

stand adjourned until 12 noon on Thursday, March 19; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, morning business be closed, and following leader remarks, the Senate resume the House Message with respect to S. 1383.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senators KLOBUCHAR and MURPHY.

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

Mr. ROUNDS. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). The Senator from Minnesota.

SAVE AMERICA ACT

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to join many of my colleagues in standing up to protect American citizens' constitutional right to vote and fighting back against this administration's most recent attack on access to the ballot box.

What are Americans really talking about right now? What do they really wish we were focused on in this great Chamber? Not the SAVE America Act. They would like us to focus on the "Save America Money Act," because Americans see rising costs because of these across-the-board tariffs that I oppose, the gas prices that are surging, the healthcare costs doubling and tripling, because the White House and congressional Republicans decided not to extend the tax credits for their health plans—doubling and tripling of people's premiums, particularly in rural areas where they tend to rely on these plans more.

So instead of simply making their case to the voters of this country, the American citizens, or maybe taking a look at their policies in case there is a way to work with us on the Affordable Care Act tax credits and compromise, or trying to add more energy to the grid instead of taking wind projects off the grid, they are trying to pass legislation to pick the voters with this bill.

And it is by President Trump's own admission. This is not me saying it. He is the one—an exact quote that says of this bill:

It will guarantee the midterms.

As my friend and colleague Senator RAPHAEL WARNOCK has said: Some people don't want some people to vote.

That is why so many of us have come to the floor this week. We don't think eligible American citizens should be kicked off voter rolls or there should be burdensome hurdles for people to register to vote.

Nothing is more fundamental to our democracy than our fair and free elections and rights of Americans to make their voices heard at the ballot box, whether they are Democrats, Republicans, Independents, whatever political beliefs they have.

Throughout even the most difficult times, Americans have stood in ballot lines because a right to vote is what secures our freedoms. But right now, we are seeing unprecedented attacks on the foundation of democracy from this administration, and we all know it is not for the first time.

There was the insurrection on January 6, right here, right in this Chamber. Someone came up, sat there on the Presiding Officer's desk, a violent mob, for the purpose of trying to stop us from certifying the results of the 2020 election.

I know Senator Blunt and I were the only two Senators left at 4 in the morning with Vice President Pence, who made that walk with the last of those ballots, by officers whose faces were scratched, over broken glass, over to the House. That happened, but democracy in the end prevailed.

And now, the President has threatened to nationalize election administration, replacing the judgment and experience of State and local officials, going so far as to say:

Republicans should say, 'We want to take over.' We should take over the voting . . .

Exact quote.

He also issued an unlawful Executive order to overhaul our Nation's elections and assert Federal control over State-run elections.

Minnesota and 18 other States sued and have won a preliminary injunction because as the judge wrote: The Constitution does not grant a President any specific powers over elections.

Undeterred, the President continues to float illegally ending mail-in voting nationwide, which is incredibly popular in red States and blue, incredibly popular in Utah and Colorado, in Minnesota; and he continues to double down on his repeatedly disproven conspiracy theories about the 2020 election. The FBI seized election ballots from 2020 in Georgia, as well as election records in Arizona.

There are also concerns that Federal agents could be deployed to polling locations. When asked at her oversight hearing about ICE being sent to polling locations, Secretary Noem did not rule out the Agency deploying officers in the future.

And the Justice Department, under this administration, has turned away from its mission of enforcing the Voting Rights Act and has experienced a mass exodus of attorneys.

It has also illegally pressured States to provide voters' sensitive and personally identifiable information to the administration which, by the way, is highly relevant to the bill before us now.

In fact, Attorney General Bondi on the same day that Alex Pretti was

killed by Federal agents—shot in the back—that same day, that same few hours, she sent a letter to Minnesota saying the administration would remove ICE from our streets if Minnesota violated the privacy of its citizens by turning over their personal voter data.

So she said: OK, we will get ICE out of there if you guys will give us your data on your voters.

That happened.

In a court hearing, a Federal judge in Minnesota asked the Justice Department:

Is the Executive trying to achieve through force what it cannot achieve through the courts?

That is a pretty good question when you read that letter, but it is not just Minnesota that is standing up against the Justice Department's pressure. State election officials in 24 States, including Republican officials in Georgia, Republican secretary of state of New Hampshire, Republican officials in Kentucky, and Republican officials in West Virginia have refused to comply with the voter file demands.

And four Federal judges, including judges appointed by President Trump, have ruled that the Justice Department's effort to obtain this data is illegal.

