

motion with respect to S. 4344 be withdrawn.

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

The cloture motion was withdrawn.

NOMINATION OF KEVIN WARSH

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, later today, the Senate will finish considering the nomination of Kevin Warsh to be the 17th Chairman of the Federal Reserve.

Leading the Federal Reserve System is an enormous task. The decisions the Fed makes affect Wall Street and Main Street and kitchen tables all across the country. So it is critical that we have people who understand not only the macro—the global economy and the markets—but who appreciate the microeconomy, and that is the hard-working Americans, their jobs, and their livelihoods.

Kevin Warsh is just such a person.

He credits his knowledge of the real economy to growing up in Upstate New York where his dad ran a children's clothing store and manufacturing company. From Shaker High School, he went on to Stanford University and then Harvard Law School.

He then started a career on Wall Street, but he shifted to public service and joined the Bush administration's economic policy team in 2002. Four years later, President Bush nominated him to the Federal Reserve Board of Governors. At age 35, Kevin Warsh was unanimously—unanimously—confirmed here in the Senate and became the youngest Governor in the history of the Federal Reserve. Being the youngest person to take a seat in the Federal Reserve's boardroom is impressive enough, but Kevin Warsh didn't just take his seat—he was a key player during the time he was on the Board.

Kevin Warsh seems to have just the profile of a Federal Reserve Chairman; yet Democrats oppose his nomination. That is right. For the first time in its history, the Banking Committee reported out a nominee for Fed Chairman on a party line vote because every single Democrat opposed Mr. Warsh's nomination—and, actually, only one Democrat was even present for the vote. The other 10 Democrats on the Banking Committee didn't even bother to show up for it.

And, yesterday on the floor, all but one Democrat opposed the first of Mr. Warsh's two nominations: his nomination to be on the Board of Governors. He has already had that job, and a number of Democrats actually supported his nomination the last time; but those same Democrats voted yesterday against appointing him to the Board, and I suspect they will do the same when it comes time to vote on his other nomination to be the Chairman later today.

I wish I could say I am surprised, but this is just how bad Trump derangement syndrome has gotten on the other side of the aisle. Democrats won't say

so, but that is what it is. I expect we are going to hear Democrats attempt to justify their opposition by suggesting that a Chairman Warsh would somehow threaten the Fed's independence. I have to say that is a pretty serious claim and one that doesn't really have any basis in reality.

To begin with, Mr. Warsh's testimony before the Banking Committee should have put any concerns about his independence to rest, but if the depth of his commitment to Fed independence were at all unclear, I recommend my colleagues review a speech he gave in 2010, entitled "An Ode to Independence," in which he said:

Central bank independence is precious. . . Ensuring Fed independence—as the cornerstone of institutional credibility—is our charge to keep. It is central to what the Federal Reserve represents, and to how policy is conducted.

Or they could ask Randall Kroszner, who served with Warsh on the Fed Board, who said:

He's not an ideologue. Since I've known him, he was someone who tried to get things done.

Or maybe—maybe—they could just ask the Democrat leader, who introduced Kevin Warsh at his 2006 confirmation hearing. He said then of Warsh:

He knows unequivocally that the Fed must be independent, nonideological, and nonpartisan, and for this reason, I am proud to support his nomination.

That was the Democrat leader's comments, who is now leading the charge in opposing Warsh's nomination.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. THUNE. It doesn't seem to matter who President Trump nominates—the Democrats blindly oppose them. Democrats aren't interested in a person's qualifications. All they care about is opposing President Trump, and it has been that way since he took office last January. President Trump is the only President on record who has not had a single—single—civilian nominee approved by voice vote or by unanimous consent here in the U.S. Senate—the only President in history. Democrats have dragged out the process on every single one of his nominations.

The fact that two Democrats voted for our former colleague Markwayne Mullin to be Secretary of DHS, in this day and age here, appears to be an act of courage in today's Democrat Party—even though it was a vote that traditionally would have been widely bipartisan, if not unanimous, but not when Democrats are in the throes of Trump derangement syndrome.

It is shameful—it really is—but Republicans aren't letting it stop us.

In September, we took steps to restore Senate precedent on largely non-controversial Presidential nominees to ensure that no other President has to face the kind of petty—and I mean petty—partisanship that President

Trump is encountering. Very soon, we will vote on a fourth nominations package containing 49 Trump nominees who have had their hearings and mark-ups and are ready for confirmation, and we will keep moving forward.

I know that Democrats aren't happy that Donald Trump is the President, but that doesn't mean that nominations should be held up for purely political reasons.

As the Democrat leader said just a few years ago:

That doesn't mean we don't disagree. But it does mean when nominees are held up, opposed, or blocked—it's for a legitimate purpose, not for leverage in partisan games. . .

Well, unfortunately, Democrats have made it pretty clear that they are only—only—interested in partisan games since President Trump took office, but we have got a country to run, and Republicans are doing our job.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

DIRECTING THE REMOVAL OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES FROM HOSTILITIES WITHIN OR AGAINST THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN THAT HAVE NOT BEEN AUTHORIZED BY CONGRESS—Motion To Discharge

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote on a simple question: Will Congress embrace and exercise its constitutional responsibility to decide the question of war?

