

mean reducing the budget. I mean complete and total defunding. My Democrat colleagues refused to provide a single dollar for the men and women who protect our borders. They refused to provide a single dollar for the men and women who take dangerous criminal illegal aliens off of our street.

And I want you to think about that for just a minute.

My Democrat colleagues, apparently, believe there should be no physical presence at our borders and no law enforcement officers to deport dangerous criminals who have entered our country illegally.

We had 4 years of chaos at the southern border under President Biden, but at least we had the Border Patrol, overstretched as it was. Now Democrats, apparently, believe in removing all law enforcement officers from our Nation's borders.

I shouldn't need to state the obvious here: that we need border security and immigration enforcement officers to protect our Nation, just as we need police officers and FBI agents and Secret Service agents and all of the law enforcement officers who serve our communities.

Democrats might like to pretend otherwise, but there are dangerous individuals who would like to make their way illegally across our border—drug traffickers, human traffickers, other criminals, terrorists. And the men and women of the Border Patrol and Immigration and Customs Enforcement are the men and women who stand between us and these dangerous individuals, who turn them back at our borders and take them out of our communities, if they do manage to make their way into our country.

These are the men and women my Democrat colleagues want to defund—not reform. Nope, my Democrat colleagues repeatedly rejected reforms. They want to defund and defund completely—zero—zero agents at our border, zero agents to deport criminals here in the United States illegally. That is what my Democrat colleagues opted for.

It is Police Week this week, a week to honor our Nation's law enforcement officers and remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting our communities. Perhaps—perhaps—it will remind my Democrat colleagues of just how much we rely on law enforcement and just how much we need all—of our Nation's law enforcement officers.

WITHHOLDING THE PAY OF SENATORS IF A GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN OCCURS—Motion to Proceed

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 296, S. Res. 526.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 296, S. Res. 526, a resolution withholding the pay of Senators if a Government shutdown occurs.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the standing rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 296, S. Res. 526, a resolution withholding the pay of Senators if a Government shutdown occurs.

John Thune, John Kennedy, Pete Ricketts, Marsha Blackburn, Thom Tillis, Bill Hagerty, Rick Scott of Florida, John Cornyn, Tim Sheehy, John Barrasso, Joni Ernst, David McCormick, Steve Daines, Ashley B. Moody, Jon Husted, Roger Marshall, John Hoeven.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

BUDGET RECONCILIATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, if you want to understand Republicans' priorities right now, just look at the \$72 billion reconciliation bill they revealed last week. The Republican bill would pump tens of billions of dollars into ICE and Border Patrol without any guardrails to prevent these rogue Agencies from continuing to unleash violence on American streets.

But that is not all. To add insult to injury, the Republican bill charges American taxpayers \$1 billion to build Trump's gilded ballroom, while including zero dollars to help Americans with rising costs.

Their billion-dollar bill has zero dollars to help Americans deal with groceries, and their prices are going up. Gas prices are going up. Zero dollars to bring down Americans' healthcare, housing, and electricity bills.

At a time when Americans are struggling to put food on the table, Republicans say, "Let them eat cake," and demand American taxpayers build Trump a palace, while they are at it.

Keep in mind, Donald Trump said, just a few months ago, that "not one penny is being used from the Federal Government" for the ballroom—"not one penny," said Trump.

Well, give me a break. He has put a billion dollars in the budget for it. This staggering waste of taxpayer dollars has nothing—nothing—to do with security and everything to do with Trump's ego.

How long before Trump asks for his name to be emblazoned in gold on the side of the ballroom?

The American people are calling out for help, but these ballroom Repub-

licans have a constituency of one: Donald Trump's ego. That is a disgrace.

Democrats will use every tool in our arsenal to fight this bill. We will bring challenges. We will bring challenges under the Byrd rule. We will offer floor amendments. We will force Republicans to take vote after vote, showing that instead of helping working families, Republicans are forcing Americans to pay for Trump's billionaire ballroom.

