

integrate best practices along with quality data. This will help ensure that foster youths and parents are best supported.

When referring to raising a child, a common phrase is used: It takes a village. That phrase rings more true when a child experiences foster care.

So I want to take this opportunity to thank First Lady Melania Trump for her work to modernize the child welfare system. It will strengthen partnerships for youth aging out of foster care through the program entitled Fostering the Future for American Children and Families initiative.

I also want to thank Assistant Secretary Adams for following through on his commitment to tackle the foster recruitment and retention challenge that is tainting child welfare agencies nationwide.

I look forward to continuing to work with the Senate Committee on Finance to advance the Recruiting Families Using Data Act.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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

The majority leader is recognized.

SAVE AMERICA ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, we have been debating the SAVE America Act for 7 days now, and what has been made clear in this debate is how out of touch Democrats are with most Americans.

Polls show that the commonsense policies in the SAVE America Act have support from the American people, but Democrats have repeatedly demonstrated they don't share the American people's interest in securing our elections.

And despite Americans' concerns, Democrats continue to embrace transgender ideology that allows men to compete in women's sports and children—children—to undergo irreversible, life-altering gender transition procedures.

At the start of this debate, the Democratic leader had the audacity to say that the SAVE America Act is a "radical bill." "Radical"—that is what he said.

Well, what is radical, I would say, about ensuring that only American citizens are voting in American elections? What is radical about asking voters for a photo ID?

And I don't know what world Democrats are living in, where keeping biological men out of women's sports is a radical proposition.

What is radical is men lining up alongside women at the starting line and winning medals and trophies meant for women. What is radical is telling female athletes that they have

to share a locker room with a biological male. That is radical.

Now, perhaps what is most radical about Democrats' position is that they seem to have no problem with gender transition procedures for minors. Democrats are more than happy to let transgender ideology reign, even when there is little to no evidence to support gender transition procedures for minors and increasing amounts of scientific evidence about the harms of these procedures for children.

But Democrats ignore the science. They ignore the fact that multiple European nations that have looked at the science have reined in gender transition procedures for minors.

They ignore the stories of Americans who underwent irreversible procedures as minors and have long lived to regret it.

So the SAVE America Act is not radical—radically common sense, maybe—so common sense, in fact, that only congressional Democrats could oppose it.

NOMINATION OF COLIN MCDONALD

Mr. President, as debate continues on the SAVE America Act, Republicans are also working to advance two nominees for important posts in the Trump administration.

One of those is Colin McDonald, whom President Trump has nominated to lead the new National Fraud Enforcement Division at the Department of Justice.

Fraud is a serious issue. Last year, it became clear that widespread fraud had taken root in the State of Minnesota. Prosecutors are working through cases and indictments related to at least \$9 billion in fraud, impacting 14 federally funded programs in that State alone.

And Minnesota is just the tip of the iceberg. The Government Accountability Office estimates that as much as \$500 billion in Federal funds is lost each year to fraud.

Now, needless to say, Mr. McDonald has his work cut out for him; and he is well suited to the challenge.

Colin McDonald is a career Federal prosecutor, which means, for his entire career, he has had only one client, and that is the American people.

Until coming to Washington to work at the Department of Justice, last year, Mr. McDonald spent 10 years as an assistant U.S. attorney in the Southern District of California. In that position, he spent a considerable amount of time trying cases in Federal court, including cases dealing with fraud, money laundering, and public corruption.

And his work has received notable praise. During one case in the Ninth Circuit, the judge actually interrupted proceedings to praise Mr. McDonald. None other than Judge Harry Pregerson, a notably progressive judge, said of Mr. McDonald:

I want to commend you on your candor, your openness, and your honesty with the Court.

Colin McDonald is well suited to provide justice for American taxpayers in

this role, and I look forward to confirming him swiftly so he can get to work.

NOMINATION OF MARKWAYNE MULLIN

Mr. President, the other nominee that we will be confirming this week is somebody we all know well—our colleague MARKWAYNE MULLIN.