As Madison summarized:

The Constitution supposes, what the History of all Governments demonstrates, that the Executive is the branch of power most interested in war, and most prone to it. [The Constitution] has accordingly with studied care, vested the question of war in the [legislative branch].

With studied care.

The Founders said that no one person, not even the President, should be able to take this Nation to war.

They would observe that throughout history, Executives were inclined to commit troops and treasure to battles that made no sense in a government by and for the people in a democratic republic. So they stipulated there had to be a debate and a vote here in the legislative branch, an act of Congress, a declaration of war, or an authorization by legislation for war. Yet we have had neither. We have had neither.

In the 1973 War Powers Act, there is a third option. It is a condition in which the United States has been attacked or is under imminent threat of an attack.

Some colleagues have said that imminent threat was real, and therefore the President has 60 days to conduct a war before he is in violation of the Constitution.

Now, I disagree. Many of us and many experts believe nothing close to an imminent threat existed that justified that third option—the President having 60 days to respond without action by Congress. But many colleagues across the aisle have said: We will give the benefit of the doubt to the President's contention that there was an imminent threat, but we will reconsider our position when the 60 days has expired.

Well, my friends, the 60 days expired on May 1. We are way past that deadline.

Now the President has a new excuse. He says: Well, we are no longer conducting acts of war. We are in a ceasefire.

But what matters are the facts on the ground. Are we, in fact—have we, in fact, suspended all the acts of war? No, we have not. We are still engaged on a daily basis. The United States is still blockading Iranian ports. That is an act of war. We are still firing on Iranian warships. That is an act of war. We are still firing on Iranian vessels. That is an act of war. Iran is still blockading the Strait of Hormuz. That is an act of war. They are still firing on U.S. Naval vessels. That is an act of war. They are still attacking U.S.-flagged tankers. That is an act of war.

Both sides are engaged in a daily war as defined by international law. Is it at a somewhat lower level than the bombing campaign? Yes, I will grant you that. But it is a war by every definition. It has not ended. Our troops have not been withdrawn.

So here we are. Are we going to honor that oath to the Constitution? Each and every one of you took that oath. The Constitution is very clear: War can be conducted by the United States only with congressional authorization. We are now past that 60 days, so that excuse, that reason, is gone.

How seriously do you take the Constitution? If you don't take it seriously, maybe you shouldn't be serving in this Chamber.

It is clear how important that debate is in this Chamber when you look at the catastrophe that has unfolded with this war of choice. Catastrophe. Undermined the reformers. Massively strengthened the hard line—massively. Enriched Russia extensively. We lifted the sanctions on Russia. They are able to sell their oil at a world price—a world price that is double what it was before. We have lost men and women in uniform. We have hundreds that are injured. We are spending \$1 to \$2 billion a day.

Here at home, there are massive increased costs for the American family. People keep saying it is \$4 for gas now—\$1.50 higher than it was. Well, in Oregon, it is over \$5. Diesel is over \$6. The cost to a family in the course of a

year at this point is about \$2,700 additional cash out of hand, posttax dollars—gone.

When energy goes up, everything goes up. Our agricultural community is looking at the increased cost for fertilizer on top of the chaos of the tariffs affecting their inputs and their outputs. The inflation index is way up—3.8 percent last month, which is the highest year-over-year in 3 years, and more is coming.

We have undermined our alliances. We said to the Europeans: We don't need you.

President Trump said: We do not need you. Then he said: Please, please come and help.

They said: This war you have embarked on is unwise. You did not ask us for help. You did not consult with us beforehand. This is your choice. It is a big mistake. And, no, we are not going to partner in this massive catastrophe.

The enriched uranium is still buried deep underground. There is a path on the uranium question. The path will look something like this: Iran will agree not to enrich for 5 years or so. That would be face-saving for the United States of America. But then they will be free to enrich to a low level, protecting and defending their sovereignty, with international inspections. The enriched uranium—60 percent—they will be in agreement that will be moved to Russia or somewhere else.

Those three features—all part of the JCPOA, the agreement that was reached through diplomacy rather than war, the agreement that President Trump tore up in his first administration and created an expanded pathway to more enriched uranium in Iran because he tore up the agreement.

So costs at home, deaths of servicemembers, cost to the Treasury, undermining alliances, enriching Russia, failing to retrieve uranium—mistake after mistake after mistake. That is why the Founders said that a President by himself should not be able to go to war and wrote a Constitution that we each have pledged ourselves to. We are a democratic republic, not an authoritarian power—authoritarian power, the President or the Chief Executive, the dictator, whatever you want to call him.

But we have a responsibility, and today, we will test whether or not we honor that oath to the Constitution. Will we?

Option 1, have we done a declaration of war? We have not.

Option 2, have we passed an authorization for the use of military force? We have not.

Option 3, the President has 60 days when there is an imminent threat. So colleagues who have asserted that is a legitimate option, I disagree, but those who have asserted it, 60 days is up.

So will you or will you not honor your constitutional responsibility? That is the question that will be in the vote today.

Mr. President, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1546(a) and in accordance with section 601(b) of the International Security Assistance and Arms Export Control Act, I move to discharge the Committee on Foreign Relations from further consideration of S.J. Res. 163.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to discharge from the Committee on Foreign Relations, S.J. Res. 163, a joint resolution to direct the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities within or against the Islamic Republic of Iran that have not been authorized by Congress.

