

hard-working Americans will see bigger paychecks this year, and that is breathing room that families can count on this year and in the years to come because Republicans' tax reform is permanent.

As the W2s go out this month and Americans prepare to file their taxes, they can also expect to see benefits from the Working Families Tax Cuts in their tax returns. They will be able to take a larger standard deduction, and seniors will be able to take a new bonus deduction on top of that. The child tax credit is now worth \$2,200 per child, and it is linked to inflation so it will never lose its value. Workers who earn tips and overtime won't have to pay Federal taxes on that income either. All of that adds up to bigger refunds come April.

The Working Families Tax Cuts provide much needed relief after a yearslong inflation crisis that is still—still—straining families' budgets; so passing this bill—and delivering an average \$3,700 tax cut to hard-working Americans—was a priority for Republicans. But that is not the only thing this bill did—far from it. We also made generational investments in healthcare, national security, and public safety.

Since 2005, more than 100 hospitals in rural parts of this country have closed their doors. It is important that we support and strengthen critical healthcare access points for Americans who live in rural areas. So, in our legislation, Republicans created the \$50 billion Rural Health Transformation Fund to bolster rural healthcare; to expand access; to modernize care; and to strengthen the rural healthcare workforce.

Our landmark legislation also addresses pressing security needs. In the months since this bill passed, not a single—single—illegal immigrant has been released into the United States. That is thanks, in part, to the generational investment we made to sustain the Trump administration's border security policies.

Our bill invests in hiring more border agents, increasing detention capacity, and providing the technology and resources needed to stop the flow of illegal immigrants and illegal drugs across our borders.

Then there is national security. After 4 years of the Biden administration and Democrats putting defense spending on the back burner, Republicans made a historic investment to help rebuild our military so we can deter and defeat today's threats and tomorrow's.

Our legislation boosts shipbuilding and defense production capacity. It grows our Air Force fleet, protects the homeland with the Golden Dome missile defense system and modernization of our nuclear deterrent and more. We are continuing our efforts with the kind of sustained investment that is needed to keep America's military strong for the long term.

Our landmark legislation also makes a serious investment in public safety

here at home. That starts by supporting the police. There is funding for State and local law enforcement agencies in this bill, including boots-on-the-ground efforts to combat violent crime. Our legislation supports efforts to combat drug trafficking and target precursor chemicals used in the production of fentanyl, and it provides resources for State and local law enforcement to assist Federal officers in enforcing immigration laws.

I am also proud of the investment this bill makes in modernizing America's air traffic control system. The systems being used in air traffic control towers today are in desperate need of an update, and our legislation provides the support needed to deploy state-of-the-art technology across America. I am glad that the modernization efforts this bill supports are now underway.

There is a lot more I can talk about when it comes to our once-in-a-generation legislation: its support for small businesses, farmers, and ranchers; its provisions addressing waste, fraud, and abuse in Federal programs to save taxpayer money; or its support for the next generation through more educational choice and investment accounts for a secure future.

But I will leave it here. Republicans delivered a big win for the American people last year with our bill. And in 2026, the American people are going to feel its impact. I look forward to that story unfolding, literally, in every corner of America.

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. 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.

VENEZUELA

MR. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday, I joined with House and Senate leaders for a briefing with Secretaries Rubio and Hegseth, Attorney General Bondi, and other officials about what comes next in Venezuela and beyond.

For 2 long hours, we heard yesterday from the administration. And what we heard was little more than wishful thinking and no real answers. We got no clear answer to any of the four questions I have been asking the administration for days:

First, how many troops are we going to commit to Venezuela? Are there any limits? No answer.

Second, for how long would we be committed to running Venezuela? No answer.

Third, how much is this all going to cost? They said they had no cost estimate.

And fourth, what country is next? Is Colombia on the table? Are we going to

invade a NATO ally like Greenland? Where does this belligerence stop? I was very troubled—very troubled—by their answer on this as well.

Sitting in yesterday's briefing, it is clear the administration pulled the trigger on step 1 of their plan in Venezuela without figuring out how they are going to follow through on steps 2 to 10.