President Trump has nominated MARKWAYNE to be the Secretary of Homeland Security. It is a tough assignment—made all the more challenging right now by Democrats having shut down DHS for 5 weeks.

But we all know that MARKWAYNE isn't afraid of a challenge—far from it. As a young man, MARKWAYNE left college to take over his family plumbing business. He grew that small enterprise into a large and successful business in the State of Oklahoma.

Just a few weeks after being elected to the House, when the Oklahoma delegation was touring storm damage, MARKWAYNE cut away from the other congressmen and climbed through debris to try to shut off water shooting through the wreckage. See a problem? Take action to solve it. That is MARKWAYNE. It is a big part of what drew him to public service.

I think all of us are familiar with MARKWAYNE MULLIN's seemingly unlimited supply of energy. His workout class in the House gym is the stuff of legend. In the halls, you can find him bouncing a little pink ball to get out some of his energy. And that energy doesn't come from coffee; MARKWAYNE does it all on decaf.

No, MARKWAYNE's energy is all him, but his strength, he will tell you, isn't his own. MARKWAYNE's strength comes from his wife and childhood sweetheart Christie and his rock-solid faith in God, both of which have made him an outstanding public servant and, most importantly, a loving father to their six children.

Heading up the Department of Homeland Security is a serious job, and I am proud to cast a vote for MARKWAYNE MULLIN, knowing with confidence that he is up to the work and to the task. I know how much I have depended on MARKWAYNE as a colleague and friend during his 3 years here in the U.S. Senate, and I am profoundly sorry to lose him. But the Senate's loss is the Department of Homeland Security's gain.

I want to thank MARKWAYNE for his service here in the Senate and wish him the very best as he continues to serve our country at DHS, and I hope whoever gets assigned to his security detail is ready to keep up.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, the Senate will soon confirm Senator

MARKWAYNE MULLIN of Oklahoma to be our Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. The sooner he is on the job, the safer, the stronger, and the more secure America will be.

Markwayne is a servant leader in the truest sense. His hometown is Westville, OK, a population of only 1,300 people. He is the youngest of seven children. When he was 20 years old, he stepped up to save his dad's plumbing company. He turned it into one of the largest in the State of Oklahoma.

Markwayne is a father, a fighter, a Christian, and someone that others have known they can count on. He has served in both the House and the Senate of the United States. I am fortunate to have worked closely with MARKWAYNE on a day-to-day basis because he is a trusted Member of our whip team. MARKWAYNE is tough. He is hard-working. He works with others to solve problems. You always know where he stands. That is the way MARKWAYNE MULLIN is.

On the whip team, he has played a critical role in passing the largest investment in American security in 40 years. He has been consistent in his commitment to enforce our laws and to strengthen our border. Once confirmed, he is going to bring the same focus and urgency and consistency to lead that Department of Homeland Security.

At his confirmation hearing, MARKWAYNE laid out a clear vision. He said:

My goal is for people to understand we're out there, we're protecting them, and we're working [with] them.

That is exactly what he should do, and it is what he will do.

The Department of Homeland Security exists to protect the American people from danger. From counterterrorism to disaster relief to border security, that Department protects our communities from terrorists, from illegal drugs, and from cyber attacks. MARKWAYNE understands fully the full weight of that critical mission.

Markwayne also understands the importance of trust. He has made it clear that he will be open, communicative, cooperative, and committed to working with others to get the job done.

Even Senate Democrats have said they like MARKWAYNE—they may have disagreed with him politically, but they acknowledge his stellar character. Senator BRIAN SCHATZ of Hawaii said this month:

I like him personally.

Senator Chris COONS of Delaware says MARKWAYNE is "well liked." Senator PETER WELCH of Vermont served with Senator MULLIN here in the Senate as well as in the House, and he said of MARKWAYNE:

He's respected, he's honest, and he's competent.

At the confirmation hearing, Senator RUBEN GALLEGOS of Arizona said MARKWAYNE is "upstanding" and qualified. That kind of respect speaks to MARKWAYNE's character.

