

both Republican and Democratic administrations comply with that law.

Congress has a constitutional responsibility to ensure the laws it passes are followed. In eighth grade civics or high school government classes, our students study about the checks and balances of government. Congress not only has a responsibility to pass the laws, they have a responsibility to make sure that the executive branch executes those laws as well.

We have not found that followed in practice for these anti-gag provisions. The anti-gag provision requires all Federal Agency nondisclosure policies, forms, or agreements to notify employees of their right to blow the whistle to Congress, to an inspector general, or to the Office of Special Counsel. Appropriations laws also prohibit Federal funds from being used to enforce non-compliant agreements.

Nevertheless, Federal Agencies, amazingly, still violate the anti-gag provisions. That failure not only has a chilling effect that discourages whistleblowers, it also happens to be illegal. I have conducted longstanding oversight to ensure that Federal Agencies comply with this law, and I have held them accountable when they failed to do so.

For example, 2013, I asked 15 executive branch departments about the inclusion of the anti-gag provision in their nondisclosure agreements.

At the time, only the Department of Treasury, out of those 15 executive branch Departments, was in full compliance. I forwarded my findings to the Office of Special Counsel, and in 2018, they issued updated guidance to all executive branch Departments about including anti-gag provisions in their nondisclosure policies and agreements.

In March of 2024, I wrote to 74 inspectors general requesting they check on their parent Agencies' compliance with the anti-gag provisions. To date, here are my findings from what I wrote to those 74 inspectors general: 45 inspectors general reported they completed their review. Of those 45, 6 inspectors general reported their parent Agency was in full compliance. Of that 45, 22 inspectors general said their parent Agency made updates to comply with the law, and 6 said that those corrective actions are ongoing.

So positive changes have been made. Whistleblowers are better off because these Agencies are doing what they can to comply with the nondisclosure gag rules.

But there are outstanding responses, and therefore more work must be done. This Senator intends to ride herd on the government about making sure that whistleblowers are protected and get rid of gag policies.

One example from my investigation, 10 inspectors general reported their parent Agency agreed to make changes but had yet to implement them. Another seven of the inspectors general who conducted a review responded that their parent Agency was noncompliant, but they didn't say if their Agency agreed to update their policies. Another seven inspectors generals re-

sponded that they were taking the requests under consideration or planning to conduct a future review.

It is a no-brainer that they ought to take that review, and I am asking them: What is the hesitation? So I have a responsibility to follow up with them.

Another eight inspectors general responded that the anti-gag law didn't apply to their Agency. So I am looking into their position that they took in response to my letter and ensure that their point that they aren't covered by the anti-gag law is correct.

Fourteen inspectors general gave the stiff arm to those of us in Congress, ignoring what we asked for them to do, and, as a result, they failed to provide a substantive response, which included inspectors general for the Central Intelligence Agency and the Export-Import Bank.

That failure to respond is a disgrace. Inspectors general ought to be the tip of the spear when it comes to transparency in government. Transparency and accountability are not a partisan issue. Federal Agencies can't conceal their wrongdoing behind illegal nondisclosure policies and related actions.

Whistleblowers are critical to exposing waste, fraud, and abuse within government. Government officials at the top don't know everything that is going on below them. That is why whistleblowers ought to be listened to. They benefit the government carrying out its constitutional responsibilities, and it surely benefits the taxpayers.

I encourage my Republican and Democrat colleagues to join in my efforts to ensure all administrations, whether Republican or Democrat, comply with whistleblower laws.

Rest assured, my oversight will continue and so will my fight for whistleblowers.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

VENEZUELA

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I am beyond outraged that President Trump would commit such a brazen act of war as he has done in Venezuela with absolutely no notice, except to the oil companies and newspapers they leaked it to. No consultation with Congress, no legitimate justification for these unauthorized strikes, nor any kind of serious long-term strategy.

It is unquestionably an act of war to invade a foreign nation, kidnap a foreign leader—even a dictator—and leave dozens of bodies, including civilians, behind.

Would my colleagues still nod their heads and go along with it if a country tried to do this to American leaders? Of course not. So we should stop playing dumb. Trump can't just say magic words and pretend this wasn't a major military operation.

This is the U.S. Congress, and we have a constitutional role to be a check on the President. Only Congress can declare war, and Congress did not authorize the use of force against Venezuela.

