

let's say you pay \$200 more for your refrigerator than you would normally, you get a smart one, and you take it home. I still didn't hear any explanation of how it spies on you. How does it spy on you unless you hook it up to the internet? Short of that, your refrigerator is not spying on you. "Big Refrigerator" is not spying on you. They are offering you a service if you choose to use it, and you have to choose to use it. You could also choose not to buy it.

Regulation like this are the regulations of the left and of Big Brother, who thinks that Americans are incompetent and can't make their decisions. But regulations like this add up, and they add to the cost of refrigerators, they add to the cost of appliances.

Just go to California. In California, you will see a tag on everything that says "doesn't cause cancer anywhere else in the United States but may cause cancer in California" because they have over-labeled everything to death.

It really isn't the business of the Federal Government to be involved with this.

They need to be committed to the rules of fraud. They shouldn't be able to sell something to you that is hooking itself up to the internet. But if you have to hook it up—if you have ever Bluetoothed something, you have to do something. The internet just doesn't come and grab your picture on the refrigerator or listen to your microphone. It has to be hooked up to the internet. You have to do this.

So there ought to be some thought that goes into this.

I am disappointed that you choose to hurt the Boys & Girls Club, but what is the alternative? I have to just say: I won't use my brain. I won't think about the consequences of this bill. I won't think about how it goes against our philosophy of adding more Federal regulations. I won't think about the cost to corporations. I won't think about the nonsensical assertion that it is going to spy on you without you knowing it because it is going to hook itself up to the internet. I am supposed to ignore all that and take that in order to get a deed for a Boys & Girls Club. I find this a false equivalency and insincere.

Every objection I have to every one of your other bills is a debatable item based on philosophy. If you have a philosophical difference with this, come to the floor and tell us why you hate the Boys & Girls Club of Paducah, but don't come to us and say: Well, you have to accept a regulation on refrigerators in order to help the Boys & Girls Club—which doesn't cost anything. It is a bizarre, arcane thing. The Federal Government, I think, owned the land, gave it to the city, and said the city couldn't transfer it 50 years ago. The Boys & Girls Club has been on this land for 50 years, but they don't have the title, so we are trying to give them the title through legislation.

This is exactly the kind of stuff that, because it doesn't affect nationwide policy, shouldn't have to go to committee, shouldn't have to come to the floor, shouldn't have to tie up a lot of time. These are the things we can dispense with. But a nationwide regulation on cars shouldn't be adopted without debate and without the normal procedure of the Senate. This is a special procedure. We only do things unanimously that typically we agree on.

If we want to have sense of the Senate to recognize John Lewis or a sense of the Senate to recognize some individual, those are the kinds of things we do unanimously, but we don't typically do policy or regulations for the whole country unanimously.

So I hope there is a better way out where we can think about treating and figuring out what levels of legislation rise to the ability of having a serious debate over and what things are parochial and really could be passed unanimously.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, the most recent assassination attempt makes approval of a secure White House addition more urgent. The National Planning Commission, of which I am a member, voted 8 to 1 to approve the White House addition. Lawfare, though, is currently delaying construction.

It is clear that the threats of violence against our President are not going away; they keep getting worse. So to prevent further delay, Congress should authorize the White House ballroom and get it on a path to completion. Let's get it built.

I am very glad that this latest assassination attempt was stopped, but it is concerning that the would-be assassin got so close and that these types of threats are growing more frequent.

The fact I even have to qualify my remarks to specifically say that I am talking about the latest assassination attempt rather than the one before it or the one before that should make us all think clearly on how seriously we need to be taking this.

We do need to improve security for the President, and one solution is already right in front of us. The most significant thing we can do—something that will make the biggest improvement in security—is have a secure event space in the White House ballroom project. Its designs are complete. The project has already broken ground. Funding has already been secured from private donors, not taxpayers. My proposal today doesn't involve any tax money.