As the Senate considers MARKWAYNE's nomination, we cannot ignore the situation facing the Department of Homeland Security today, right now, this very moment because, right now, the Department of Homeland Security is shut down. Senate Democrats shut it down by withholding its funding. That is the cruel fact. It is the undeniable fact. The fact is, Senate Democrats have voted five times to block full funding for the Department of Homeland Security.

Many employees are working without pay. Others have been furloughed. Families are struggling to meet basic needs. TSA agents are quitting. They are calling in sick in rising numbers. And as a result, wait times at major airports are rising as well.

We have seen terrorist attacks in New York, Virginia, Michigan, and Texas. Pro-Iran cyber hackers successfully attacked a major medical company in Michigan. The situation remains dangerous today. The warning lights are flashing red. And Democrats would rather pander to protect illegal immigrant criminals than pay to protect American people. MARKWAYNE MULLIN is ready to lead.

He is ready to serve with seriousness and character, and he is going to be a leader who makes our country safer, stronger, and more secure. He will secure our borders. He will fight terrorism. He will protect our cyber space. He will safeguard our communities. And he will support the individuals who keep our country safe.

Today, this Senate will confirm MARKWAYNE MULLIN. Then the Senate must fully fund the Department of Homeland Security because the safety and security of the American people depend upon it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill 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.

LAGUARDIA AIRPORT ACCIDENT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first, let me begin today by saying that my deepest prayers are with the families of the two pilots who were killed in a terrible collision at LaGuardia Airport this morning. The video and audio of the collision were heart-wrenching. It is like a punch to the stomach when you listen to it. It leaves you gasping for air.

I spoke with Chairwoman Homendy of the National Transportation Safety Board, which has always done an outstanding job, impartial, in investigating these tragedies. I spoke to Chair Homendy earlier today, and she told me the situation is under investigation.

She told me that over 25 investigators are on their way to LaGuardia right now to get to the bottom of what happened. We owe it to those pilots and their families to find out exactly how this accident was permitted to happen, and I will remain in constant communication with Chair Homendy and the NTSB as well as local authorities as the investigation unfolds.

My heart goes out to all of those affected by this tragedy. My heart goes out to the two pilots who were killed and to all the passengers who were injured at LaGuardia.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. President, on Homeland Security talks. Over the weekend—and for weeks now—Democrats have engaged Republicans in good faith to pay our TSA workers, to fund DHS, while also enacting commonsense safeguards to rein in ICE.

Both sides talked all weekend long. We had some constructive conversations, but there is considerably more work to be done, and Democrats are ready to keep negotiating. Democrats believe TSA staff should be paid now—now.

We tried to move forward this weekend to pay these workers, but Republicans have blocked pay for TSA workers in a rollcall vote where they all voted no on Saturday; and additionally, they have blocked pay for TSA workers seven times when Democrats tried to bring it up.

It is preposterous because the chaos at our airports is simply unacceptable. Still, Democrats are going to keep working in good faith.

Donald Trump, meanwhile, is trying to sabotage negotiations, demanding that talks stop entirely until Congress passes the SAVE Act, a bill that has nothing—nothing—to do with paying TSA workers and nothing to do with ending the shutdown.

That is right. Donald Trump is now saying: We will pay TSA only after Congress passes voter suppression.

What a ridiculous thing to do. What a callous thing to do. He doesn't give a damn about the American people. He cares about his own election. He thinks this SAVE Act—which isn't going to pass—will change how the election comes out, and he uses millions and millions of Americans as hostages.

How can our Republican friends on the other side of the aisle go along with this? It stinks on its face. You don't need any deeper explanation.

This morning, unfortunately, Trump doubled down in Memphis, saying explicitly as possible he won't pay TSA workers and he won't end this shutdown until the SAVE Act is passed.

Let's make it very clear: Donald Trump is the one standing in the way of paychecks for TSA workers with this ridiculous attempt to pass the SAVE Act; the SAVE Act, which would destroy a lot of what we know about democracy; the SAVE Act, which would disenfranchise 20 million American citizens in all likelihood from voting in the next election; the SAVE Act,