today just as much as I loved it then. You learn so much. You see people face to face. Sitting behind a desk, just answering the phone, doesn't suffice if you want to be a good Senator. You have to get out there, meet people, shake hands, hear about their concerns, hear about their anguish, hear about their happiness and joys, and that is what I do in every county.

New York is a tremendously diverse State. We have one of the largest rural populations in America. Our upstate cities are like Midwestern cities, and, of course, we have New York City and its suburbs—the largest metropolis in the country—so I get to see and learn everything. I consider what I do in visiting each county a work requirement. I can't do my job if I don't talk to New Yorkers face to face and see firsthand what is going on with them every single day.

Now, I have to say this: This year's 62-county was somewhat different than the ones in the past. This year, I heard from New Yorkers in every corner of the State, of every profession and every age, of every race, creed, color, gender, and preference about the rising cost of living. It was a universal chorus of complaints that our country is not doing enough about the cost of living.

Every county I visited—all 62—had the same story. People are struggling to pay for the things they need. Some of their worst moments are while simply sitting around the dinner table after a Friday evening dinner and saying: How are we going to pay this bill? Maybe we should pay this one and not that one or do without this or do without that. For families with children, it is particularly hard when their kids need things that will be good for them, and they can't afford them.

Here are some instances, and I met so many: a man named Thomas, who is the owner of a beautiful brewery, the 1812 brewery in Watertown, NY, on the shores of Lake Ontario, where the War of 1812 was fought. His beer was taken off the shelves in Canada because of Donald Trump's stupidity and name-calling of the Canadians.