

These are the people who not only stop people attempting to enter our country illegally but defend our Nation against a number of threats. In fiscal year 2025, Border Patrol agents apprehended 460 gang members trying to enter our country illegally. They apprehended 73 known or suspected terrorists—terrorists—illegally crossing our borders. They seized almost 80,000 pounds of illegal drugs.

They are the ones capturing the human smugglers, the drug traffickers, and the criminals engaged in human trafficking, not to mention that they are the ones conducting rescue operations when illegal immigrants are drowning in the Rio Grande or dying of dehydration in the desert.

And Democrats want to defund—defund—this Agency. They want to leave our borders completely unprotected. I would say they want to go back to the days of the Biden border crisis, when you had literally tens and often hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants flooding across our southern border every month. But it seems Democrats may be looking for something even worse.

Democrats are also refusing to fund Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and that is the Agency that removes criminal illegal immigrants from our country like criminals who are in our country because of the open border policies of the Biden administration.

Do Democrats really want to go back to the days when criminal illegal immigrants were often allowed to live freely in our country? We owe it to the families of Laken Riley and too many others to keep our communities safe, and that is what ICE is doing.

The American people support that mission. Democrats apparently don't.

I expect we are going to hear Democrats this week talk about reforming ICE operations. Here is what I don't think they are going to talk about: The White House reformed how ICE operates on its own months ago. On top of that, the White House repeatedly offered Democrats a robust package of legislative reforms, but nothing was ever enough for Democrats. They kept moving the goalpost, and eventually they just walked away.

Democrats may have decided to abdicate their responsibility to fund crucial government Agencies, but Republicans will not do the same. As I said, the budget resolution before us this week will unlock funding for law enforcement and border security at DHS for the next 3 years.

For the past year, Republicans have operated in good faith to fund the Federal Government with—with—Democrats. We made considerable progress and, as I said, passed 11 out of the 12 appropriations bills. And we were on track to pass a bipartisan Department of Homeland Security funding bill until Democrats walked away.

I suspect our Democrat colleagues will cry "partisanship"—we heard it

from the Democrat leader this morning—throughout this process. The Democrat leader had the gall last week and this to accuse Republicans of embarking on a "partisan circus" to fund law enforcement and border security. And it would be funny if those words were not so hypocritical.

Democrats—and Democrats alone—alone—have made this process partisan. Republicans bent over backward to work with them, but it was never enough. And we have run out of time to play the Democrats' games. We have a job to do, and Republicans are going to get it done.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, 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. 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.

RECONCILIATION

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, the U.S. Border Patrol and our Immigration and Customs Enforcement have a complex and essential role in the lives of all Americans. They have a big mission. They arrest drug traffickers, they arrest terror suspects, they arrest human traffickers, they save exploited children, and they secure our border. This work is absolutely critical to our Nation's security.

Not long ago, Democrats actually agreed with all of those things I said. In 2019, Senator SCHUMER, the minority leader—this is what he said to NBC News.

He said:

ICE does some functions that are very much needed.

They don't seem to think that anymore. Now Senator SCHUMER is leading the charge to abolish ICE, and he wants to defund the Border Patrol. That is because today Democrats care more about protecting illegal immigrant criminals than protecting law-abiding American citizens.

For more than 2 months, Republicans have negotiated in good faith to fully fund critical law enforcement Agencies in this country. We are done negotiating. We are moving forward alone. Republicans are going to fund ICE and Border Patrol without a single Democrat vote. We are not going to concede a single one of their demands, and these are demands made by radical Senate Democrats.

The Senate is going to consider a budget resolution this week. The resolution is targeted, and it is focused. Here is what it does:

First, it fully funds and fully supports the men and women of ICE and Border Patrol.

Second, it funds them for the next 3 years.

Third, it gives them more resources than ever before. ICE receives more money to protect our communities. Border Patrol receives more money to secure our borders. Increased funding means more law enforcement. It means more illegal immigrants will be deported as criminals. It means more investigations into drug cartels and human traffickers. It means that our communities will be safer.

It is just common sense. Consider the commonsense policy changes that Republicans offered and Democrats refused to accept: \$20 million to buy body cameras for agents to wear; Democrats voted no. More oversight of ICE spending; Democrats voted no. More money for deescalation training; Democrats voted no.

The Department of Homeland Security now has a new leader. It is Markwayne Mullin—we know him—from the great State of Oklahoma. At his confirmation hearing, now-Secretary Mullin committed to working with Democrats on commonsense reforms to immigration enforcement. Almost every Democrat still voted against his confirmation. Why? Not because they don't like him personally but because Democrats don't want to reform ICE. They want to abolish ICE. That is the difference. They want to abolish our Border Patrol. They want to defund law enforcement in America.

Here is what Democrats are still demanding: Senate Democrats want to ban ICE agents from wearing masks. Masks help protect agents and their families from being doxed by gangs of radical thugs. We know that open border groups are publishing the names and home addresses of agents online. These dangerous actions are one more reason that attacks on ICE agents have been rising dramatically.

These open border Democrats have a long-term goal. Their goal is to make life so miserable and so frightening for the families of ICE and Border Patrol agents that these highly trained professionals quit their jobs. The Democrats' long-term goal is to undermine the hiring of new agents and shut them down completely.

So, today, Republicans are moving forward to fund law enforcement.

To my Democratic colleagues, you have lost your war on law enforcement. You have failed to turn America into one big sanctuary country, as you have turned so many cities into sanctuary cities all across the country. You have failed to take America backward to the days of open borders by the Democrats, when more than 10 million illegal immigrants flooded into our country on the Democrats' watch. Under Republican leadership, zero illegal immigrants have been released into our country now in almost a year.