Americans don't want this ballroom blitz. They want Congress to bring down costs.

HANTAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on the hantavirus, earlier today, 17 Americans—including 3 New Yorkers—who were on the cruise ship at the center of the hantavirus outbreak arrived in Nebraska, where they remained in quarantine. One has since tested positive for hantavirus.

They should know that all of us here in the Senate are thinking of them and praying for their health. No one should have to go through such an ordeal.

The hantavirus outbreak reminds us of what happened during COVID-19. We need to invest in public health and pandemic preparedness. Sadly, the Trump administration has not learned that lesson. The Trump administration gutted our public health defenses. The public may not know it, but Trump fired the workers whose job it is to protect us from outbreaks like hanta.

Donald Trump, Russell Vought, and now Elon Musk purged hundreds of Federal workers at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Department of Health and Human Services including—here is who Trump fired—cruise ship inspectors, port health station staff, disease detectives, and others. He cut all those, and now we have the hantavirus. They were there for a purpose.

Blindly swinging their DOGE chainsaw through the Federal Government, Trump, Vought, and Musk also hamstringed the CDC's Vessel Sanitation Program—a program that didn't cost the taxpayers any money. The cruise ships paid for it, but, of course, they didn't care.

The solution is a simple one. I put out a plan that calls on the Trump administration to rehire these fired outbreak-response experts, to restore funding to protect Americans from infectious diseases, and to rejoin the World Health Organization and other groups that track outbreaks and provide early warning.

Rehire, restore, rejoin—that is how we keep the American people healthy and safe.

Diseases like hantavirus and COVID don't care what your politics are. They threaten everyone. Donald Trump needs to stop politicizing public health and start investing in it.

IRAN

Mr. SCHUMER. On Iran, Donald Trump and members of his administration have referred to the fighting in Iran as a "skirmish," a "mini-war", a "little excursion," a "blip" and most recently "a love tap." Let's call the ongoing hostilities with Iran for what they are—a war.

Let me repeat: Donald Trump dragged America into a war—an illegal, costly war—without any goals, without any endgame.

It has been over a week since we hit the 60-day threshold under the War Powers Act, which means the hostilities must cease unless Trump gets authorization from Congress.

Donald Trump and Pete Hegseth tried to skirt the deadline when they told us the timer had stopped because the fighting was over.

Tell that to the American servicemembers who were dodging Iranian drones and missiles in the Strait of Hormuz last week.

Tell that to the American people who just saw headlines the other day about Trump saying we are getting ready for a protracted blockade.

The war is over? Bunk, poppycock, craziness to even say it, but Trump says anything that enters his head which he thinks will please him in the moment—even if he gets himself in trouble by the end of the day.

And to this war, there is still no end in sight. Just today, the most recent round of negotiations with Iran fell apart. Trump keeps digging himself into a deeper and deeper hole.

Meanwhile, Americans are now paying over \$4.50 for a gallon of gas. Families need real relief at the pump, and Senate Democrats will support real action to lower costs, but let's not pretend \$0.18 of gas tax relief per gallon makes up for the damage Trump created with this war. Mr. President, \$0.18 cents isn't \$1.50, which is how much the price of gas has gone up since this war started.

Trump wants credit for handing the American people a glass of water to put out the fire he started—the massive fire he started—when he launched this war.

Americans don't need just a few cents back—they need an end to the chaos that sent gas prices soaring in the first place.

The best way to lower costs is to end this illegal war. Trump could end this war tomorrow and prices would plummet by far more than \$0.18 a gallon.

And Republicans know that this blunder didn't magically end when the 60-day clock ran out. It is time to do something about it, so Democrats are forcing a seventh vote on our War Powers Resolution this week to withdraw United States troops from hostilities with Iran.

If Republicans care about preserving our War Powers, keeping our servicemembers safe, lowering Americans' costs, they need to support the War Powers Resolution and end this war.