Now, President Trump and congressional Republicans are trying to force through this bill. That would result mandatory in voters' data being turned over to the Federal Government and would empower the Department of Homeland Security to kick American citizens off State voter rolls.

Under this bill, the Department of Homeland Security would run voters' personal data through a tool, a DOGE tool, and tell States who they have to purge from their voter rolls.

So, remember, 24 States, including several Republican officials, including in conservative States like West Virginia, have said no to this. They don't want to give over those data rolls, of the voter data rolls.

But now, this would mandate it that it go to the Department of Homeland Security, the same Agency that gave us ICE in Minnesota.

This will result in these American citizens—when you go back and you are supposed to run this through this tool, this system, these algorithms, and we are supposed to believe that that will all work great, given what we have seen from Homeland Security in the last few months. No way.

At least 24 States, as I noted, already have agreements to share voter data with DHS, and already the Department's tool has misidentified hundreds of American citizens as ineligible to vote. So I already have a proof point. The SAVE America Act isn't about what they are saying it is. In the 64 election lawsuits brought by President Trump and his allies contesting the 2020 election, no judge, including judges appointed by President Trump himself, found evidence of widespread fraud.

His own Attorney General said there wasn't evidence of widespread fraud.

And according to a bipartisan policy center analysis of the Heritage Foundation's database of noncitizen voting across 25 years, there were only 77 cases out of nearly 2 billion votes cast of noncitizens voting. In each of these cases, they faced an investigation.

I know when I was the county attorney in my State, way before any of this technology existed, we would get cases referred to us from the Minnesota secretary of state, and I actually put an investigator on this and looked at every single case to make sure there wasn't a problem. And the vast majority of them, with the exception of one where the school board line went through someone's house and they voted twice, which was illegal, and another one where a guy decided he was going to vote twice. This is in our biggest county. They were all fathers and sons with the same names.

We looked diligently at every single case. We had a Republican secretary of state. She sent them over. We looked at them. We explained it back. That is what I did as county attorney. So I had some experience with this.

Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem said:

[We need to make sure that] we have the right people voting, electing the right leaders to lead this country . . .

And President Trump himself said that, with this bill, Republicans will "never lose a race" in 50 years.

So you wonder why we are concerned about this. I believe in free and fair elections. I like the fact that my State has the highest voter turnout. I like the fact, like a number of States, including some red States, we have same day registration. I like the fact that we make it easier for people to vote by mail.

Our State actually was not nearly on the bandwagon with vote-by-mail like Utah was, the Presiding Officer's State, or Colorado. Some States recently changed the rules to be consistent with some of these other States to make it easier for people to vote-by-mail.

But this idea that we are suddenly going to turn over all of our voter data to what is now Kristi Noem's Department, despite her soon departure, is just—I don't think most people in America would think this is a good idea.

The Department of Homeland Security has already violated Federal law by repurposing its SAVE program to verify voters and only issuing their prior notice after being sued by the League of Women Voters. And the Department of Justice even admitted in court—and this was bad—that Elon Musk's DOGE employees shared Americans' personal Social Security data with partisan organizations that worked to purge voter rolls.

Let me say that again. They have already admitted, so you wonder why whenever these secretaries of state, including Republican secretaries of state,

don't want to give up this voter data, well, the Department of Justice admitted in court that Elon Musk's DOGE employees shared Americans' personal Social Security data with partisan organizations that worked to purge voter rolls.

So what else happens? There are costly and burdensome hurdles that are designed to make it harder for eligible U.S. citizens to register and cast their ballot. Many common sources of identification that people have come to rely on—driver's license, military ID—would not be enough under this bill.

So people would either have to present a birth certificate or a passport or, as my colleague from Utah pointed out, some kind of affidavit through a State process that may or may not be set up as an alternative.

And if someone's current name doesn't match the name on their birth certificate, the barriers are even higher. So 69 million married women who changed their name, they have to provide some kind of additional documentation that they may not have in order to register. Maybe their State won't set up some process, and maybe they won't want to drive in rural areas hours to go in and submit some affidavit, or maybe they won't have someone that can help them do this affidavit.

In most cases, these women will need to dig up their birth certificates, and I think many of us for one thing or another have had that experience. It is not always easy to get that birth certificate. You try to hide it somewhere, and then you don't remember, and then you have to go and you have to get another copy of the birth certificate.

That is what is going to happen here. Marriage licenses, maybe mine is in my wedding book, don't know. That is what people are going to be thinking right now.

So what happens if people don't have these documents on hand? In fact, more than 21 million Americans lack ready access to the documents necessary to register under this bill, and more than half of Americans—146 million—don't have a passport.