Republicans want ICE and Border Patrol to be able to do their job. Republicans want law enforcement to be funded. We want American citizens and American communities to be safe. Americans deserve safety and security.

This week, Republicans are delivering it.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The minority whip.

IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, remember the rallies? President Trump would stand up at the rallies and say: We are going to get rid of the “worst of the worst” criminals who managed to sneak into the United States in violation of our immigration laws—the rapists, the murderers, the terrorists, the criminally insane, those who are exploiting our children. That was his goal, stated over and over again.

But let’s look at the record. Earlier this month, in the midst of President Donald Trump’s mass deportation campaign, members of my staff traveled to Southwest Texas to conduct oversight of ICE’s Dilley family detention facility. ICE allowed my staff 2 hours—just 2 hours—for the entire visit and notified them of the limitation when they were en route to the facility.

What is ICE and this administration trying to conceal?

My staff’s visit uncovered serious issues. Let me tell you some of their findings.

If the Dilley detention facility sounds familiar, that is because that is where ICE held 5-year-old Liam Ramos, the boy in the blue bunny hat and the Spiderman backpack, whose image symbolizes this administration’s inhumane detention agenda as part of their gross deportation effort.

After public outcry and a Federal court order, 5-year-old Liam was released after 10 days, but that is not the outcome for many children being held at the Dilley ICE facility.

Hayam El Gamal and her five children—ranging in age from 5 to 18—have been held for nearly a year. That is believed to be the longest anyone has been detained during Trump’s second term.

Hayam’s husband faces serious State charges for a violent attack in Boulder, CO, last June. There is no question that he should face the full weight of the law. But the FBI and an immigration judge found Hayam and her children engaged in no wrongdoing and had no prior knowledge of their father’s horrific actions. Should they be punished for his crime too?

Just yesterday, a magistrate judge recommended the family’s habeas petition be granted. The judge found the family had been detained in violation

of their due process rights and recommended they be released after being held for nearly 1 year.

The judge ruled:

[T]he government has engaged in procedural maneuvers aimed at thwarting the possibility of [El Gamal family’s] discretionary release from the moment they were taken into custody.

If, despite the judge’s recommendations, the Department of Homeland Security still objects to the release of an innocent woman and her five children, we know exactly why that is the case. It is not because they present any danger to the community or a flight risk. It is because they are immigrants—Arab Muslim immigrants at that.

Earlier this year, through their attorney, the El Gamal family submitted to the Senate Judiciary Committee letters and drawings describing their life inside the Dilley detention facility in Texas.

In one letter, their 9-year-old child wrote:

We have been here for 9 months. I really miss playing with my toys and my watch. Please get us out of here.

In another, the 16-year-old wrote:

I have seen, with my own eyes, food that has mold in it. I even saw food with actual worms.

These are children in a facility run under Federal contract, paid for by you and me, the American taxpayers.

The mother has experienced despair and a recent medical emergency. Only 1 hour after my staff left the facilities, this mother was rushed to the emergency room in pain. The doctor recommended she receive an ultrasound. ICE denied it. Hayam has a history of cancer. She was denied a recommended diagnostic procedure. ICE is allowing this medical neglect, even when so many people are dying in immigration detention.

The El Gamal family’s case is an extreme one, but, unfortunately, their experiences in detention are not uncommon, as there are widespread reports of inhumane conditions at ICE facilities across the country.

Earlier this month, the peer-reviewed Journal of the American Medical Association published a 22-year study of deaths in ICE custody. Its finding: The death rate in fiscal year 2026 is the highest in the entire study period—higher than any year on record, higher even than during the COVID outbreak.

And this year alone, 17 people have already died in immigration detention. They are people who died in American custody, many of them from treatable conditions, such as cardiovascular disease and infections.

This is happening inside a detention system that congressional Republicans injected with \$45 billion in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, and now the Republicans want to use the partisan budget reconciliation process to pour even more money into this system. It is a system where about 90 percent of detention beds are run by private corporations for profit—not care stand-

ards but profits—and they hit record highs last year.

In February, I sent a letter to Secretary Kristi Noem, sounding the alarm on the dramatic increase in deaths in ICE detention. While she was shown the door—and thank goodness for that—problems at these facilities and at ICE persist.

The El Gamal family has been at Dilley for nearly a year. Hayam is a mother. Her youngest children are 5-year-old twins. They have done nothing wrong. It is time for the Federal Government to heed the recommendations of the magistrate judge and release them.

As the partial government shutdown of DHS continues, House Republicans refuse to even consider the bipartisan Senate-passed bill to fund all of DHS except ICE and CBP. Democrats will not fund cruelty without accountability. We will continue to demand the reforms ICE and CBP require, including the end of roving patrols, requiring a judicial warrant to enter someone’s home and conduct searches, a uniform code of conduct to restore trust—one similar to those followed by police departments in every corner of this country—and clear identification and the removal of masks to improve accountability.

As they prepare to turn to the partisan budget reconciliation process to fund ICE, Republicans in Congress have a choice: Demand accountability for every dollar we give this Agency or keep signing checks to a slush fund while people are detained by ICE.

Remember what the President said? We are going after the “worst of the worst”—the terrorists, rapists, murderers, the criminally insane, those who are exploiting our children.

Does it sound like this family, which has been waiting in detention for 1 year with no charges, fits into that category? Of course not.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ARMSTRONG). The Senator from Montana.

RECESS

Mr. SHEEHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the scheduled recess begin immediately.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:01 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. BRITT).

MORNING BUSINESS—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

SAVE AMERICA ACT

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, protecting the integrity of elections is a constitutional principle. That is why I am a proud cosponsor of the SAVE America Act requiring a photo ID when someone goes to vote.