Mr. MERKLEY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays are ordered.

The majority whip.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor having just heard the Senator from Oregon is proposing a resolution, a War Powers Act today, heard him say this was about protecting the Constitution.

What they are doing—the Democrats are doing is not about protecting the Constitution; it is about obstructing the President of the United States. That is what is happening here today. That is exactly what Democrats are trying to do.

Going back to 1973, there have been a total of 17 War Powers Act votes in Congress. That is when the War Powers became law—1973. There have been 17 votes in 53 years, and 14 of the 17 votes were from Democrats aimed specifically at President Trump—53 years; 17; 14 of 17 by the Democrats actively going after President Trump.

Democrats—here they are saying they are protecting the Constitution. They introduce absolutely zero War Powers Resolutions under President Obama, and that was despite his strikes in Libya. Democrats introduced absolutely zero War Powers Resolutions under President Biden despite his actions in Syria. So we have Libya, Syria, and they say nothing.

This is the eighth vote on Iran this very Congress. We have also had War Powers Resolutions and votes regarding Cuba and Venezuela.

Well, let's talk about Iran. For nearly 50 years, Iran has waged war against our Nation. Iran is the world's largest, leading sponsor of terrorism. They regularly chant "Death to America." Iran has murdered thousands of Americans, tens of thousands of Iranians, and has tried to build nuclear weapons.

For decades, American Presidents have pledged that Iran would not get a nuclear weapon. Only President Trump had the courage and the strength to keep his word. Earlier this year, President Trump responded with military precision. Now we are deploying economic pressure as well and diplomatic pressure.

Under President Trump, America continues to restore peace through strength around the world. Today, Iran is losing \$500 million a day in revenue. They are going to lose that much today, yesterday, and they will again tomorrow.

That is the impact of what the President is doing to Iran right now. Iran's cash cow of oil exports has collapsed.

By contrast, America is pumping out record amounts of oil and natural gas.

Iran's economy is on life support. Its leadership has been eliminated.

Thirteen days ago, President Trump sent a letter to Congress about the conflict in Iran. The President made it very clear—clear that the major fighting is halted; clear that the American cease-fire has held for more than a month, and our Naval blockade is working.

This week, President Trump is meeting with China overseas. Democrats right here in the Senate want to pull the rug out from under him.

Let's be clear: President Trump has complied with the law. Enforcing a blockade is not the same as active hostilities under the War Powers Act. That is the established and binding precedent that governs the U.S. Senate.

Democrats don't seem to care. Senator TIM KAINE of Virginia said in January that their goal—the Democrat goal, he said, is to “flood the Senate calendar.” So they want to run out the clock on the Republican majority.

The Senate has now rejected each and every one of these Democrat delays. We need to reject this one as well. We should reject it because it is partisan. We should reject it because it is written by Democrats to weaken our Commander in Chief. And we should reject it because it encourages Iran to doubt the resolve of our Nation.

Iran is going to be watching this vote today. China will be watching this vote. America must continue to show strength and resolve.

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.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday, Donald Trump told a reporter: “I don't think about Americans' financial situations.” I don't think of anyone.

I repeat: Donald Trump actually said this. He said:

“I don't think about Americans' financial situations.”

Can you believe it? You wouldn't believe it coming from any other Presi-

dent. But, sadly, from this President, it smacks of reality. He says almost anything, and he doesn't care.

Clearly, Donald Trump doesn't care about Americans' financial situations, considering that, just this morning, we saw wholesale inflation skyrocket to 6 percent, the highest it has been since December of 2022—wholesale inflation, 6 percent. As those costs trickle down to Americans, Americans are going to be paying more and more and more, and they hate it.

Now, what is Donald Trump thinking about instead? Himself, especially his new ballroom, at a time when 77 percent—that is 77 percent—of Americans say that Donald Trump's policies have increased their cost of living.

Trump and the Senate GOP try to force through a bill that would spend \$1 billion taxpayer dollars on a gilded ballroom and not one penny on bringing down American costs. Trump may be trying to build a ballroom, but, clearly, he is living in the theater of the absurd.

Really? Do Americans want a ballroom when wholesale inflation just hit 6 percent—the highest level in 4 years? Do Americans want a ballroom when food prices just went up more in April than in any month in nearly 40 years? Do Americans want a ballroom when the cost of a gallon of gas has increased a dollar and a half since March?

Of course not.

I would say Trump has completely lost touch with the American people, but that would assume that Trump was ever in touch with the American people to begin with. And on this issue, he sure as heck isn't.

IRAN

Mr. President, on Iran, Trump was talking about his disastrous Iran war when he said:

I don't think about Americans' financial situations.

Trump launched this war without a plan, without a clear objective, and without any thought to how it might affect the American people.

When Hegseth and other Pentagon officials came to testify, at the end of April, they said this war cost American taxpayers \$25 billion. Well, yesterday, they revised that figure to \$29 billion. Trump has forced American taxpayers to sink at least \$29 billion into a war that still has no end game.

And \$29 billion is just the sticker price and doesn't include the hundreds of additional dollars American families will have to pay this year just to fill up their tanks. Americans are paying over \$4½ a gallon at the pump—more than a dollar and a half above what it was when Trump started this war.