How do you enter a country and remove its leader by force without knowing anything about what happens after?

The current Vice President for Venezuela now says she may cooperate with the United States, but her grip on power is weak. She has many rivals in government, and her reputation for steadfastness and honesty leaves much to be desired. And all of the remaining regime leaders in Venezuela are so corrupt that it is naive for the administration to think we can rely on any of them to maintain stability.

Now, this is how we get into endless wars. The administration has a 1-day plan on how to get rid of Maduro but no idea of what happens after. It is what happened to us in Iraq. Yes, this is how we get into endless wars: a 1-day plan to get rid of Maduro but no idea what happens after. Look at history. Look at Iraq. Look at so many other places. This is what leads to endless wars.

And last night, Donald Trump added to the fires of confusion once again.

He was asked who exactly is in charge in Venezuela, and he simply said, "Me." Donald Trump. A lot of macho going on there.

How the hell does Donald Trump expect to exert direct control over Venezuela? We have so many problems here at home—people who are struggling to make ends meet when the economy is slowing down and costs are going up. Yesterday, Donald Trump even suggested we might spend up to 18 months in Venezuela rebuilding its oil infrastructure. And that is probably a low estimate according to most experts. Most experts think it could take easily longer than that, the Venezuela oil fields are such a mess. And are you kidding me? How are we going to spend 18 months and potentially tens of billions of dollars in taxpayer money in Venezuela at a time when people here at home don't even have basic healthcare?

There are also reports that Stephen Miller might be heavily involved in the governance of Venezuela. I asked about this at our briefing, and the answers were very troubling. This is the same Stephen Miller who yesterday went to CNN and asserted that Greenland rightfully belongs to the United States and nobody will fight the U.S. military over Greenland.

What is going on here? What kind of venture is this?

The language Miller used comes right out of the 1930s, directed by a senior official of the United States against a NATO ally. God help us and the future of world order.

Donald Trump has opened a Pandora's box. We have to take seriously that, after Venezuela, he may attack other nations without warning—maybe Colombia, maybe even a NATO ally like Greenland run by Denmark. All the while, how does any of this belligerence in Venezuela or Greenland put America first?

How does any of this help people here at home pay the bills, pay for their healthcare, put a roof over their heads, pay for their groceries or their energy bill? The American people voted for Donald Trump to put America first. That is what he campaigned on. A lot of his most hard-right supporters voted for him because he was "America First."

Well, "America First" means focusing on healthcare costs and all kinds of rising costs here at home, instead of using taxpayer dollars to build up the oil fields in Venezuela. It means helping American farmers instead of bailing out Argentinian farmers. It means bringing manufacturing back to our shores instead of giving critical chips away to China.

It means helping people pay their rent, pay their mortgage, pay their energy bill, instead of launching an attack on foreign countries and putting our troops in danger.

JEFFREY EPSTEIN

Mr. President, on Epstein, it has been 18 days—18 days—since the administration was required by law to release the full Epstein files to the American public, and it has been 15 days since the administration has released any documentation on Jeffrey Epstein.

Now, the Department of Justice says it has released less than 1 percent of the files—less than 1 percent in 18 days at 2½ weeks. Are you kidding me? They say they were preparing well in advance, and they have only gotten 1 percent done?

It is deliberate stonewalling of the American people, what Congress and the American people are demanding. It is an outlandishly naked attempt to hide the truth and defy the law. People across America are wondering, scratching their heads, and asking, What the hell is Donald Trump hiding? His Justice Department is so adamant about slow-walking everything.

Let's be very clear about what the Justice Department is doing and what I warned would happen. They are using every trick in the book to ignore the will of Congress and to ignore Federal law. Every single Member of Congress, with one exception, spoke in unanimity: The administration must release the truth about Jeffrey Epstein—no dodging, no obfuscation, no hiding. It has been 18 days, and what does the administration have to show for it? Less than 1 percent of the truth. It is unacceptable.

The American people won't stand for it. And the Senate is going to take every action available to ensure that every shred of evidence that must see the light of day comes out. Jeffrey

Epstein's victims deserve no less. The American people deserve no less.