So as Americans are already facing rising costs for necessities like healthcare and housing and energy, now they have to figure out this paperwork—when they are trying to call Social Security and no one answers, when they are trying to call the VA and no one answers, when they are trying to get a loan and USDA is down 20 percent of employees and they can't get anyone to answer or help them, now they have this.

Marriage license, \$10; birth certificate, I don't know, in my State it is \$24; passport, \$165. Maybe your State gets you an affidavit, but where are you supposed to go? How are you supposed to get that done? But it is not just about the documentation.

The SAVE America Act also makes it harder to vote by effectively ending some of the most popular methods of voter registration.

Right now, voters in 45 States, including my State, can register to vote online. And in 2024, more than 14.4 million voters did that. Americans in 46 States and the District of Columbia can register by mail using the Federal form, while two other States use a State absentee voter mail-in registration form.

And in 2024, more than half of all voters registered through automatic voter registration—what a smart way to do it. When they get their driver's license renewed at the DMV or when they interact with another State agency, like their State department of health. But under the SAVE America Act, Americans wouldn't have these options; instead they would have to provide necessary documentation in person. As a result, mail registration, no; online voter registration, no; motor voter is severely limited; and non-partisan voter registration drives are gone too.

Altogether, the SAVE America Act's in-person voter registration requirements would clearly be a significant barrier, especially for new voters and people who get registered when they get their driver's licenses.

For rural Americans driving 4½ hours roundtrip or people in Alaska and Hawaii actually having to get on a plane just to register to vote or Tribal voters in remote areas or people who lack reliable transportation and then those in Minnesota and in 22 other States who exercise their rights, under State law, to register in person on election day, as more than 2.6 million Americans, particularly young voters, did—uh-uh. It undermines it. It is by design. It makes it harder. It is kind of hard to see through all of those pages, but it makes it harder and undermines mail-in voting by requiring Americans to provide copies of "this" and "this" when they submit their mail-in ballots.

President Trump's message on mail-in voting has been inconsistent. He actually voted by mail multiple times, and in 2024, he urged his supporters to do the same. It was good enough for him and his supporters. It should be good enough for all Americans now.

You know, voting by mail is nothing new. It dates back to the Civil War. Now 36 States allow voters to cast their votes by mail, and nearly one-third of voters do. That is a good thing, and it is why I lead legislation that would make sure Americans in every State can request a mail-in ballot. In Minnesota, as I said, we have made it easier for people to vote. There is no excuse vote-by-mail—a lot of States have that—and 46 days of early voting and same-day registration.

By the way, with some of the best voting laws and the highest voter turnout, we have elected Republican Governors like Tim Pawlenty. We have elected Independent Governors like Jesse Ventura, and we have elected Democratic Governors. We had in the legislature, with this voting system, one House Republican and one House

Democratic last year. We have had statewide officials from both parties with an election system that makes it easier for people to vote.

But as Steve Simon—Minnesota's respected secretary of state—has testified, the bill would cost States, counties, and cities untold millions of dollars to implement, and it would require implementation within 60 days of becoming law. As Steve put it, it is a recipe for chaos in our election system.

I think we should be making it easier for people to vote. That is why I worked with my colleagues on the Freedom to Vote Act. That is why I support the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

Instead of talking about this right now, we should be doing something about Americans' expenses, and why don't we also talk about how AI is being used to deceive voters? Whether you are a Democrat or a Republican, no one wants to see fake ads or robocalls where you cannot even tell if it is a candidate you don't like or the candidate you love.

While a number of States—red and blue—have enacted laws to address these threats to our elections, we cannot rely on a patchwork of State laws. Congress must act. That is why I lead legislation to ban content that falsely depicts Federal candidates in political ads to influence Federal elections. I have worked with Senator JOSH HAWLEY—not exactly a flaming liberal. There is another bill to require disclaimers on political ads with images—audio or video—that are substantially generated by AI. That is for the ones, of course, that are constitutional and that allow for parity in certain uses. You could at least put a disclaimer on those to show that it is created by AI so you know if it is real or not. Then, on the ones that falsely depict people, you could actually ban those. That is what they have done in other countries.

While we are talking about protecting our elections, we also need to talk about the need to support our State and local election offices as they work to maintain their election infrastructure to keep pace with new technology and combat cyber security.