Congress doesn't need to reinvent the wheel here. I have a straightforward bill, which I will move to pass in a moment, to give this project clear, legal authority to proceed. By passing my bill, we can help build the ballroom

with no more legal delays, no more bureaucratic delays, improved reporting and progress updates to Congress, and no added cost to taxpayers.

I support the building of the ballroom, and the Senate can do something right now to make it happen. Let's do the right thing without delay. Let's formalize and authorize the White House ballroom.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of my bill which is at the desk. I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MCCORMICK). Is there objection?

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, Donald Trump promised to lower costs on day one. Well, today is day 464 of Donald Trump's Presidency, and we are in a full-blown affordability crisis.

We are 2 months into Trump's illegal war with Iran, a war that, according to experts, is costing taxpayers over \$1 billion a day. American families are getting flattened by rising costs on just about everything, from groceries, to rent, to gas. Just today, gas prices hit a new high since Trump started his war. People are stretching themselves to the brink just to pay their bills. But what is the biggest issue of the day, according to Republicans in Congress? Fast-tracking Donald Trump's gold-encrusted ballroom.

Another recent Republican plan would send \$400 million to the White House—I guess to buy more gold leaf and onyx marble for the want-to-be King. But I want to be clear: It is common sense that we can, of course, protect the President without shoveling millions of dollars into Trump's ballroom in the middle of an affordability crisis.

This bill to rubberstamp Trump's latest vanity project is a giant slap in the face to American families, just plain and simple. Americans are selling their plasma to pay for groceries and gas. Think about that.

Americans right now today are selling their blood just to pay their bills. And what is the Republicans' solution? Dump more money into Donald Trump's golden-crusted vanity project, and let's do it on the fast track because it is that urgent.

Well, here are a few other ideas for things we could fast-track to actually help the American people: We could reverse Trump's and the Republicans' giant healthcare costs that kicked millions of Americans off their health insurance and jacked up insurance premiums for millions more; or we could deliver affordable childcare for every American family; or we could undo Republicans' cuts to food assistance for families; or we could put a stop to Trump's across-the-board tariffs; or we could end Donald Trump's war with Iran. And, look, the list goes on and on.

But nowhere on the list of ways to lower costs for American families is rubberstamping Donald Trump's lavish ballroom. Remember, Trump's ballroom has already become a tool for what looks like corruption in plain sight.

Since day one, giant corporations have lined up to dump millions of dollars into Trump's ballroom, and that includes Meta, Apple, Amazon, Google, Microsoft, Comcast, Coinbase, and Palantir.

And those are just the people and the entities that we know of. Others are being kept secret from the American people because Donald Trump has let them stay anonymous.

So what do they have to hide? And what are all these donors expecting in return? And by the way, if Congress bankrolls this ballroom for Trump's corporate donors like other Republicans are proposing, what happens to all those private donations?

So, by the way, I want to make that point again: If Congress bankrolls this ballroom for Trump's corporate donors like the other Republicans are proposing, what happens to all those private donations? If Trump is using his ballroom to facilitate a giant pay-to-play scheme, then the American people deserve to know.

Instead of dumping even more money into Trump's golden ballroom, we need to put an end to this corruption and focus on lowering costs for American families. That is what Democrats are laser-focused on. Republicans should join us and get it done.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Kentucky.

TRANSFERRING ADMINISTRATIVE JURISDICTION OVER CERTAIN PARCELS OF FEDERAL LAND IN HARPERS FERRY, WEST VIRGINIA

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 2280, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2280) to transfer administrative jurisdiction over certain parcels of Federal land in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. PAUL. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 2280) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 2280

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. TRANSFERS OF ADMINISTRATIVE JURISDICTION OVER CERTAIN PARCELS OF FEDERAL LAND IN HARPERS FERRY, WEST VIRGINIA.

(a) TRANSFERS.—

(1) TRANSFER TO THE COMMISSIONER OF U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Administrative jurisdiction over approximately 25 acres of Federal land in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, as generally depicted on the map entitled “Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Proposed Land Transfers”, numbered 385/176,677, and dated May 2021 (referred to in this section as the “Map”) is transferred from the Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”) to the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, to be administered as part of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Advanced Training Center in accordance with applicable law.