If Senate Republicans care about Americans' financial situations, which they should, they need to vote for our War Powers Resolution today to limit Trump's ability to continue this war without authorization. Senator MERKLEY will be introducing that War Powers Resolution, which I am proud to cosponsor, in a little while.

Today's vote will be the Republicans' seventh—seventh—opportunity to support our resolution to withdraw our troops from hostilities with Iran and stop the economic fallout from this historic blunder.

Americans' financial situation is dire, and Republicans don't think about anyone other than Donald Trump.

CHINA

Mr. President, on China, Donald Trump may have no interest in helping the American people get ahead, but he certainly seems willing to give China a leg up. We all ought to fear what Donald Trump may concede to China just so he can claim a headline. Trump has fantasized about \$1 trillion in Chinese investments in America that would give the Chinese a stranglehold on our economy, threaten our supply chains, our economic independence, and our national security.

This is Trump empowering Xi's “Made in China” ambitions—selling out American manufacturers and workers, giving CCP businesses an edge in undermining America building the industries of the future here at home.

He is opening the door. He is saying: China, you come here. Use all American innovation and technology and everything else; and then send it back to China, and let China take the lead over America on industry over industry.

What a disgrace. The American people—American businesses—aren't going to fall for this bunk.

And then there are many other things we all worry about that Trump would or could do to weaken American workers, families, and businesses when he gets outnegotiated by Xi. And that has happened time and time again.

Here are some of the things that Donald Trump could do that we all worry about—American workers, American families, American people, American companies worry about.

Donald Trump could sell out American autoworkers by allowing Chinese EVs to flood our markets and crowd out domestic manufacturing.

Donald Trump could sell out America on chips and AI, allowing the sale of our AI chips and semiconductor equipment to China so they can catch up in the technology race that will define the global economy for the next decade. This is a clear and present threat, not just to American jobs but to our national security.

Donald Trump could sell out on fentanyl, failing to use American leverage to extract real and meaningful concessions from the Chinese Communist Party to prevent the deadly flow of fentanyl poisoning our communities. This is an issue I brought up directly with Xi years ago. We were making some progress. Will Donald Trump sell it out? We all worry about it.

Donald Trump could sell out Taiwan, whose people want to continue living in freedom, instead of under the jackboot of the Chinese Communist Party. Any threat Trump allows Xi Jinping to

make against the Taiwanese is a threat to the global democracy. It is also a threat to the global economy, given how many semiconductor chips are made in Taiwan.

So in all of these things, forget the “Art of the Deal.” Trump is practicing the “art of the duped.”

Forget the “art of the deal.” Donald Trump is practicing the “art of the duped.”

NOMINATION OF KEVIN WARSH

Mr. President, on Mr. Warsh, Donald Trump has made it clear he will stop at nothing—nothing—to undermine the independence of the Federal Reserve at the expense of the American economy and the American people. As the Senate prepares to vote on Kevin Warsh’s confirmation as Fed chair, Donald Trump has shown no sign he intends to stop his crusade against an independent Fed.

Trump undermined the central bank with his attempt to oust Lisa Cook and his sham investigation against Chairman Powell. Those attacks on the Fed ought to concern everyone who is worried about the cost of living and interest rates going up.

The more Donald Trump interferes with an independent Fed, the more chaos he injects into the markets. And the more chaos he injects into the markets, the more the interest rates go up. Markets like certainty. Donald Trump doesn’t offer that.

With this administration’s disastrous war and failed economic agenda driving up costs, Donald Trump will only seek to exert more pressure on the Fed to manipulate interest rates to his own political advantage. Appointing a new Fed Chair amid this chaos and coercion could further undermine the independence of the Fed.

I urge Senate Republicans to join Democrats in protecting the Fed and restoring some stability to our economy.

CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT

Mr. President, on CRAs, later today, the Senate will have a series of votes on the Trump administration’s undermining of key protections for the American consumer against predatory corporate practices that raise costs and limit opportunity.

The CFPB, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, has played a critical role on the side of people to help them avoid junk fees, predatory medical debt, and payday lenders who take advantage of people in need, including military servicemembers.

The Trump administration has chosen to prioritize undermining these critical protections, and, today, Senate Democrats stand up and say “enough.”

As someone who helped authorize the CFPB, years ago, I feel strongly that we cannot let Trump undermine and constrain this vital Agency. So I thank Senator WARREN and so many of my Democratic colleagues for leading these joint resolutions of disapproval to fight on behalf of the American people, of the American consumer.

The joint resolution of disapproval that I am leading is against the Trump administration’s decision to reverse CFPB protections on mortgage lending called “contract for deed” transactions, that without the proper guardrails can be predatory to people trying to live the American dream in purchasing a home.

For millions of Americans who can’t access a traditional mortgage, a contract for deed can seem like a lifeline, but all too often these arrangements are traps. The buyer takes on every obligation of home ownership immediately—taxes, repairs, risk—but doesn’t receive the deed until they have paid every last dollar. You miss a single payment, and you can lose everything—no equity, no recourse, evicted like a tenant.

Over 200,000 New Yorkers are in these arrangements right now.

The CFPB has heard reports of many unfair, deceptive, and abusive practices in “contract for deed” transactions and took action in 2024 to crack down on these practices by applying the same lending protections to these loans as other consumer and mortgage loans.