But instead of strengthening our election security and making sure that, in our campaigns, AI is not being used in a way that is going to mislead people and that voters are given knowledge of what they are seeing, which is something that is coming right at us in this next election—instead of talking about how to get rid of these across-the-board tariffs that cost households \$1,700 last year or the small farm bankruptcies that are at a 5-year high, which has nearly doubled over the last year—as one farmer put it, a perfect, perfect storm of ugly—or instead of working together to extend the healthcare tax credits or doing something about electricity prices that went up an average of \$110 or doing something with this war that they uni-

laterally started and did not allow Congress to have a say in—and now we have seen an increase of \$30 to \$40 a barrel. Every \$10 increase in a barrel of oil is a \$450-a-year increase in gas prices for the average American family. But instead of doing all that when we have seen jobs down in January alone 108,000, and then in February, we lost 92,000 more jobs—instead of dealing with this and not rubberstamping this President's policies, we are here, talking about a bill that makes it harder for people to vote.

So I urge our Republican colleagues to change course and to work with us on where people really are, which is doing something about how much it costs for them to go on with their daily lives; to work with us on everything from permitting reform to doing something about getting more energy on the grid, to doing something about bringing grocery prices down. We are messing around here.

Protecting the freedom to vote has never been easy, and we have had to course-correct many times to ensure that our democracy is there for people. Americans have fought and died to protect our freedom to vote. They have done so on the battlefield, and they have done it in marches and the civil rights movement; and 61 years after the Voting Rights Act was passed by this Chamber and signed into law, that fight continues today. This bill is not the right bill for this country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

SAVE AMERICA ACT

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I appreciate the remarks from my friend from Minnesota. I think she laid out an unassailable case about how this is going to greatly constrain people's abilities to cast their votes, how it is a broad assault on democracy, how it effectively makes up a problem that doesn't exist.

I think I am the last speaker tonight before everybody gets to go home. So I am going to be very brief, and I am going to try to put today's debate in some context.

Here is what President Trump told a gathering of lawmakers at his golf resort. By the way, let's just not gloss over the fact that Donald Trump doesn't spare any moment to make money off of his Presidency, including demanding that, if you want an audience with him, you have to go down and spend money at his golf resort.

Here is what he said. He said: If you pass the SAVE Act, "[i]t will guarantee the midterms. If you don't get it, big trouble, my opinion."

Pass the SAVE Act, and "[i]t will guarantee the midterms. If you don't get it, big trouble."

Donald Trump—one of the most unpopular Presidents at this point in his Presidency in history. All he cares about is power and winning elections.

He can't maintain power in the Senate or the House this fall being this unpopular in running a war that is out of control and that is driving up costs for Americans, tariffs that are costing the average family thousands of dollars a year, an economy that is not growing; and manufacturing jobs that are fleeing. So he is seeking to gain power that he believes will allow him to manipulate who can vote and who can't vote.

That is why we are here. We are certainly not here because voter fraud is a systemic problem in our elections.

The Heritage Foundation—the organization behind Project 2025 and many of the ideas that form the foundation of this legislation—has been able to uncover 10,000 instances of non—wait a second—5,000 instances of noncitizen voter—no, not 5—no, 400—no. It is 100. They found 100 instances in a country of 300 million of noncitizen voters trying to vote since 2000—in 26 years, 100 cases.

Another study found that the percent of voter fraud in Arizona over the last 25 years was—and I have got to read this carefully—0.0000845 percent. I actually have no concept of what that number is. That number is so tiny as to be kind of impossible to comprehend. The rate of voter fraud over the last 25 years in Arizona is 0.0000845 percent.

When you ask Americans what the top problems are that are facing the country right now—this is a Washington University poll, so it is not a Democratic poll or a Republican poll—they are, 1, jobs are disappearing; 2, prices are going up—let's see—3, the President generally; 4, the cost of living; 5, corruption in government; 6, polarization in government; 7, crime; 8, immigration; 9, abortion; 10, healthcare. I would bet you, if you went 11 through 19, you would not find voter fraud on that list. Statistically, this isn't a systemic problem. Voters aren't asking for us to focus on it.

So why are we here? Why is this the emergency issue—the urgent issue—that Congress is debating at nearing 11 o'clock on a Wednesday night?

It is, first and foremost, because Trump is demanding it. He has said he will not sign any other legislation until this bill reaches his desk, and Republicans in the Senate are compliant. They are employees of the President. He has said: This is the bill I want. So they are attempting to deliver him this bill. He believes, I think wrongly, but he believes this bill will give him special powers with which to change the electorate in his favor.

But we are also here because Republicans do not want to talk about the issues that are actually top of mind for Americans. They do not want to talk about prices or the economy or healthcare. They do not want to talk about corruption in government or the cost of living. That is probably the primary reason we are debating this bill—because, if you asked Americans what should be in a "save America" law, they would not say this.