Now, I opposed the war in Iraq from the outset. And the parallels to what President Trump has kicked off in Venezuela are glaring. And I absolutely will not support any large-scale mili-

tary conflict in Venezuela or a dangerous and expansive occupation.

We have a President ignoring the problems that he has caused in our own country, all to start a war no one asked for, with no legitimate justification, no concern for the servicemembers who are being put in harm's way, and absolutely no long-term strategy.

Seriously, the only thing that was clear after the briefing yesterday is that Trump has no serious plan. First, Trump was just bombing alleged drug boats. Then Trump was just seizing oil shipments. And the next thing you know, this administration is sending the military to abduct a foreign leader.

So I have to ask: What is next and where is next? How far is this going to go? Because it is clear that this is not over, not when Trump keeps saying he will run the country.

What is Trump's plan to run Venezuela exactly? How long are we going to be there? How many of our people is he going to send? Who is even in charge? And how are we paying for this?

There are no serious answers. The only thing we do know is why Trump is doing this—for oil—because this clearly is not about ending tyranny and establishing a democracy since Trump outright dismissed any possibility of helping the opposition party to build a true democracy. And it is clearly not about drug trafficking. After all, not even a month before this, President Trump pardoned the former President of Honduras who was convicted of the same crime. But the real reason—it is so painfully obvious—this was always about the oil.

Why? Well, it is pretty simple. Trump keeps saying it. He literally said:

The difference between Iraq and this is that Bush didn't keep the oil. We're going to keep the oil.

That was the President. Is this "America First"? Of course not. It is "Big Oil Barons First." It is "Billionaires First." It is "Trump First." First to rake in profits, mind you, not first to put themselves in harm's way.

And you can bet when Trump says he is not worried about boots on the ground, it is because he is not talking about his boots. He is not talking about his kids. He is talking about yours.

Congress cannot stand by and shrug our shoulders. We have a constitutional responsibility here. It is important that a majority of Senators voted to rein in this President's reckless actions. But if we want to put an end to this warmongering, we need to keep pressing until we have a veto-proof majority. Today's vote is not the end of the line. So I urge all my colleagues to join us in asserting our authority and continuing to send President Trump a simple message: No American boots on the ground. No trading blood for oil. No war.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to use a prop during my remarks.

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

NUTRITIONAL GUIDELINES

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, I am so excited to be here today. I am going to talk about one of my favorite—favorite—topics, eating. But my mouth is a little dry here, so I want to take a moment and enjoy some whole milk.

You know, I am not the only one that loves eating. America loves eating. If I can share a story with my fellow Senators, I always thought that I was my grandma's favorite grandchild, and I thought it was because I was always the one that was the first to raise my hands for seconds. Now, I don't know if I was her favorite, but certainly I was one of her favorites.

The interesting thing was, we couldn't gain weight, though. Despite eating seconds and an active lifestyle, nobody gained weight. We were all in a good weight area.

And what did we eat? We ate real food. What did that real food look like? Well, we had whole milk for breakfast and for lunch and for supper. We had bacon and eggs in the morning. For lunch, we would have one of the other proteins: turkey or chicken or ham—but vegetables from our garden. That was it. Fresh vegetables, and we had, I think, four or five different fruit trees: a pear tree, a peach tree, several others. So we would have fresh fruits as well. And then for dinner—we called it supper—beef was the main dish always, but still with more fresh fruits, maybe some potatoes, some new potatoes. And, yes, we put bacon in the new potatoes, but all my grandparents lived a long healthy life on those diets as well.

You know, on a Saturday night—I don't want to forget. Once or twice a month, on a Saturday night, we would finish work early, at 7 or 8 p.m., and we would make homemade ice cream with that cream that we had from our own dairy herd.

And then the other piece that people forget about is we had canned food—not in a metal can, but they were in bottles. And what that canned food did is it was easier to digest. That fresh taste was locked into it.

And, very simply, real food tastes better. I would hardly recognize the taste of some of the fruits and vegetables today. When I was growing up on our family farm, the strawberries melted in your mouth. The green beans, potatoes all had a very fresh taste. The cantaloupe, the watermelon—you would have thought they were adding sugar to it.

But today's world, unfortunately, we eat from a box. We eat from a sack, and that is not real food. We did not have any of these ultraprocessed foods in my diet growing up.

Now, I would like to talk a little bit more about eating, about eating real food, and share the new nutritional guidelines released yesterday by

USDA, HHS, and FDA. Guess what their advice is. Their advice is to eat real food, the same food that I was raised on.