What does Trump want to do? Of course, he wants to give a green light to the bad actors, that they are free to exploit American potential homeowners in this way by eliminating the protections of CFPB.

Apparently, Trump wasn’t paying attention during the 2008 financial crisis. Giving these predatory lenders free rein only hurts the American people and the American economy.

I call on all of my colleagues—Democrats and Republicans alike—to join me in protecting Americans who just want a fair shot at the American dream.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). The Democratic whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, first, I ask unanimous consent that the following Senators be permitted to speak prior to the scheduled rollcall vote: Senator CORNYN for up to 10 minutes and Senator KENNEDY for up to 10 minutes.

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

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, like many families across America, mine was touched by the disease of cancer when I was a young man. At the age of 14, my father died of lung cancer. I was 14; he was 53. Seeing my dad struggle changed my life. I made it a priority during my time in Congress to try to spare others from the suffering. We have made significant progress in reducing smoking over the last several decades. After I passed legislation banning smoking on airplanes, it turned out to be a tipping point. And, increasingly, we have seen tobacco and cigarettes disappear from public spaces.

But Big Tobacco did not dissipate like a cloud of smoke. They rebranded with flashy new products: vaping and e-

cigarettes. And they followed the same playbook they used to sell Marlboro cigarettes and so many others: They targeted our children in America.

Tobacco companies have donated generously to Donald Trump’s election, his inauguration, and his “Great Gatsby” ballroom with the expectation of favorable treatment, and President Trump’s administration has delivered for tobacco. Last week, the Food and Drug Administration did something it had never done before. After pressure from President Trump, the FDA authorized the first ever flavored e-cigarettes.

Why is that important? That is what lures the children into this deadly habit. Scientists, doctors, and parents—even the FDA’s own studies—all acknowledge sweet and fruity flavored e-cigarettes are responsible for addicting our children. Health experts I have spoken to believe the true number of high school kids vaping is at least 40 percent—40 percent of our kids vaping—a percentage that teachers, principals, and students acknowledge. These are not kids vaping to quit cigarette smoking. These are kids who first became addicted to nicotine because of flavored vaping.

Why would an administration supposedly committed to making America healthy again unleash this new wave of addiction on our children? Formaldehyde, chromium, and heavy metals like nickel and lead all are present in e-cigarettes. A recent study found that vaping is likely to cause cancer.

We should not trust Big Tobacco when they promise they won’t market to kids. We know better.

Then, on Friday, the Food and Drug Administration granted a free pass to scores of illegal vapes, permitting them to stay on the market without having met the law’s requirement that they first prove to the FDA that their product is “appropriate for the protection of public health.” They didn’t try to do it because they can’t do that; they can’t prove it.

But even that gift to vaping and cigarette titans like Altria and R. J. Reynolds was not enough to spare the Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration. Yesterday, President Trump canned him, forced his resignation. Dr. Makary is gone for his resistance to this expansion of vaping in the high schools of America.

What a disgraceful display in Washington. The President wants yes-men no matter the consequences, even if it harms our children.

While I did not agree on everything that Dr. Makary did, I appreciated his commitment and focus on protecting kids from Big Tobacco.

Whether it is for drugs, medical devices, or tobacco products, it is never a good idea for the President and the White House to pressure regulators to approve applications. That is a recipe for deadly consequences.

As the President’s whims have created dangerous vacancies now at the

Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control, my Republican colleagues should have the nerve and fortitude to call out this alarming, unacceptable, and dangerous behavior and treatment of our children.

AMERICAN CURES ACT

Mr. President, on a separate topic, every family, like my own, has wrestled with a dangerous medical condition. When you or a loved one receive a diagnosis, there is only one question on your mind: Is there a cure? Is there a treatment? Often, thank God, the answer is yes.

America's world-class medical researchers and institutions have pushed the boundaries of science and achieved so many important and lifesaving breakthroughs. Medical researchers have turned terminal illness into treatable conditions in many instances—from HIV and AIDS, to heart disease, to many types of cancer—and they have developed treatments that have given patients what they desire the most: more time with their loved ones.

This work is primarily supported by the National Institutes of Health, or NIH. It is not only the Nation's premier medical research agency; it is the world's premier medical research agency.

Today, the budget of the National Institutes of Health is nearly \$50 billion. The vast majority of their research is competitively awarded to scientists, research institutions, and small businesses in every State across the Nation. Last year, Illinois hospitals and universities received more than \$1.2 billion in NIH funding.

What do we have to show for this investment? Well, thanks to NIH research, cancer deaths have declined by 34 percent between 1991 and 2022, and death from heart disease and stroke fell by 78 percent between 1968 and 2013. Medical research works. Because of NIH funding, we are on the verge of curing—yes, curing—sickle cell disease. Consider this: Between 2010 and 2016, the FDA approved more than 200 new drugs and treatments. Every single one of them benefitted from NIH research funding—money well spent.

Congress has long recognized the importance of NIH, which is why we, on a bipartisan basis, provided NIH with \$19 billion in additional funding over the past decade, a 60-percent increase. I was part of that effort, and I am proud to announce that it was bipartisan from the start. Senator Roy Blunt, a Republican from Missouri, was chairman of the key Appropriations subcommittee. Senator PATTY MURRAY, who is the ranking Democrat on the Appropriations Committee, was a leader in this field. Senator SUSAN COLLINS did remarkable work in the same area. It has been bipartisan from the start. And working together as a team, we have achieved an amazing investment in medical research.