Donald Trump, why are you hiding the truth about Jeffrey Epstein from the American people?

ANNIVERSARY OF JANUARY 6

Mr. President, on January 6, later this afternoon, I will join with Leader JEFFRIES and Members of both the House and Senate to mark the 5-year anniversary of the deadly insurrection of January 6.

It is a bitter, frustrating, and somber day for all of us who were in the building that fateful morning and afternoon. I remember standing right here on this very spot, alongside other Senators, getting ready to certify the 2020 election. All of a sudden—all of a sudden—my security detail pulled my collar like this, gripped me by the arm, and told me we had to get out because a mob of rioters had broken into the Capitol.

At that moment, I saw the Vice President was instantly rushed out of the Chamber as well. He was sitting up in that chair. We went downstairs. We turned toward one hallway and for a moment came within several yards of angry rioters before my detail pulled us away to safety.

It was a dark, scary, violent day. They pulled me away toward safety—not from. And when the MAGA rioters desecrated this Chamber, they ransacked offices, waved Confederate flags through these hallways, and used violence to try and steal an election. All of that happened, and it was propagated by Donald Trump.

But make no mistake, January 6 was also a day when the power of democracy ultimately prevailed. It was a day where U.S. Capitol Police faced their moment of maximum danger and responded with maximum valor.

Let us take a moment to remember all our brave public servicemembers, Capitol Police, DC Police, and all other officers who died in connection with the attack. I just want to thank our officers who were here on that day, who do their jobs every day without fanfare.

Of course, the 5-year anniversary of January 6 comes at a bitter and complicated moment. The very same man who sought to steal an election and delegitimize our democracy has now returned to office by the very same means he tried to destroy.

And what was Donald Trump's first official action while in office? Donald Trump—a man who claims to stand up for the police, a man who says he cares about law and order—pardoned every single convicted insurrectionist on his very first day as President.

These pardons are among the most sickening things Donald Trump has done in office. His betrayal of law enforcement—of democracy—makes a mockery of the rule of law. These pardons were an explicit endorsement of using violence to get your way. That is who Donald Trump is at his core: a man who is happy to see violence work in his favor to get what he wants.

And in this Chamber, especially in the House of Representatives, too many Republicans remain silent in the face of obvious evil. That is true in both Chambers, unfortunately. Too many have tried to rewrite the history of January 6. Too many are trying to turn these criminals into martyrs and into heroes. That is perverse, it is a lie, and it is wicked. History will curse those who absolve or celebrate the violence that happened on January 6.

We must never relent on speaking the truth of January 6 in the face of the hurricane of lies that comes from Donald Trump. That is a moral obligation, our obligation to this grand democracy, as Members of this institution and as citizens of this great democracy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

RURAL HEALTHCARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, for 24 years, I practiced medicine as an orthopedic surgeon in Wyoming. And over that time, I know what it is like to practice in a frontier State, a State where huge distances separate us.

Medical care is needed everywhere. I know how important it is to provide available, affordable, quality care for the citizens in my State and in the Presiding Officer's State.

(Mr. SHEEHY assumed the Chair.)

And as in the Presiding Officer's State today where people are celebrating an overtime victory by the Montana football team last evening—a 1-point difference—and people traveled vast distances to get to the game, they also travel vast distances to get to care.

So in my State of Wyoming and in the Presiding Officer's State of Montana where the distances are great, we know how important it is to provide quality care for all of our citizens.

I want everyone in my State to be able to get the care that they need from a doctor they choose, at a price they can afford. And that is why we worked so hard—myself and the Presiding Officer, working together—during the Working Families Tax Cut bill that we passed last year to include a specific, large component for rural healthcare, for the patients in our small communities to get the care that they need and, many times, closer to home.

And we funded this program in a way that it really provides the necessary care in our communities. And I know, in my home State of Wyoming, \$205 million came to the State of Wyoming, and it is headed specifically to our critical access hospitals. It is heading for emergency medical services, emergency medical technicians.

It is to address the needs we have all across our State. And it is also going for education—to provide the education needed, to provide to make sure that, in the future, there are people there to continue to be able to deliver the care—because we need the money to