If Republicans vote against our resolution, they will continue to bear the blame for Trump's war. Not a skirmish, not a blip, not an excursion—it is a war.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill 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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The minority whip.

HONORING OFFICER JOHN BARTHOLOMEW

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, last week was an opportunity for us to return home to our States and districts, and in my case, the city of Chicago, where it was a glorious week but for one sobering event—we lost one of Chicago's finest—patrolman and policeman John Bartholomew. In the line of duty, he was shot, and we had a tribute to him at his Greek Orthodox church on Hollywood Avenue in Chicago. Hundreds of his fellow law enforcement officers came in from jurisdictions all over the Midwest and across the United States.

John Bartholomew leaves three small children and his wife and family behind. I went to that memorial service, and I was just at a loss for words as I met his mother and told her how sorry I was for what had happened.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. DURBIN. This is Police Week. We are remembering John Bartholomew and hundreds of others who lost their lives in the line of duty to protect us and their families and neighborhoods. We take them for granted until these terrible tragedies occur, and then we come to realize how much is on the line every single day they put the badge on.

I listened earlier when the Republican leader Senator THUNE said this Police Week should be a reminder to Democrats to take police seriously. We do. I trust that both political parties do.

When I was chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I looked forward to this week to pass bipartisan—bipartisan—legislation to help our policemen. Under Chairman GRASSLEY in my service as a ranking member, I will join that bipartisan effort again. But I do have to tell you I am disappointed that during Police Week we would consider on the floor of the U.S. Senate nominations for U.S. attorneys who have testified before our committee and said things which I believe do not reflect respect for the law as it should be—particularly when it comes to the January 6 insurrection in the Capitol.

I remember that day. It was one of the most noteworthy days of my serv-

ice in the Senate. When Vice President Pence was presiding, we were counting the electoral ballots for the 2020 Presidential election. At about 2:10 p.m. in the afternoon, someone came in and pulled Vice President Pence out of that chair out that door. People couldn't understand why. There was a demonstration outside—a political demonstration—but we went about our business, and yet something had happened.

At that point someone from the Capitol Police came and stood before us and said: You can continue what you are doing, but stay in this room. We are going to make this a safe room in the U.S. Capitol—a safe room.

It wasn't 10 minutes later until the same Capitol policeman came before us and said: Change of plans. We are evacuating the Senate Chamber, and we all filed out the door to another adjoining building where we were protected.

These Capitol policemen and -women risked their lives for us on that day. I think it was nothing less than an act of heroism and courage for them to defy this Trump crowd that was sent to disrupt the proceedings.

Unfortunately, the mob took over the Senate Chamber. C-SPAN broadcast as they took pictures and photos for one another, went rifling through our desks, and tried to take over the Capitol—we saw that later on. What an embarrassing chapter in the history of the United States.

What is even more embarrassing is the fact that there have been people who have come before us seeking Federal positions since who don't take that seriously—what happened on January 6. Let me give you an example—and this individual is going to come up for a vote this week in the Senate—Police Week.

His name is Phillip Williams. He is from Alabama. Phillip Williams is seeking the U.S. attorney spot in Alabama. He argued that January 6 rioters were "Hunted down by Federal law enforcement," whom he accused of prosecutorial abuse many, many times over.

Williams equated these prosecutions to the Salem witch trials on a national scale. He minimized the attack on the Capitol stating: It certainly was not an insurrection because there was no attempt to overthrow the government.

He criticized the 87-month prison sentence imposed on a rioter named Guy Reffitt because he was nonviolent according to Williams and did not step into the Capitol.

Let me tell you the rest of the story about Reffitt that Mr. Williams, who seeks to represent the Department of Justice in the State of Alabama had to say.

Reffitt traveled to the Capitol on January 6 wearing body armor, carrying handguns, flex cuffs, and radios for communication. Prior to his arrest, Reffitt threatened his own minor children telling them: If you turn me in, you are traitors, and traitors get shot.