However, thousands of chronic diseases still need treatments, causing millions of families to suffer. These

families are depending on us to support NIH in groundbreaking research today. So, this week, I have reintroduced the American Cures Act, which would provide our top medical research agencies with 5 percent real funding growth every year. My bill would ensure that the United States remains at the forefront of new treatments and would provide researchers with the strong, stable funding they need to continue their lifesaving work.

This legislation is more important than ever since we currently have a new administration that seems hell-bent on dismantling America's medical research infrastructure. No nation has ever made such a significant investment in science as the United States. No nation's scientists have ever done more to improve the quality of life on Earth. Through government support for scientific research, we have split the atom, defeated polio, and mapped the human genome.

American leadership comes with the responsibility to continue to move forward, to never be satisfied when there are those suffering with sickness, and to push the boundaries of what is possible. Let's pass the American Cures Act on a bipartisan basis and give families facing terrible illnesses today the hope of treatment and cures tomorrow.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum call with respect to the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 296, S. Res. 526.

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

WATER ASSURANCE AND TREATY ENFORCEMENT FOR THE RIO GRANDE FARMERS ACT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, eight decades ago, the United States and Mexico signed an agreement now known as the 1944 Water Treaty to govern the sharing of waters in the Colorado River and the Rio Grande. According to this treaty, the United States is required to deliver 1.5 million acre-feet, or just under 500,000 gallons, of water from the Colorado River to Mexico each year. Similarly, Mexico is obligated to deliver 1.75 million acre-feet to the United States from the Rio Grande River every 5 years.

And while the United States has dutifully held up its end of the bargain, Mexico has been delinquent on repeated occasions. Now, Mexico is hundreds of thousands of acre-feet behind in their required water deliveries. In the most recent cycle, which ended in October of last year, Mexico had delivered less than half of the water it was obligated to deliver under the terms of the treaty. Furthermore, Mexico has not been consistent in their water delivery, sometimes waiting until the very end of the 5-year period to deliver a substantial amount of water in an attempt, ostensibly, to catch up.

This uncertainty in and of itself has made life difficult, you can imagine,

for the more than 400,000 farmers and ranchers who call Texas home. Imagine trying to grow crops not knowing whether you are going to have any water for as long as 4 years, only to receive a huge lump sum at the end of year 5. It just doesn't work out. But this is a very real dilemma faced by many of my constituents in South Texas.

Water deliveries from Mexico are vital to irrigation farming and municipal use in the Rio Grande Valley, helping generate billions in economic productivity for the region. Water shortages created by Mexico's failure to follow this treaty have wreaked havoc on the ability of farmers and ranchers to plan and to tend their crops, which has, in turn, had a terrible economic cost on our entire State. In 2024, the Rio Grande Valley Sugar Growers, which ran the only sugarcane mill in Texas, announced they were forced to close operations after more than 51 years because of these water shortages. Five hundred American jobs were lost as a result.

If Mexico continues to fail to live up to the treaty, more and more farmers and ranchers and other producers will face the same fate. Many growers will potentially default on their financing, and they will be unable to secure any additional financing for future crops without the ability to plan on future water deliveries. Imagine running a bank that offers credit to farmers in the community. If you know the farmer will not be able to access the water they need in order to grow their crops and have a profitable business, obviously that makes it a much riskier bet to offer them a line of credit or a loan.

Further delay of water deliveries could result in bankruptcies, land auctions, more lost jobs, supply chain disruptions, and higher prices at the grocery store for Americans around the country.

I am grateful to Secretary Rubio—the Secretary of State—and Secretary Rollins of the U.S. Department of Agriculture for their leadership on this issue and for their willingness to engage with Mexico and indeed put pressure on them to hold up their end of the bargain.

But South Texas farmers cannot wait. They have already suffered too much from the draught caused by Mexico's failure to live up to its obligations.

The "carrot" approach is clearly not working, so now it is time to bring out the "sticks." For this reason, I am introducing legislation called the Water Assurance and Treaty Enforcement for Rio Grande Farmers—or WATER for Farmers—Act, which will impose penalties in the form of tariffs on Mexico if they continue in their delinquency.

This bill will establish annual benchmarks that Mexico must meet in order to be considered compliant with the 1944 Water Treaty. These annual benchmarks will help ensure that water deliveries are predictable for the farmers

in South Texas. Waiting until the end of a 5-year treaty period to deliver water is neither realistic nor acceptable and certainly what anybody contemplated when this treaty was enacted.

This bill would also direct the Secretary of State, in consultation with the U.S. Commissioner of the International Boundary and Water Commission and the Secretary of Agriculture, to determine each year if Mexico has met the requirements of these benchmarks. If Mexico does not, this legislation directs the U.S. Trade Representative to impose tariffs on the shortfalls accumulated at the end of each year.

While this may seem like an extraordinary measure, Mexico has had ample time to make things right. As I said, we have tried "carrots." Those don't work, so now it is time for the "sticks."

By imposing severe tariffs on Mexico, I hope they will pick up the pace and begin delivering the water they are already committed to delivering so that South Texas farmers and ranchers will have the predictability they need.

South Texans and the agricultural community there are counting on us to ensure that Mexico complies with this treaty that they agreed to way back in 1944.