(B) EXCLUSION FROM BOUNDARY.—The Federal land transferred by subparagraph (A) is excluded from the boundary of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.

(2) TRANSFER TO THE SECRETARY.—Administrative jurisdiction over 3 parcels of Federal land totaling approximately 71.51 acres in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, as generally depicted on the Map, is transferred from the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to the Secretary, to be administered by the Secretary—

(A) as part of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park; and

(B) in accordance with applicable law.

(3) NO REIMBURSEMENT OR CONSIDERATION.—A transfer of administrative jurisdiction over Federal land under paragraph (1)(A) or (2) shall be without monetary reimbursement or additional consideration.

(b) LAND SURVEYS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection—

(A) shall obtain a survey to finalize the exact acreage and legal description of the parcel of Federal land described in subsection (a)(1)(A); and

(B) may, in consultation with the Secretary, modify any clerical and typographical errors in the Map.

(2) COST OF SURVEY.—The cost of the survey under paragraph (1)(A) shall be charged to an appropriation of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

(3) INFORMATION SHARING.—On completion of the survey under paragraph (1)(A), the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall provide to the Secretary a copy of the survey.

(4) REVERSION AND RESTORATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—If the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection determines that the Federal land transferred by subparagraph (A) of subsection (a)(1) is no longer required for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Advanced Training Center, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall transfer administrative jurisdiction over the Federal land described in that subparagraph to the Secretary in a manner and condition acceptable to the Secretary, to be included within the boundary of, and to be administered as part of, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.

(B) ACREAGE LIMITATION.—The acreage limitation under section 1(d) of the Act of June 30, 1944 (58 Stat. 645, chapter 328; 16 U.S.C. 450bb(d)) shall not apply to the inclusion within the boundary of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park of the Federal land under subparagraph (A).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

EXPANDING WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS FOR CONTRACTORS ACT OF 2025

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 289, S. 874.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 874) to ensure that whistleblowers, including contractors, are protected from retaliation when a Federal employee orders a reprisal, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in italic, as follows:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Expanding Whistleblower Protections for Contractors Act of 2025”.

SEC. 2. DEFENSE CONTRACTOR EMPLOYEES: PROTECTION FROM REPRISAL FOR DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN INFORMATION.

Section 4701 of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A)—

(I) by striking “An employee” and all that follows through “services contractor” and inserting “A protected individual”; and

(II) by striking “disclosing” and all that follows through “evidence of”; and

(ii) by striking subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) and inserting the following subparagraphs:

“(A) Refusing to obey an order that would require the protected individual to violate a law, rule, or regulation related to any contract, subcontract, grant, or subgrant.

“(B) Disclosing to a person or body described in paragraph (2) information that the protected individual reasonably believes is evidence of the following:

“(i) Gross mismanagement of any Department of Defense contract or grant, any gross waste of Department funds, any abuse of authority relating to any Department contract, subcontract, grant, or subgrant, or any violation of law, rule, or regulation related to any Department contract or subcontract (including the competition for or negotiation of a contract or subcontract) or grant or subgrant.

“(ii) Gross mismanagement of any National Aeronautics and Space Administration contract or grant, any gross waste of Administration funds, any abuse of authority relating to an Administration contract, subcontract, grant, or subgrant, or any violation of law, rule, or regulation related to any Administration contract or subcontract (including the competition for or negotiation of a contract or subcontract) or grant or subgrant.

“(iii) A substantial and specific danger to public health or safety.”; and

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking “an employee” and inserting “a protected individual”; and

(ii) by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following subparagraph:

“(B) it shall not be within the authority of an executive branch official to request that a contractor, subcontractor, grantee, or subgrantee engage in a reprisal prohibited by paragraph (1).”;

(2) in subsection (c)—