Now, what I am excited about is—look, America was so hungry, so hungry for a new food pyramid that we flipped it. We flipped the food pyramid, and we made a triangle out of it.

The big emphasis here is common sense and eating real food. And the big winner is going to be American families. It is going to be our youth, especially where we are seeing an epidemic.

And I just want to give a shoutout to President Trump's leadership, to Secretary Kennedy, to Secretary Rollins, to FDA Director Dr. Makary, Dr. Oz at CMS, and Dr. Jay Bhattacharya at NIH for providing the real science—and all the people that worked so hard to put together these nutritional guidelines.

And for all you naysayers out here, the science is never settled. I don't absolutely agree with everything on this pyramid as a physician, but these are incredible guidelines and huge steps in the right direction. And, again, use a little common sense as you go forward.

For too long, we overcomplicated nutrition. We buried families in confusing charts, changing rules, and special-interest science. And while all of this was happening, America got sicker.

Ninety percent of American dollars—healthcare dollars—are being spent on chronic diseases. Seventy percent of Americans have a chronic disease. A third of our children are prediabetic or diabetic. We simply can't continue to live in that direction.

We were being told the last 20, 30 years to eat food from factories rather than foods from the farm. And these ultraprocessed foods were marketed as healthy. Well, people followed the advice in good faith, and they got sicker rather than healthier.

Real food is food you recognize when you see it. Most of the time, it is not coming from a box. It is not in a bag. Sometimes, it is in a can; sometimes, it is not. You have to be careful. You have to look at the can.

Did they add sugar to it? Did they add salt to it? Then I would probably turn away from it.

It is fresh or frozen. Real food—healthy food—is fresh or frozen.

I am so glad that the SNAP program is now going to require all the grocery stores to double the amount of opportunities of choices that you are going to have from this real food selection.

Real food is protein. It is whole grains, and it is healthy fat. The previous pyramid probably required that 50 percent of your calories come from carbohydrates. We know that was probably a big mistake. Instead, we are going to push more proteins.

People say: What is the new guideline talking about?

It is that same diet I was raised on back at our farm. It is the same food your grandparents and my parents—my mom—made for us.

Look, long before we knew what MAHA moms were, my grandmothers

were MAHA grandmothers, and my mother was a MAHA mom. And my wife was cooking MAHA food, as well. They seldom opened a box. If you are opening a box to cook, think twice about it.

Another good option, as we discussed what the new guidelines are, is putting water back where it belongs. I would argue water, whole milk—those are your one-two drink alternatives, and certainly not sugary sodas. We all should be drinking more water. If you want to drink something besides water, I would suggest whole milk. A big point about whole milk to me is it satisfies one's appetite longer. You drink a sugary soda, and you are hungry again in 10 minutes. Your sugar is bouncing up and down. But milk has protein in it, and it is going to satisfy your hunger for longer, not to mention that it is full of protein, vitamins, and minerals.

Let's take a look at this graph, our "Eat Real Food" graph, the new dietary guidelines. I think it is interesting. The foods down here aren't necessarily bad, but you should maybe eat less of them and more of these. As you go up the triangle, these are the more healthy foods.

This is real simple. Down in the bottom of this, it looks like we have whole grains. We have oatmeal and whole grain wheat from Kansas to make bread. Then I believe this is rice and beans and nuts and bananas—more nuts, seafood, butter. Butter is another one of those full-fat foods derived from whole milk.

Then we have a bunch of fruit. We have more seafood and yogurt, another milk product, as well.

And, of course, there are your vegetables grown in the garden. Here are some frozen vegetables. Frozen vegetables are cheaper but really close to the nutritional value of fresh out of the garden.

It looks like chicken and turkey. You probably have made those. The guidelines here are for a protein source. The cheeses—cheese is a great healthy source of food for you. And, of course, there is the American hamburger. Americans can't get along without hamburger.

This is my favorite one. This is absolutely my favorite one. I am going to call this a T-bone steak. Most of you know that a T-bone steak not only has a bone in it, but on one side, of course, is the KC strip. That is a Kansas City strip. Some mistakenly call it a New York strip, but this is actually a KC strip, as well. And on this side, there is a little bit more of a flavorless type of meat. I like this KC strip here.

So, again, the whole concept is what? It is to eat some of these, but more of these and a lot of these—basically, substituting more protein for less carbohydrates.

We spend a lot of time here on the floor talking about healthcare reform. But this is the biggest day in healthcare reform we are going to see