I urge my colleagues in the Senate to support this legislation, and I will not give up on this matter until the farmers in Texas are made whole.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

S. RES. 526

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, in a few minutes, we are going to be voting on S. Res. 526, and I wanted to spend a few moments explaining what my resolution would do.

First, it is a resolution; it is not a bill. This resolution will only affect the U.S. Senate. It will not affect the U.S. House of Representatives.

Very simply, this is what my resolution would do. When we shut down the government—and by that, I mean, of course, when Congress, House and Senate, refuses to provide funding for an Agency in government and in some cases, all of government, and those Agencies or all of government, as the case may be, have to shut down, that means that Federal employees for the most part aren't being paid.

My resolution would require—or stipulate, rather, that Senators wouldn't be paid either. It is called shared sacrifice.

Now, I want to be clear so my colleagues understand exactly what this resolution would do because I have worked hard to get the votes to pass this, and I have had to make a few accommodations.

First, a Senator would not lose his or her salary. The money would be escrowed. The Senator's salary just would not be available to that Senator while we are in a shutdown, but once the shutdown is over, you will get your money.

No. 2, again, to repeat, this bill will not apply to the House of Representatives. It will only apply to the U.S. Senate. The House can take care of its own business.

Because of the 27th Amendment and in order for my resolution to be constitutional, the resolution will not take effect until the day after the midterm elections. The 27th Amendment provides pretty clearly that our compensation as Members of the Senate—and the House, for that matter, although this resolution doesn't apply to the House—can't be changed until after an election, and the soonest election, of course, is midterms.

If I could, if I were King for a day—I am not. I don't aspire to be. But if I were, I would make this resolution effective immediately because I am very concerned—I hope I am wrong. If I am wrong, I will apologize. I am very concerned that my Senate colleagues on the Democratic side are going to try to shut down the government yet again right before the election to try to create chaos to affect the midterm elections. If I am wrong in that prediction, I will come here and apologize to every Senator by name. So if I could, I would make this resolution apply immediately.

Frankly, if I were also King for a day and I wanted to stop government shutdowns, I would do more than this. I would do two things. I would say that if government shuts down, a Senator loses his pay. It is not escrowed and you get it back later; you just don't get your pay. I would also say that you can't leave Washington; you can't go home.

If you make people forfeit their pay and tell them they can't leave Washington, we won't have any more shutdowns, and everybody in this body knows that. But I can't pass that. I would if I could, but I can't.

So to repeat one more time, all my resolution would do would say: If we choose to shut down government, you are not going to be paid. You will get your money later, but while we are in a shutdown, you are not going to be paid.

This is about shared sacrifice. I mean, what we have done this year in terms of keeping government open—last October—I looked it up before I came to the floor—last October, we shut down government for 43 days. That is the longest shutdown in history. We had FBI agents, national park rangers, CDC scientists, our staff here in Congress—nobody was getting paid. Then 3 months later, after we finally got out of that 43-day shutdown, we shut down the Department of Homeland Security. It was shut down for 76 days. This is all in 1 year.

We ought to hide our heads in a bag. It has to stop. Shutting down government should not be a default solution to our refusal to work out our issues and our differences.

So that is what my Senate resolution will do. Vote how you want to. I am

not saying this is going to stop all shutdowns. As I say, if I were King for a day, I know what to pass that will stop them, but maybe this will help.

So vote for it if you want to. Don't vote for it if you don't want to. Follow your heart. Be sure and take your brain with you, because this is about shared sacrifice. This is about putting our money where our mouths are.

I yield the floor. Thank you for your time and attention.

My work here is done, and I can show myself out.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask that our vote scheduled for 11:30 begin immediately.

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

VOTE ON MOTION TO DISCHARGE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to discharge S.J. Res. 163.

The yeas and nays were previously ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. RICKETTS).

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 118 Leg.]

YEAS—49

Alsobrooks	Hirono	Rosen
Baldwin	Kaine	Sanders
Bennet	Kelly	Schatz
Blumenthal	Kim	Schiff
Blunt Rochester	King	Schumer
Booker	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cantwell	Lujan	Slotkin
Collins	Markey	Smith
Coons	Merkley	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Murkowski	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Gallego	Ossoff	Welch
Gillibrand	Padilla	Whitehouse
Hassan	Paul	Wyden
Heinrich	Peters	
Hickenlooper	Reed	

NAYS—50

Armstrong	Fetterman	McCormick
Banks	Fischer	Moody
Barrasso	Graham	Moran
Blackburn	Grassley	Moreno
Boozman	Hagerty	Risch
Britt	Hawley	Rounds
Budd	Hoeven	Schmitt
Capito	Husted	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Hyde-Smith	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Johnson	Sheehy
Cotton	Justice	Sullivan
Cramer	Kennedy	Thune
Crapo	Lankford	Tillis
Cruz	Lee	Tuberville
Curtis	Lummis	Wicker
Daines	Marshall	Young
Ernst	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—1

Ricketts

The motion was rejected.

(Mr. BANKS assumed the Chair.)

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHMITT). Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

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 Moody, Jon Husted, Roger Marshall, John Hoeven.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that 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, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Nebraska Mr. RICKETTS.

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Nebraska Mr. RICKETTS would have voted "yea."

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 99, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 119 Leg.]

YEAS—99

Alsobrooks	Graham	Murray
Armstrong	Grassley	Ossoff
Baldwin	Hagerty	Padilla
Banks	Hassan	Paul
Barrasso	Hawley	Peters
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blackburn	Hickenlooper	Risch
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rosen
Blunt Rochester	Hoeven	Rounds
Booker	Husted	Sanders
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Britt	Johnson	Schiff
Budd	Justice	Schmitt
Cantwell	Kaine	Schumer
Capito	Kelly	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Collins	Kim	Shaheen
Coons	King	Sheehy
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Slotkin
Cortez Masto	Lankford	Smith
Cotton	Lee	Sullivan
Cramer	Luján	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Tillis
Cruz	Markey	Tuberville
Curtis	Marshall	Van Hollen
Daines	McConnell	Warner
Duckworth	McCormick	Warnock
Durbin	Merkley	Warren
Ernst	Moody	Welch
Fetterman	Moran	Whitehouse
Fischer	Moreno	Wicker
Galleo	Murkowski	Wyden
Gillibrand	Murphy	Young

NOT VOTING—1

Ricketts

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ARMSTRONG). On this vote, the yeas are 99, the nays are 0.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

WITHHOLDING THE PAY OF SENATORS IF A GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN OCCURS—Motion To Proceed The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, here in DC this week is Police Week, and we are reflecting on the brave men and women who serve us in Tennessee and also across this country, where they are serving our communities every day with courage, with integrity, and with honor. We so appreciate their service. Every day, they put their lives on the line to protect their families, their friends, their neighbors. They enforce the law, and they keep the peace; and for that, they deserve every American's enduring gratitude.

Few places better capture the magnitude of their sacrifices than the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial that is here in our Nation's Capital. Engraved on that memorial are the names of every fallen officer in our country going back to the year 1850. This memorial contains 24,775 names. This week, 363 heroes are being added, including 3 from Tennessee: Hugh Carlen of Putnam County, whose watch ended February 24, 1912; James Hood of Jonesborough, who fell in the line of duty August 26, 1928; and Deputy Sheriff Justin Bradford Mowery, of Blount County, whom we tragically lost on December 28.

This week's candlelight vigil will provide a powerful moment to reflect on their sacrifices and their stories and those made by the thousands of other officers on the Roll Call of Heroes.

There is a reason our officers are called the thin blue line: They are the only force separating us from chaos, disorder, and anarchy. They take pride in their responsibility, but to do their jobs, they need the support of their communities, their States, their country. They need the support of this Chamber, and for too long, they have lacked that support from Democrat leadership. Instead of funding the police, the Democrats have worked to defund the police and, indeed, all law enforcement. But, under President Trump, the Federal Government is backing the blue from one side of this country to another.

In Tennessee, we have seen this much needed support in Memphis. For years, Memphis, which is an iconic American city, has struggled with rampant crime. In 2024, it had the highest crime rate per capita of any city in the country. Memphians truly suffered. Indeed, all West Tennesseans suffered. Many could not walk outside of their homes without fear of being robbed, assaulted, or murdered in Memphis.

Under the President's leadership, those days are coming to an end. Since

launching the Memphis Safe Task Force last year, crime in Memphis has plummeted. In the first quarter of this year, overall crime was down more than 40 percent compared to 2025. Indeed, since the task force began 7 months ago, the crime rate has been cut 50 percent.

The way this happened was in coordination with local, State, and Federal resources. The task force has done a great job in getting criminals off the street and behind bars. In total, authorities have made more than 9,000 arrests, including 996 for narcotics, 838 for firearms offenses, 105 for sex offenses, and 67 for homicide. They have also seized 1,500 illegal firearms, and they have located 150 missing children. Every single American—indeed, every Member of this Chamber—should applaud this success.

In the Senate, Republicans are working to support the administration's effort. My Restoring Law and Order Act would increase funding for law enforcement and help keep violent criminals behind bars.

The Protecting Law Enforcement Officers from Doxing Act would make it illegal to dox Federal law enforcement officials and put them in harm's way.

The Safer Prisons Act would double the maximum term of imprisonment for assaulting a Federal Bureau of Prisons correctional officer.

While Republicans work to support our brave officers, unfortunately, many of our Democratic colleagues are trying to do everything in their power to undermine law enforcement.

For 76 days, they shut down the Department of Homeland Security, left the Secret Service, Coast Guard, TSA, FEMA, and other critical Agencies without funding, and they jeopardized our Nation's security at a time of heightened threats from the world's largest sponsor of terrorism, Iran.

And the reason? Well, they had a petty reason. They used our Federal law enforcement and the Department of Homeland Security as a trading chip. What they were trying to do was to abolish ICE, end the enforcement of our immigration laws, and defund Federal law enforcement.

Thank goodness they were not successful. They got nothing for their little fit. President Trump brought this charade to an end late last month by signing into law legislation that reopened DHS and restored its vital operations.

Now Republicans are moving forward with a public security bill that will fund ICE and Customs and Border Protection for years to come. We are accomplishing this through the reconciliation process, and that is the same process we used to pass the Working Families Tax Cut last year. We are going to make certain we can fund these vital Agencies.

Our colleagues across the aisle can continue to oppose the rule of law, and they can side with criminals over law enforcement. They can continue to side